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Francis revives 'Latino' debate

Pope's Italian heritage ignites passionate talk about term's meaning

By **Jesse Washington**
The Associated Press

He is being hailed with pride and wonder as the "first Latino pope," a native Spanish speaker born and raised in the South American nation of Argentina. But for some Latinos in the United States, there's a catch: Pope Francis' parents were born in Italy.



Pope Francis

Such recent European heritage is reviving debate in the United States about what makes someone a Latino. Those questioning whether their idea of Latino identity applies to Pope Francis acknowledge that he is Latin American, and that he is a special inspiration to Spanish-speaking Catholics around the world. Yet that, in their eyes, does not mean the pope is "Latino."

These views seem to be in the minority. But they have become a distinct part of the conversation in the United States as the Latino world contemplates this unique man and moment.

◆ "Are Italians Latino? No," said Eric Cortes, who has been debating the issue with his friends.

◆ "The most European alternative and the closest thing to an Italian," is how Baylor University professor Philip Jenkins described Pope Francis in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

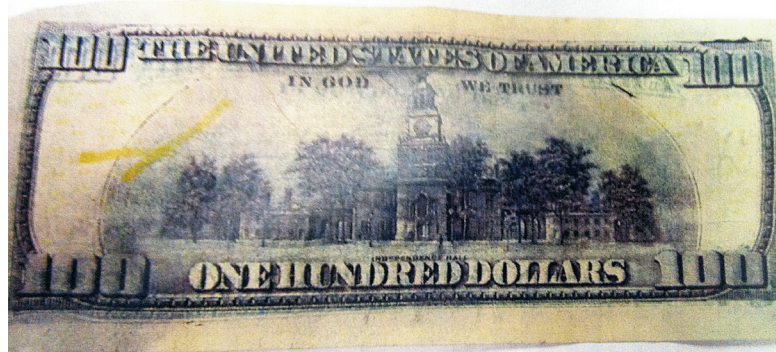
◆ "Does a Latino have to have indigenous blood?" asked the *LA Weekly* newspaper of Los Angeles beneath the headline, "Is The New Pope Latino?"

◆ "Latinos come in all colors and shades and features," Ivette Baez said in an emotional debate on the "Being Latino" Facebook page.

The swirling discussion indicates just how much the man formerly known as Jorge Mario Bergoglio, whatever his ethnicity, means to Catholic Latinos around the world.

"The Latino community tends to pride itself on the accomplishments of our own," said Baez, a Puerto Rican who lives in New Jersey. "And a lot of people are hoping that a Latino pope

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COURTESY SANTA FE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Bad bills

Recent case involving fake currency highlights threat counterfeiters pose to local businesses



Alvin McKenzie, manager of the Murphy USA gas station on Cerrillos Road, recently identified one of the fake \$100 bills that Tyler Ament allegedly tried to spend there. Police say bills seized in the case were legitimate \$20 bills that had been scrubbed with paint thinner and disguised as \$100 bills. Such practices render counterfeit-detection pens ineffective because the paper is genuine. CLYDE MUELLER/THE NEW MEXICAN



The phony bill on top was produced using an aluminum-based printing system that can produce detail almost identical to a genuine bill. The counterfeit bill on the bottom was made with a common inkjet printer on regular paper. NICO ROESLER/THE NEW MEXICAN

By **Nico Roesler**
The New Mexican

Walking into the Murphy USA gas station near the Wal-Mart Supercenter on March 9, a young man handed the cashier a \$100 bill for a pack of cigarettes.

Manager Alvin McKenzie told the man that he couldn't accept it. "That's a bad bill," he said.

"No, it's not," the man later identified as Tyler Ament, 20, allegedly responded.

"As soon as he took it out of his wallet and flipped it over, I knew it was counterfeit," McKenzie said recently. "I gave it back to him so he wouldn't bail and I got his license plate info."

McKenzie then called police.

Ament, according to his arrest warrant, went across the street to Kohl's department store and used the fake

\$100 bill to pay for a pair of jeans worth \$33, then came back to the gas station to buy the cigarettes, this time with the real money he received as change.

He was met by police, questioned and arrested on charges of forgery, fraud and conspiracy.

Ament told police that he had two accomplices, retired Santa Fe police officer Anthony Rivera, 44, and his brother Dominic Rivera, 41, who were subsequently arrested and charged with the same crimes.

Ament told police that the three had spent more than \$1,200 in counterfeit \$100 bills in Santa Fe since January.

According to the U.S. Secret Service, the agency that investigates counterfeit fraud and forgery cases, more than \$100,000 in counterfeit money has been seized and removed from the streets of New Mexico so far in 2013.

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Vocal foes urge voters to speak out about guns

By **Michele Salcedo**
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Two of the loudest voices in the gun debate say it's up to voters now to make their position known to Congress.

New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and National Rifle Associate Executive Vice President Wayne LaPierre claim their opposing views on guns have the support of the overwhelming number of Americans. They are looking at the next two weeks as critical to the debate, when lawmakers head home to hear from constituents ahead of next month's anticipated Senate vote on gun control.

Bloomberg, a former Republican-turned-independent, has just sunk \$12 million for Mayors Against Illegal Guns to run television ads and phone

banks in 13 states urging voters to tell their senators to pass legislation requiring universal background checks for gun buyers.

"We demanded a plan and then we demanded a vote. We've got the plan, we're going to get the vote. And now it's incumbent on us to make our voices heard," Bloomberg said.

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid said Thursday that legislation would likely be debated in his chamber next month that will include expanded federal background checks, tougher laws and stiffer sentences for gun trafficking and increased school safety grants. A ban on assault-style weapons was dropped from the bill, fearing it would sink the broader bill. But Reid has said that he would allow the ban

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Pasapick

Weekly all-ages informal swing dances

Lesson 7-8 p.m., dance 8-10 p.m., Odd Fellows Hall, 1125 Cerrillos Road, dance only \$3, lesson and dance \$8, 473-0955.

More events in Calendar, A-2 and Fridays in Pasatiempo

Obituaries

Melchor Torres, 73, March 21

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Today

Mostly sunny.
High 48,
low 22.

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On gay marriage, court has variety of options

By **David G. Savage and Maura Dolan**
Tribune Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Four years ago, many gay rights advocates shook their heads when super-lawyers Theodore B. Olson and David Boies announced they would challenge California's ban on gay marriages in federal court and take the case all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

It was too risky, the skeptics said. Voters in state after state were rejecting same-sex marriage, and no federal judge had said such bans were illegal. One liberal legal scholar called the lawsuit a "Hail Mary" pass.

But now that Proposition 8's ban on gay marriage is set for a hearing Tuesday before the Supreme Court, the lawyers and activists who started the case think they may be on the

verge of a historic victory. Even the early doubters are hopeful. "We think the time is right," said Los Angeles lawyer Theodore J. Boutrous Jr., Olson's partner on the case. "Everything seems to be breaking in favor of marriage equality."

Olson and Boies are urging the court to rule that gays and lesbians have an equal right to marry under the Constitution, a decision that would not only strike down the California ban but could make gay marriage legal nationwide. That is "the right result," Boies said last week. "There is no rational or legitimate reason for the government to deny marriage to these loving couples."

That may go too far for the court's majority. The conventional wisdom among legal experts is that the court

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