To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by William Owen Westerfield II entitled "Issues, Voting, and the Christian Right." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Political Science.

Dr. Michael Gant, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Dr. Thomas Ungs

Dr. Michael Fitzgerald

Accepted for the Council:

Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

ISSUES, VOTING, AND THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

William Owen Westerfield, II
December 1999

Copyright © William Owen Westerfield II, 1999
All rights reserved

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my wife and son

Stephanie Marie Westerfield

and

William Jacob Westerfield

who motivated me to stop dreaming about the future

and to start working toward my goals.

Abstract

Today scholars are using various forms of James D. Hunter's culture war theory to explain the impact of religion on electoral behavior. According to the culture war theory, two groups who disagree over moral issues divide the electorate. One group is made up of religious conservatives who are committed to traditional religious beliefs. The other group is made up of religious liberals or secularists that prefer more modern views. The opposing views of these groups on issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and gender roles are used to support this thesis. Previous research, however, indicates voters are too ill-informed about issues to be able to cast a vote on the basis of issues. To test the issue basis of this theory the question: "Do the members of the Christian Right fulfill the requirements of citizens in a representative democracy?" is asked. Before answering the question, the level of support in the general public for the Christian Right is measured, the methodological controversy surrounding the survey questions used to identify the constituency of the Christian Right are reviewed; and the contribution of the major religious groups to the two major party coalitions are examined. Evangelical Protestants are found to be the constituency of the Christian Right. The National Election Studies born-again and biblical authority items are determined to be valid measures for identifying Evangelical Protestants. The religious components of the Democratic and Republican coalition are shown to have changed since the rise of the Christian Right. And, finally, abortion views are found to influence the voting behavior of a little over a majority of Evangelical Protestants.

Table of Contents

Issues, Voting, and the Christian Right

Chapter		Page
Introduction	The Christian Right and American Electoral Behavior: An Overview	1
Chapter 1	The Moral Minority: Popular Support for the Christian Right in 1996	9
Chapter 2	The Validity of Born-Again and Biblical Authority Questions Used in the Study of the Christian Right	28
Chapter 3	Electoral Transformation: The Contribution of the Christian Right	51
Chapter 4	Issue Voting and the Christian Right	74
Conclusion	Political Behavior and Religion: Prospects for the Future	96
References		100
Appendix		110
Vita		120

List of Tables

Table		Page
1:1	Support for the Christian Right	13
1:2	Social Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters	15
1:3	Religious Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters	17
1:4	Issues and Christian Right Supporters	20
1:5	Logistic Model of Christian Right Support	21
2:1	Mean Score of Political Variables by Alternative Versions of the NES Born-Again Item	41
2:2	Mean Score of Political Variables by Alternative Versions of the NES Bible Item	48
2:3	Mean Score of Political Variables by Christian Right Measure	49
3:1	Religious Groups and the Democratic and Republican Party Coalition: 1976 - 1996	61
3:2	Contribution of Religious Groups to the Democratic Coalition: 1976 - 1996	71
3:3	Contribution of Religious Groups to the Republican Coalition: 1976 - 1996	71
4:1	Number of Evangelical Protestants in 1996	85
4:2	Abortion Position of Evangelical Protestants	86
4:3	Knowledge of the Abortion Position of the Democratic and Republican Party: Evangelical Protestants	87
4:4	Perceive Difference In the Abortion Position of the Democratic and Republican Party: Evangelical Protestants	87
4:5	Abortion Issue Important: Evangelical Protestants	87

Table		Page
4:6	Fulfill Abortion Issue Voter Requirements: Evangelical Protestants	88
4:7	Party Identification and Candidate Choice: Informed Evangelical Protestants	89
4:8	Logistic Model of Candidate Choice: All Evangelical Protestants	90
4:9	Logistic Model of Candidate Choice: Informed Evangelical Protestants	92

List of Figures

Figure		Page
3:1	Mainline Protestant Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 - 1996	63
3:2	Evangelical Protestant Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 - 1996	65
3:3	Catholic Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 - 1996	67
3:4	Jewish Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 - 1996	68
3:5	Other and None Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 - 1996	68

Introduction

The Christian Right and American Electoral Behavior: An Overview

"Contemporary American politics faces few greater dilemmas than deciding how to deal with the resurgence of religious belief."

Stephen L. Carter

Religion and Political Science

Due to the rise of the Christian Right, in the late seventies and early eighties, interest in the connection between religion and politics was rekindled. As a result, political scientists faced a new question: how to account for the increased impact of religious belief in the American electorate. Prior to the rise of the Christian Right, most of the debate about political behavior revolved around questions about voter turnout, vote choice, and the rationality of voters. After the rise of the Christian Right, some political scientists started to investigate the connection between religion and political behavior. Controversies soon developed over methodological issues and explanations for the political behavior of the Christian Right.

The methodological controversies common to the study of the religion and politics developed because the data available for research were severely lacking. Early on scholars were forced to rely on outdated measures of denominational preference and measures of church attendance (Jelen 1998). They soon discovered that these measures were inadequate (Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt 1996). Dissatisfaction led scholars to seek more precise measures of religious phenomena (Jelen 1998). Today, the available data are greatly improved. The National Election Studies now includes an updated denominational coding scheme as well as other items measuring the importance of religion, attitudes toward the Bible, born-again experience, clerical cue-giving, and the

frequency of religious acts like church attendance, prayer, and Bible reading. As a result of the improvements in religious measures scholars are now able to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the impact of religion on politics (Leege and Kellstedt 1993).

Most of the theoretical advancements in the study of religion and politics have come as a result of attempts to explain the political behavior of the Christian Right. Early on scholars thought "religiously based political activity" was the result of "individual psychological pathologies" (Jelen 1998: 115). Supporters of the Christian Right were "accused of being authoritarian, dogmatic, alienated, anxious about their social status, motivated by feelings of inadequacy, of projecting self-hatred outward, and of being motivated by other non-political factors" (Wilcox, Jelen, and Linzey 1995: 263-264).

The most popular explanation for the rise of the Christian Right was the status politics explanation (Lipset and Raab 1981, Lipset 1982, Conover 1983, Lorentzen 1980, Shupe and Stacey 1983, Wald, Owen, and Hill 1989). The status politics explanation was drawn from the literature on right-wing extremist movements such as the Ku Klux Klan, the John Birch Society, and other similar groups (Bell 1963). From the status politics perspective right-wing movements are formed by groups who perceive their values, traditions and life-styles as being threatened by modernism (Simpson 1983). "The picture which generally emerges from such analyses is that status politics embodies irrational, intolerant, and non-instrumental behavior by those who experience status anxieties and who respond to such anxieties by blaming familiar scapegoats for threatening their prestige" (Smidt 1988: 4).

At first glance, the status politics explanation appears to fit the Christian Right well. The Christian Right is a movement whose goal is to restore traditional values in American public policy. Furthermore, the Christian Right has a "symbolic enemy in secular humanism" (Moen 1988: 430). However, the status politics explanation has not stood up well to criticism (Simpson 1983, Simpson 1985, Moore and Whitt 1986, Moen

1988, Smidt 1988). Some scholars, in fact, believe research in religion and politics has "decisively falsified" the hypothesis that the rise of the Christian Right is an example of status politics (Jelen 1998).

Scholars who battled over pathological explanations for the rise of the Christian Right held two distinctive points of view. Those who favored pathological accounts such as the status politics explanation believed that religious values are private and therefore inappropriate in the public sphere of politics. Furthermore, they argued "that fervent religious belief is something of a dangerous stranger to democratic politics" because religious beliefs are nonnegotiable (Wilcox et al. 1995: 263). Scholars who disfavored the pathological interpretation preferred the representational account of the political behavior of the Christian Right. The representational account emphasizes political beliefs and religious doctrine. According to the representational account, support for the Christian Right is "reasonable" because "it represents support for political organizations that sought to enact the political agenda of their supporters. In this respect, support for organizations of the Christian Right was not considered to be substantially different from support for other political organizations" (Wilcox et al. 1995: 264).

The root of the disagreement over explanations for the political behavior of the Christian Right is more likely value based than fact based. While most social scientists strive to be objective, "few social scientists would subscribe to the view that a value-free science of human behavior is possible" (Jelen 1989: xv). Though the interplay between facts and values is generally not evident in mainstream political science it is often visible in the religion and politics subfield of political science (Jelen 1989). Quite frequently disputes about concepts, measurements, and theories mirror religious differences between social scientists (Jelen 1989). As a result, it is very important that social scientists understand the implications of the various points of view underlying explanations for the political behavior of the Christian Right. Basically, pathological explanations for the

political behavior of the Christian Right call into question the "reasonableness" of Christian Right supporters (Wilcox et al. 1995). Representational theories, on the other hand, suggest that it is political interests or more specifically policy preferences that drive the political behavior of Christian Right supporters.

Culture War Theory: The Leading Account

The representational account of political behavior is now the driving force behind research in the religion and politics subfield. More specifically, the leading account of religion's effect on politics is James D. Hunter's culture war theory (1991 and 1994). Hunter's theory seeks to explain the conflict over issues such as abortion, homosexuality, gender roles, and other moral issues. According to Hunter, the conflict over moral issues pits individuals who are committed to traditional religious beliefs against individuals who have abandoned traditional religious beliefs in favor of more modern views. Scholars who favor the representational account of political behavior have adopted Hunter's theory to explain a wide variety of political phenomena including:

- the political behavior of Protestant clergy (Guth, Green, Smidt, Kellstedt, and Poloma 1997);
- the attitudes and preferences of the political elite (Guth and Green 1986; Guth and Green 1990; Guth, Green, Kellstedt, and Smidt 1995; Layman 1999; Rozell, Wilcox, and Green 1999); and
- the political realignment of religious traditions (Kellstedt, Smidt, and Kellstedt 1991; Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt 1994 and 1996; Layman 1997; Layman and Carmines 1997).

According to each of these accounts, the Republican Party is becoming the home of religious conservatives while the Democratic Party is becoming the home of religious liberals and secularists.

The religious cleavage outlined by the culture war perspective is appealing because much of what is contested in American politics is defined in terms of group competition. The culture war theory, however, is important because of its use. Following the tradition of political sociology, political scientists have designed research around the culture war theory to explain the political phenomena listed above. Some scholars believe this achievement is religion and politics' most impressive (Jelen 1998); however, research such as this may produce dubious generalizations.

Research following this approach "seems quite plausible on the face of it; yet there are numerous objections one may raise about such analysis of electoral behavior" (Dennis 1991: 64). The problem with this approach is "the inherent causal ambiguity" of demographic attributes whether those attributes are age, income, education, place of residence, or religion. In the case of religion and politics, without the "auxiliary" evidence of a divide over culture war issues it is difficult to understand the true meaning of religion's impact on politics. Various religious variables may correlate well with electoral decisions, but such a correlation may "mean a great variety of things" (Dennis 1991: 65). Without the explanatory power of issues, the tendency of this approach is to suggest that electoral decisions "are more like cultural tastes" rather "than individually deliberated decisions" (Dennis 1991: 64).

The biggest problem with this approach, then, is the unexamined assumption that issues explain the connection between religion and politics. Given this problem the time has come for religion and politics scholars to grapple with the "issues in issues voting" (Kessel 1972). Democratic theory suggests voters are supposed to be interested in politics and well informed about political issues. Most research, however, indicates

voters are too ill-informed about public policy to be able to cast a vote on the basis of issues (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960; Converse 1964). Other research, however, has been more optimistic about voters using issues to decide to how to vote (Key 1966; Fiorina 1981; Carmines and Stimson 1980). Still issue voting is an elusive concept and most positive evaluations of policy-oriented voting suggest the memory-based requirements for issue voting laid out by democratic theorists should be relaxed in one way or another (Fiorina 1981; Gant and Davis 1984; and Lodge, Stroh, and Wahlke 1990).

Dealing with the Issues

We will ask the following question to assess the impact of issues on the political behavior of the Christian Right:

Do the members of the Christian Right fulfill the requirements of citizens in a representative democracy as articulated by classical democratic theorists?

It has been suggested that the assessment of issue based voting is often dependent on "the specification of necessary and sufficient conditions for the influence of policy attitudes in the voting decision" (Brody and Page 1972: 450). In the analysis that follows, an issue can impact the candidate choice of a voter if that voter has an opinion about the issue; perceives the position of the parties on the issue, recognizes the difference in the position of the parties; and feels the issue is important. While this approach may be controversial given its memory-based assumptions, it is followed for several reasons. First, the assessment of policy based voting in mainstream political science began with the same basic assumptions. Second, the goal of this thesis is not to

answer the research question above alone, but rather to start building a bridge over the gap between the mainstream study of political behavior and the study of political behavior in the religion and politics subfield.

To start the building process, we will review and test many of the findings in the religion and politics subfield before seeking to answer the research question at hand. For instance, this thesis begins with a chapter that assesses the level of support in the general public for the Christian Right in 1996. It makes sense to start with this chapter because this is the first question political scientists asked about the Christian Right in the late seventies and early eighties. This chapter will also help the reader understand the various demographic and religious characteristics of Christian Right supporters. Finally, this chapter is important because the role of issues in the political behavior of the Christian Right is examined for the first time in this thesis.

Chapter 2 focuses on measurement strategies used to identify the constituency of the Christian Right. Again, it makes sense to include this chapter because much of the debate in religion and politics over the past two decades has focused on measurement issues. Furthermore, most of the debate about measurement focused on various strategies for identifying the doctrinally conservative constituency of the Christian Right, Evangelical Protestants. This chapter shows that two measures can be employed to identify Evangelical Protestants. The first is a measure related to born-again status and the second is a measure related to views of Biblical authority.

Chapter 3 turns its focus to the impact of religion on electoral politics. In this chapter, the contribution of the major religious groups in America to the electoral coalition of the two major parties is measured. The dramatic shift in the voting behavior of Mainline and Evangelical Protestants is revealed by this analysis. Mainline Protestants it appears are moving toward the Democratic Party in large numbers. While Evangelical Protestants appear to be shifting their loyalties to the Republican Party. This analysis

suggests the rise of the Christian Right had a serious effect on the religious composition of the Democratic and Republican Party coalitions. It also suggests the study of religion and politics and more specifically the Christian Right is an important endeavor.

The research question, "Do the members of the Christian Right fulfill the requirements of citizens in a representative democracy as articulated by classical democratic theorists?" is investigated in chapter 4. Evangelical Protestants, the constituency of the Christian Right, are shown to be just as uninformed about issues as the rest of the public. However, issues are shown to play an important role in the vote choice of informed Evangelical Protestants. More importantly, the findings in chapter 4 suggest scholars may be unwise to use issues to explain the religious differences between the Republican and Democratic Party or the realignment of religious groups.

Chapter 1

The Moral Minority: Popular Support for the Christian Right in 1996

"The search for a single number representing support for the New Christian Right is like that for the Holy Grail"

Sigelman and Presser

The Search for the Holy Grail

Few groups in American politics have received more media attention then the Christian Right. Most observers, especially the media, follow the political fortunes of the Christian Right because of its potential impact on national politics. Scholars follow the Christian Right because they are interested in what the group can reveal about the role of religion in politics. Both the media and academia share an interest in the answers to the following questions: How much does the Christian Right appeal to the average American? What are the characteristics and political views of the supporters of the Christian Right?

In the past, scholars have characterized the Christian Right as "the sleeping giant" of American electoral politics (Menendez 1977). Whether the Christian Right is the "sleeping giant" of electoral politics or not is debatable. Some research indicates popular support for the Christian Right is not very strong (Buell and Sigelman 1985; Sigelman, Wilcox, and Buell 1987; Shupe and Stacey 1983; Wilcox, DeBell, and Sigelman 1999); while other research indicates popular support for the platform of the Christian Right is strong (Simpson 1983; Wilcox 1987; and Kellstedt 1988).

Most of the confusion surrounding the level of support in the electorate for the

Christian Right is rooted in the meaning of term "support" (Buell and Sigelman 1985). Support can mean anything from approval of the platform of the Christian Right to actual support for a Christian Right organization such as the Christian Coalition. For example, Simpson (1983) operationalized support for the Christian Right as acceptance of its platform. He found that 30% of Americans back the Christian Right's positions on abortion, homosexuality, school prayer, and woman's role in society. Buell and Sigelman (1985), however, found a much different and lower estimate of support for the Christian Right. Buell and Sigelman defined support for the Christian Right as support for the Moral Majority, an organization of the early Christian Right. They estimated that only 9% of the adult population endorse the Christian Right.

In this thesis, support for the Christian Right refers to a positive affect toward an organization of the Christian Right such as the Christian Coalition. There are two reasons we define a Christian Right supporter in this manner. First, "mere congruence of policy views is hardly enough to label someone a Moral Majority supporter. People may agree with the Moral Majority on social issues and still object to its leadership, tactics, or goals, or may not even know of the organization's existence" (Buell and Sigelman 1985: 427). Second, we can determine the constituency of the Christian Right by analyzing support in this manner. Evangelical Protestants, who are often referred to as the members of the Christian Right, are the target constituency of Christian Right organizations, but evidence suggests the Christian Right is not highly supported by Evangelical Protestants (Smidt 1993).

Varying estimates of support for the Christian Right are also the result of surveys conducted at different times. Estimates of support for the Christian Right in the 1990's

will no doubt differ from estimates of support for the Christian Right in the 1980's no matter how the term support is operationalized. Many changes have occurred within the Christian Right and within the electorate as a whole since the early 1980's (see chapter 3). As a result, the time has come to reassess the level of support in the general population for the Christian Right.

Measuring Support for the Christian Right

Support for the Christian Right in 1996 can be measured using one of the feeling thermometers in the National Election Survey (NES). In the 1996 NES respondents were asked to rate the "Christian Coalition", the leading organization of the Christian Right, on a feeling thermometer, with 0 degrees indicating the most negative assessment and 100 degrees the most positive. In this chapter, supporters of the Christian Right are all respondents who rated the Christian Coalition at 80 degrees or more.

One of the biggest debates about support for the Christian Right revolves around the use of feeling thermometers (Wilcox 1987). Responses to feeling thermometers vary depending on the individual. Some respondents give positive (well above 50 degrees) responses to group feeling thermometers, while others give relatively negative responses (less than 50 degrees or around 50 degrees) to group feeling thermometers (positive responses are more common). Due to these response patterns interpreting feeling thermometer scores can be difficult. For example, an individual may rate the Christian Coalition at 60 degrees, which appears to be a somewhat favorable impression of the Christian Right. However, the same individual may have given a score of 80 degrees or

above to all the other groups in the survey indicating he or she has an unfavorable impression of the Christian Coalition instead of a favorable impression.

To avoid the problems associated with feeling thermometers scholars have suggested adjusting these scores for the response pattern of the individual. Following this approach, scholars have defined supporters of the Christian Right as all respondents who rate the Christian Coalition at least 10 degrees warmer than the average score assigned to all other groups in the survey (Wilcox 1987). It may not be necessary, however, to follow the adjusted approach. Wilcox, DeBell, and Sigelman (1999) have shown that using 80 degrees on the feeling thermometer as a cutoff to identify supporters of the Christian Right produces "substantively similar" results as the "adjusted approach". For purposes of comparison, support for the Christian Right was analyzed following the "80 degree approach" and the "adjusted approach". Both approaches produced practically the same number of supporters, 15.2% and 15.3%, respectively. The social characteristics, religious characteristics, and issue positions of supporters also appeared to be substantially the same regardless of the approach followed (usually varying only 1-2%). These findings support the notion that it is not necessary to follow the "adjusted approach". Therefore, the analysis of Christian Right supporters found within this chapter follows the "80 degree approach" because of its easy application.

Support for the Christian Right

An estimate of support for the Christian Right in 1996 using 80 degrees as the cutoff is presented below in Table 1:1. Following the 80 degree approach, 15.2% of 1996

Support for the Christian Right

Table 1:1

Support	Percent	N
No	84.8	1152
Yes	15.2	207

NES respondents are classified as supporters of the Christian Right.

As noted above, Buell and Sigelman found a substantially lower estimate of Christian Right support in 1980. Why? Buell and Sigelman measured support for the Moral Majority. This estimate measures support for the Christian Coalition. The Moral Majority, founded by Jerry Falwell, was the leading organization of the Christian Right in the early years of the movement. The Christian Coalition, founded by Pat Robertson, is the leading organization of the Christian Right today.

The Christian Coalition receives a higher level of support from the general population then the Moral Majority for several possible reasons. The Moral Majority, which shutdown in 1988, was extremely sectarian (Wilcox 1992), nationally focused (Moen 1994), and an ineffective coalition partner (Bruce 1994). The Christian Coalition, on the other hand, has expanded the religious base of support for the Christian Right. The Christian Right now counts all types of Evangelical Protestants (Hertzke 1993) and even some Mainline Protestant and Catholic elites among its supporters (Wilcox, Rozell, and Gunn 1996). The Christian Coalition has also successfully shifted the focus of the Christian Right from national politics to local politics (though national politics are definitely not ignored) (Martin 1996). Finally, the Christian Right has become a more effective partner within the Republican Party. Supporters no longer focus solely on religious issues and even support political candidates who do not oppose abortion but do

support the secular political desires of the Christian Right such as tax cuts, welfare reform, etc. (Moen 1994).

Social Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters

Table 1:2 presents data about the social characteristics of Christian Right supporters and non-supporters[1]. It is evident from the table that Christian Right supporters are no more likely to be female than male, nor more likely to be younger than older. The table does indicate Christian Right supporters are generally white. However, the table also indicates approximately 30% of Christian Right supporters are African-American or members of some other smaller minority community. Though African-Americans and other minorities are usually left out of most analyses of the Christian Right it is clear the minority community may be a potential source of increased mobilization. However, the overwhelming support minorities give the Democratic Party and the Christian Right's attachment to the Republican Party are significant barriers that cast doubt on the ability of the Christian Right to make any inroads in the minority community (Smidt 1993).

Table 1:2 also indicates supporters of the Christian Right are more likely to be from the South than any other part of the country. Previous research has also shown support for the Christian Right is strong in the South (Smidt 1993; Buell and Sigelman 1985; and Simpson 1983). Support for the Christian Right is stronger in the South than any other part of the country because religion is especially important to Southerners. Data from the 1996 NES (not shown) indicate individuals in the South are more likely

Social Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters

Table 1:2

Social Characteristic	Non-Supporter	Supporter
% Female	52.8	58.2
% Below 35	24.2	26.6
% White	88.8	71.2
% Southern	35.1	54.1
% > 12 yr. Education	60.9	44.5
% Family Income < $25K	32.3	45.5

than individuals in the Non-South to feel religion is important and to receive guidance from religion. The support the Christian Right receives from the South is important because of the number of electoral votes in the south. In fact, John Green (1995) listed the support given the Christian Right in the South as one of the main strengths of the movement.

Finally, Table 1:2 indicates supporters of the Christian Right a more likely than non-supporters to earn less than $25,000 a year. To a certain extent, the income differences between supporters and non-supporters appear to be a function of education. More non-supporters than supporters of the Christian Right have completed 12 years of education. Previous research has shown similar gaps between the income and education levels of supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right (Wilcox 1989). The educational level of Christian Right supporters may have an impact on the analysis of issue voting within the Christian Right presented in chapter 4. Research has shown individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to vote and are better prepared

to use issues as a basis for voting.

Religious Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters

The data presented in Table 1:3 indicates that the differences between the religious characteristics and beliefs of supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right are greater than any of the social characteristic gaps discussed above. The data in Table 1:3 indicate that supporters of the Christian Right are more likely to be Evangelical Protestants, believe the Bible is the actual word of God, have had a born-again experience, attend church weekly, and receive a great deal of guidance from religion.

The connection between Evangelical Protestantism and the Christian Right is not surprising because the goal of the Christian Right is "to get Evangelical Protestants to participate in politics, to bring them into the Republican coalition, and to elect social conservatives to public office" (Wald 1997: 252). The lack of support given the Christian Right by the rest of Christianity, however, is somewhat surprising. Among all Christian Right supporters only 17% are Mainline Protestants and only 14.1% of are Catholics. Some leaders of the Christian Right have claimed to speak for a broad constituency of religious conservatives that includes Evangelical Protestants, Mainline Protestants, and Catholics (Reed 1996). Though some Mainline Protestant and Catholic elites do support the Christian Right (Guth and Green 1986 and 1990), it is clear from Table 1:3 that the Christian Right does not receive a lot of support from Mainline Protestant and Catholic masses.

Given almost two-thirds of Christian Right supporters are Evangelical Protestants,

Religious Characteristics of Christian Right Supporters

Table 1:3

Religious Characteristic	Non-Supporter	Supporter
Mainline Protestant	32.5	17.0
Evangelical Protestant	23.5	64.1
Catholic	26.8	14.1
Jewish	2.1	0.5
Other and None	15.1	4.4
Born-Again	32.3	75.6
Bible is the Actual Word of God	28.4	73.4
Attend Church Every Week	32.5	55.5
Religion Provides a Great Deal of Guidance	42.1	71.1

it is not surprising that Table 1:3 shows a significant religious gap between supporters and non-supporters. According to the table, supporters of the Christian Right are substantially more likely to have had a born-again experience and to believe the Bible is the actual word of God. The religious gap between supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right is very important. Research has shown doctrinal beliefs (Kellstedt and Smidt 1993) and religious experiences (Jelen, Smidt, and Wilcox 1993) are significant predictors of issue stances, party identification, and vote choice, especially among Evangelical Protestants.

Another important difference between supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right is evident in Table 1:3. Religion provides a great deal of guidance in the day-to-day living of 71.1% of Christian Right supporters. Religion only provides a great deal of guidance in the day-to-day living of 42.1% of Christian Right non-supporters. Research indicates the amount of guidance an individual receives from religion, often

called religious salience, has important political consequences. Though religious salience has not been studied as often as biblical literalism or born-again experience, Guth and Green (1993) have shown the political behavior of individuals for whom religion is salient tends to "resemble" the political behavior of individuals who belong to the same religious group. Other research indicates individuals who receive a great deal of day-to-day guidance from their religion are more likely to perceive a strong connection between religion and politics than those who do not receive a great deal of day-to-day guidance from their religion (Guth, Green, Kellstedt, Smidt 1996).

With respect to church attendance a majority of supporters of the Christian Right attend church weekly while only one-third of non-supporters attend church weekly (see Table 1:3). Church attendance is an important concept because higher levels of church attendance exert a positive influence on political participation (Clark 1998). Scholars believe that church attendance and other forms of social connectedness "provide a substantial proportion of an individual's motivation to vote" (Teixeira 1992: 36). Church attendance may also play a role in developing a "sense of an election's meaningfulness" (Teixeira 1992: 36). Cues given by clergy who discuss politics in the pulpit have been shown to influence the political behavior and attitudes of individuals (Leege, Kellstedt, and Wald 1990).

Issues and Support for the Christian Right

Most scholars believe the political behavior of supporters of the Christian Right is based on conservative attitudes toward social/moral issues. Table 1:4 presents the

percentage of supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right that selected the conservative response to four issue items: abortion, homosexuals in the army, prayer in school, and women's rights. Each of the issue items examined in Table 1:4 are good examples of social/moral issues that have been on the political agenda. The responses presented in Table 1:4, however, do not fully support the argument that the political behavior of the supporters of the Christian Right is issue based.

The leaders of the Christian Right have claimed to speak for politically conservative religious individuals, but according to Table 1:4 a majority of Christian Right supporters preferred the conservative position only on the issue of abortion. Less than a majority of Christian Right supporters selected the conservative position on the rest of the issues: homosexuals in the army, prayer in school, and women's rights. While the incongruity between the attitudes of the supporters of the Christian Right and the leadership of the Christian Right may be surprising, it is not surprising that the data in Table 1:4 shows Christian Right supporters are more conservative on moral issues than non-supporters. What is surprising, however, is that less Christian Right supporters felt the term moral did not describe Clinton well than non-supporters.

Character, especially the character of the Democratic presidential candidate, has been an important issue in most recent presidential elections. The leaders of the Christian Right, the Republican Party, and the news media have all questioned the character of the incumbent President Bill Clinton. The leaders of the Christian Right have probably underscored the importance of character more than any other group. It appears, however, that Christian Right supporteres are more likely to give Bill Clinton a pass on character issues than non-supporters. The best possible explanation for this phenomenon is race.

Issues and Christian Right Supporters

Table 1:4

Issues	Non-Supporter	Supporter
Limit Access to Abortion	36.5	68.8
No Homosexuals in the Army	28.1	47.5
Prayer in School	27.8	42.4
Woman's Place is in the Home	8.8	21.2
Clinton Immoral	64.1	53.2

Non-white Christian Right supporters (23.2%) are less likely than white Christian Right supporters (64.8%) to state that the term moral does not describe Clinton well.

A Model of Support for the Christian Right

We have seen that supporters of the Christian Right are more likely to be non-whites, southerners, the less educated, individuals from families who earn less than $25,000 a year, Evangelical Protestants, biblical literalists, the born-again, the highly religious, and pro-lifers. Previous research, as reported, has found similar sources of support for the Christian Right. To further test these findings a logistic regression model[2] of support for the Christian Right is estimated.

The logistic model of Christian Right support is presented in Table 1:5. The dependent variable Christian Right support is coded "1" for supporter and "0" for non-supporter. Supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right were determined using

Logistic Model of Christian Right Support

Table 1:5

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Probability	Odds Ratio
Age	-.02	.01	5.96	.01*	.98
Gender	.25	.23	1.24	.27	1.29
White	-.44	.29	2.22	.14	.64
South	.08	.22	.13	.72	1.08
Education	-.06	.08	.54	.46	.94
Family Income	-.04	.05	.47	.49	.96
Evangelical	1.23	.24	27.44	.00*	3.43
Church Attend	.07	.11	.40	.53	1.07
Relig Guidance	.61	.19	9.96	.00*	1.84
Party-Id	.11	.07	2.60	.11	1.11
Abortion	.32	.12	7.16	.01*	1.38
Gays in Army	.09	.06	2.15	.14	1.09
School Prayer	.42	.14	8.85	.00*	1.52
Women's Role	-.03	.06	.25	.61	.99
Clinton Moral	-.34	.15	4.89	.03*	.71
Constant	-4.03	.93	18.56	.00*	-

* statistically significant at the .05 level or lower

-2 Log Likelihood = 559.49 p = .00
Model Chi-Square = 138.11 p = .00
Tau-p = .43 p = .00
Correctly Predicted = 82.15%

the "80 degree approach" discussed earlier. The demographic variables included in the model were age, gender, race, region, education, and family income. The religious variables included in the model were Evangelical Protestant, church attendance, and religious guidance. The biblical literalism and born-again variables were not included in the model because they are used in the construction of the variable Evangelical Protestant (see Chapter 2). Respondent's positions on abortion, homosexuals in the army, school prayer, women's rights, and Clinton's morality were included in the model. The only other variable included in the model was party identification.

Overall, the logistic model of Christian Right support performs well. The model

is statistically significant (log likelihood and model chi-square probability of less than .00) and reduced almost half the error of prediction (tau-p = .43)[3]. The only significant predictors of support for the Christian Right were Evangelical Protestant, religious guidance, school prayer, abortion, age, and Clinton's morality. The coefficients for all the other variables were not statistically significant.

In 1996, younger individuals were significantly more likely to support the Christian Right than older individuals[4]. Age has been shown to have significant effects on the political behavior. "Young people may be more open to efforts by religious elites to encourage political action on the basis of religious identities and beliefs" than older people (Guth, Green, Kellstedt, and Smidt 1996: 304). However, research on this topic is mixed. Several authors have found youth is positively related to support for the Christian Right (Buell and Sigelman 1985; and Wilcox, DeBell, and Sigelman 1999). Others have found youth is negatively related to religiously based political behavior (Guth, Green, Kellstedt, and Smidt 1996). The current analysis supports the view that youth is positively related to support for the Christian Right.

The importance of the religious differences between supporters and non-supporters of the Christian Right was underscored earlier. The results of the logistic model further support that discussion. Evangelical Protestants and individuals that are highly religious were the most likely to be supporters of the Christian Right. In fact, Evangelical Protestants were almost three and one-half times more likely than Non-Evangelical Protestants to support the Christian Right. Furthermore, the highly religious or those who receive a great deal of day-to-day guidance from religion were almost two times more likely to support the Christian Right than those who are not highly religious.

Church attendance, however, is not a significant predictor of Christian Right support, which may indicate churches are not as great a source of political mobilization as previously thought or that the effects of church attendance are accounted for by other variables related to church attendance.

The logistic model presented in Table 1:5 supports the proposition that support for the Christian Right is issue-based. Three out of five of the social/moral issue items included in the model were significant. The strongest predictors among the issue items were school prayer, abortion, and Clinton's morality, respectively. Furthermore, all but one of the issues impacted support for the Christian Right in the expected manner. Those who favored scheduling a time for a Christian prayer in school were one and half times more likely to support the Christian Right than those who did not. Those who favored the most restrictive abortion position (never) were 1.3 times more likely to support the Christian Right than those who held less conservative views on the issue. Interestingly, individuals who felt the term moral did not describe Clinton very well were less likely to support the Christian Right than individuals who felt the term moral did describe Clinton well.

A strong pro-life stance and support for school prayer have often been associated with support for the Christian Right. The Christian Right has also been associated with stances against homosexuality and support for traditional gender roles. It does not appear, however, that the issue of homosexuals serving in the army and women's rights significantly impacted support for the Christian Right. In the past, researchers have found that support for the Christian Right is related to a negative view of women's rights. Most of those findings, however, were tested using the Moral Majority feeling

thermometer to determine levels of support. Support for the Moral Majority was heavily drawn from fundamentalist Christians who are more likely than any other group to possess a negative view of women's rights (Wilcox 1987).

The Moral Minority

The findings in this chapter lead to the following general conclusion: the Christian Right is definitely not the moral majority. Only 15% of Americans supported the Christian Right in 1996. However, size is relative. Even though the Christian Right does not constitute a majority, it still is a politically significant group. Every Republican presidential candidate in 1996 embraced the Christian Right by speaking at the Christian Coalition's annual conference. The Christian Right also heavily influenced the Republican Party platform in 1996. In fact, after the Republican Convention Jerry Falwell made the following statement, "I'm happy, I can't think of a single thing I felt we needed that I didn't get. I'm happy with the platform and I'm happy with the candidates" (cited in Hopson and Smith 1999: 5)

The findings in this chapter also lead to another conclusion: Evangelical Protestants and those who are highly religious are the constituency of the Christian Right. The connection between Evangelical Protestantism and the Christian Right has been detailed in the literature. Smidt (1993) has shown that the percentage of supporters of the Christian Right who are Evangelicals Protestants has increased over the past decade, while the percentage of support from Non-Evangelical Protestants has decreased. Specifically, only about 25% of supporters of the Christian Right were Evangelical

Protestants in 1980, but by 1988 50% of supporters of the Christian Right were Evangelical Protestants. According to the analysis in this chapter, 64% of Christian Right supporters were Evangelical Protestants in 1996. The increase in Evangelical Protestant support for the Christian Right suggests that it has taken the Christian Right nearly two decades to reach the point where it can truly say it represents the Evangelical Protestant community. It also suggests the Christian Right has lost the support of Non-Evangelicals.

Though the leaders of the Christian Right have dreamed and often claimed to represent the views of a broad constituency of religious conservatives including Evangelical Protestants, conservative Mainline Protestants, traditionalist Catholics, and Orthodox Jews, evidence suggests the Christian Right's influence is not that broad. The political impact of such an alliance would be enormous. There is some evidence just such an alliance exists among Republican Party activists (Rozell, Wilcox, and Green 1998). To expand the influence of the Christian Right well beyond Evangelical Protestantism the leaders of the Christian Right will have to appeal to the highly religious from all traditions. Research suggests the highly religious are ripe for just such a mobilization. Highly religious Mainline Protestants, Catholics, and Jews have all been shown to hold views similar to Evangelical Protestants on social/moral issues (Kellstedt, Green, Guth and Smidt 1994 and 1996).

It does not appear likely, however, that the Christian Right will expand its base in the near future. Many changes have occurred within the leadership of the Christian Right since 1996; the most important of which is a change in attitude brought on by the Christian Right's inability to drive President Bill Clinton from office. In the past, the

leaders of the Christian Right assumed that a majority of Americans agreed with their point of view. Today, the leaders of the Christian Right no longer believe there is a moral majority in this country (Weyrich 1999). Some leaders of the Christian Right are even advocating that religious conservatives separate themselves from the political world (Weyrich 1999). Whether or not this crisis of confidence within the Christian Right will result in a change in support is debatable. It is also a subject for further research.

Endnotes

1. The exact coding of the variables used in this analysis is presented in the Appendix.

2. Logistic regression is useful in situations in which you want to predict the presence or absence of a characteristic or outcome based on values of a set of predictor variables. It is similar to a linear regression model but is suited to models where the dependent variable is dichotomous. Logistic regression coefficients can be used to estimate odds ratios for each independent variable in the model. The odds ratio indicate the relative probability of falling into one of the two categories of the dependent variable.

3. Tau-p is a basic measure of predictive efficiency for logistic regression models. A value of 1 for tau-p indicates that all the cases in the model are correctly classified, and a negative value for tau-p indicates that the model does worse than expected in predicting the classification of cases.

4. The age variable in the logistic regression model is coded using the specific age of the respondent (i.e. 23, 36, 57, 85, 45, 18) not an age grouping (i.e. 18 – 24, 25 – 34, 35 – 44, etc.). Therefore, the odds ratio (.98) indicates a one year increase in age decreases the odds of being a Christian Right supporter by .02%. More importantly, the odds ratio indicates the odds of being a Christian Right supporter decreases 94% from the age 18 to the age 65.

Chapter 2

The Validity of Born-Again and Biblical Authority Questions Used in the Study of the Christian Right

"Measurement error is sin"

Lyman Kellstedt

"Measurement error is predestined and is only overcome by the grace of God"

Corwin Smidt

"A stereotype is truth with measurement error"

Jim Guth

"What's a little measurement error among friends"

John Green

Developing a Good Measure

In the past, political scientists who study religion and politics complained other political scientists ignored the connection between religion and politics. Those complaints are no longer justified. Contemporary political science research is increasingly devoted to religion and politics. Every year, more and more political scientists are conducting secondary analysis using the religious items available in the National Election Survey (NES). In fact, thanks to the efforts of social scientists like Lyman A. Kellstedt, Wade Clark Roof, Kenneth D. Wald, and David C. Leege (members of the NES Working Group on Religious Measures) a variety of new religious measures are available in the NES. Political scientists no longer have to rely on the traditional measures of denomination and church attendance to study the effect of religion on political behavior. More abstract measures of religious concepts are now available.

Despite this progress, researchers who attempt to measure religious phenomena face several challenges. First of all, measuring religious phenomena is a daunting task. Classification schemes like "Democrat", "Independent", and "Republican" are quite simple compared to the variety of sizes, creeds, and experiences found with religious phenomena. For example, questions concerning being born-again and the interpretation of the Bible are clearly difficult issues if one considers doctrinal, theological, and personal differences.

James D. Hunter (1981) argued in the early 1980's that a major problem facing the research on the Christian Right was the lack of valid operational definitions capable of reliably identifying the members of this politically and doctrinally conservative Christian subculture. Others have agreed with Hunter. Kellstedt (1989) stated bluntly, "evangelicalism has been neither adequately conceptualized nor measured." And Corwin Smidt suggested three general problems face those who wish to engage in the analysis of the interplay between religion and politics. First, "little structure to guide current research" exists. Second, there is "a general lack of intimate knowledge about the phenomenon under investigation." And lastly, "few and relatively crude measurement items" are available to work with (1989: 24).

The development of good measures is quite important in the social sciences. Careful attention must be given to the nature of the phenomenon being tapped, because "as is well known, what a measure seemingly taps and what it actually taps may be two different things" (Smidt 1989: 24). Thus, researchers must always be sensitive to what their operational measures actually tap. Or in other words, researchers must be aware of the validity of their measures.

To answer the question central to this thesis a valid method for measuring evangelicals must be identified. Therefore, in this chapter attention will be paid to the complexity of survey questions used to identify the base of the Christian Right, namely born-again questions and Biblical authority questions. Special attention will be paid to the validity of these measures. The validity of the measures in question will be analyzed by subjecting them to a construct validity test using 1988 and 1996 NES data.

Measurement Quality

Measurement in the social sciences is "important because it provides a bridge between our proposed explanations and the empirical world they are suppose to explain" (Johnson and Joslyn 1995: 73). "Measurement is the process of linking abstract concepts to empirical indicants...involving an explicit plan for classifying (and often quantifying) the particular sense data at hand –the indicants- in terms of the general concept in the researchers mind" (Carmines and Zeller 1979: 11). In other words, measurement or operationalization is a step in the research process that links our theories with real world empirical observations (Nachmias and Nachmias 1992).

Measurement focuses on the relation between "empirically grounded indicators" and the "underlying unobservable concepts" in question. When the relationship between these indicators is strong, useful inferences can be made from the empirical indicators of the underlying concepts (Carmines and Zeller 1979). Through the evaluation of empirical indicants, political scientists can make judgments about the theories underlying their studies and advance the understanding of the political world. When the relationship

between indicant and concept is weak, the analysis of the indicators produces faulty inferences and conclusions about the underlying concepts (Carmines and Zeller 1979). Research of this kind does not advance the understanding of the phenomena under consideration.

To determine whether or not an empirical indicator depicts the concept in question one must assess whether or not an indicator possesses the qualities of reliability and validity. A measure is considered reliable if it is applied repeatedly to the same concept and yield the same results each time (Babbie 1990). A measure is considered valid if it "adequately reflects the real meaning of the concept under consideration" (Babbie 1992: 132). Again this chapter is mainly concerned with validity, though reliability is important.

"Validity concerns the crucial relationship between concept and indicator" (Carmines and Zeller 1979: 12). One assesses the theoretical claims being made when one assesses the validity, or rather the use to which a measure is being put. Earl Babbie (1990: 135) writes, "In a very real sense...you can never make accurate measures only useful ones." Useful in what way? Useful for evaluating the concept in question. There are three different methods for assessing the validity of a measure: Criterion-related validity, content validity, and construct validity (Babbie 1990 and 1992; Carmines and Zeller 1979; Johnson and Joslyn 1995; Nachmias and Nachmias 1992). Construct validity is useful in assessing many of the measures employed in political science, whereas the other forms of validity are limited in their usefulness (Carmines and Zeller 1979).

"Construct validity must be investigated whenever no criterion or universe of content is accepted as entirely adequate to define the quality to be measured" (Carmines and Zeller 1979: 12). Construct validity is primarily concerned with the extent to which a measure correlated with other measures logically derived from the hypothesis concerning the concepts in question (Carmines and Zeller 1979).

Construct validation involves three steps (Johnson and Joslyn 1995). First, the researcher specifies the relationship between the concept in question and a theoretically related concept. Second, "the researcher then develops a measure for each of the concepts and examines the relationship between them" (Johnson and Joslyn 1995: 85). Third, the evidence produced must be interpreted. If the relationship fails three possibilities exist: 1) the measurement instrument does not measure the original concept; 2) the specified relationship between the two concepts is flawed; and 3) the design of the research failed to test the specified relationships between the two concepts (Nachmias and Nachmias 1992). However, if the anticipated relationship is found, the instrument is considered valid. This particular method of measuring validity is used below to examine the use of born-again and Biblical authority measures in the study of the Christian Right.

Measuring Support of the Christian Right

Measures of support for the Christian Right has produced varied results. Some argue that the Christian Right entered the political realm in 1976 strongly supporting Jimmy Carter for the presidency (Wuthnow 1983) and overwhelming shifted their support to Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1984 (Smidt 1987). Others argued only a minority

of the Christian Right supported Ronald Reagan (Buell and Sigelman 1985; Wilcox 1987). Still others argue that the Christian Right strongly supports a socially conservative platform (Kellstedt 1988; Simpson 1983). And again others like Sigelman and Presser (1988) disagree, "deriving a much different" and significantly lower level of support. As one can see, a cursory look at seven different scholarly efforts in this area produced different results. Why?

Varying results, according to Jelen, come from "a lack of clarity about the ultimate dependent variable" (1991: 4). Furthermore he writes, "I remain convinced that our conceptualizations of variables, and the attendant operationalization choices, would seem much less intractable if we were clearer about the macro-level political phenomena we hope to explain." In light of this, I would like to suggest a definition for the Christian Right. The Christian Right is a "movement that seeks to restore traditional values in public policy by means of mobilizing evangelical Protestants" (Green 1995: 2).

In order to study this movement, we must be able to identify evangelicals. A valid measuring instrument must be developed. According to Smidt (1989) and Kellstedt (1989), various "conceptual approaches" to identify evangelicals exist. One approach emphasizes the religious belief systems that are associated with evangelicalism; which seeks to assess adherence to evangelical beliefs (whether one is more or less evangelical). A second approach is to view evangelicals as a group within society versus individuals who may be more or less evangelical than others. This second approach can be employed several different ways. One can categorize evangelicals according to stipulated characteristics. Alternatively, evangelicals can be viewed as members of socially

cohesive group either identifying with a particular movement (i.e.. Christian Right or Moral Majority) or a religious group such as a denomination (Smidt 1989).

Given the nature of research today, and the fact that one is generally working with secondary data, choice of approach is limited and may be dictated by the availability of particular measures in a given survey or surveys. More often than not, political science researchers will define an evangelical as those Protestants who emphasize that conversion or salvation by Jesus Christ is the first step in the Christian life and who regard the Bible to be the basis of religious belief. Kellstedt (1989) suggests that measurement items connected to this definition are inadequate, he would suggest the inclusion of measurement items tapping church attendance and belief in the divinity of Christ. However, it can be argued that these additional beliefs are not needed and can be extrapolated from the original definition given (Smidt 1989). Would not an individual confessing salvation believe in the divinity of Christ?

Two major measures have been employed for identifying evangelicals. The first, a question related to being born-again; and the second, a question related to views of Biblical authority. Below we will examine the validity of these measures by reviewing the debate about their adequacy and examining their relationship with a variable routinely considered to be directly related to being born-again and believing in the Bible as the basis of authority: sociopolitical conservatism.

Born-Again

The issue of born-again status has figured prominently in the analysis of politics and the impact of the Christian Right (Gallup 1979; Hunter 1982; Lipset and Raab 1981; Leibman 1983; Shupe and Stacey 1983; Buell and Sigelman 1985; Wilcox 1987; Jelen 1990). Born-again status is purported to correlate with certain political attitudes found among members of the Christian Right, primarily with social and political conservatism. The items used to elicit born-again responses in the NES have varied between 1980 and 1996. For example, the following questions have been used in the NES between 1980 and 1996:

<u>1980-1984</u>

"Some people have had a deep religious experience which has transformed their lives. I'm thinking of experiences sometimes described as 'being born-again in one's life.' There are deeply religious people who have not had an experience of this sort. How about you; have you had such an experience?"

- "Yes"
- "No"

<u>1988</u>

"Do you consider yourself a born-again Christian?"

- "Yes"
- "No"

1992-1996

"Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?"

- "Yes"
- "No"

The debate surrounding the differences in these questions center on the criticism: that the NES questions do not adequately tap the diversity of religious experience found in evangelical circles (Kellstedt 1989).

Hunter (1982) argues identifying evangelicals according to any of the NES questions, through self-identification as either born-again (1988 question) or as one who has had a born-again experience (as in 1980-1984 and 1992-1996 questions respectively) prejudices the sample in favor of those who are conversionalists in their view of salvation. In agreement, Kellstedt (1989: 9) asks, "is it appropriate to exclude from the evangelical camp any person who denies having has a born-again experience? Or a believer who cannot recall a specific turning point?" Essentially, the issue is how one becomes born-again, through an instantaneous experience like that of Saul/Paul on the road to Damascus, or through a more gradual process, like that employed by more orthodox traditions with rigorous confirmation training. Many scholars have argued that the distinctions listed above are essential to identifying the Christian Right, and have suggested that measurement techniques which tap the diversity of born-again views and experience (i.e. gradual versus sudden) must be employed to adequately study evangelicals.

Yet, we must remember, as noted above, that the availability of religious measures in the secondary data available for analysis is limited. So what then do we make of this critique? First, we do not take it lightly. Second, we consider the critique in light of the available information and its relationship with the purpose of this thesis. If studying evangelicals as the defined members of the Christian Right is essential to furthering our understanding of the political world, we must look at what we know. Again the issue of born-again status is heavily related to the political implications and the impact of the Christian Right. It is generally conceded that evangelicals are more politically conservative than other Americans are in their social issue stances (Wilcox 1990). Therefore, we can consider the impact of born-again status as a predictor of sociopolitical conservatism.

Dixon, Lowery, and Jones (1992) examined the distinction between those who were born-again suddenly and those who had a more gradual experience. Dixon et al. asked self identified "Protestants" a two item sequence of born-again questions, a frequency of church service attendance question, and numerous other questions shown by previous research to tap differences in doctrinal beliefs between the Christian Right and Mainline Protestants. The born-again questions consisted of a question quite similar to the born-again question employed in the NES followed by two questions designed to elicit different responses from those gradually and suddenly born-again:

Typical Born-Again Question:

"Would you say you have been born-again or have had a born-again experience, that is a turning point in your life when you committed yourself to Christ?"

- "Yes"
- "No"

Follow-up Question

"If yes, would you say that this born-again experience or turning point that you had is better described:

- as a single, very sudden, powerful, and emotional event that happened to you, or
- as a more gradual process, occurring over a period of time, that you thought about a lot?"

As a result of these sequence of questions, a single measure of born-again status was developed that yielded the following results: "Not Born-Again" 46%, "Born-Again Gradually" 35%, and "Born-Again Suddenly" 14%, "No Response" 5%.

Dixon et al. (1992) also asked respondents to describe themselves politically on a scale ranging from "very liberal" to "very conservative", and according to their responses the categories of "liberal, "middle of the road", and "conservative" were created. These responses were then compared to a set of 24 social, economic, and political opinion statements. Responses which revealed "significant differences" ($p<.05$) among those who identified themselves as politically liberal, middle of the road, and conservative were used to create a 12 item "Conservatism Index." Scores on the conservatism index were then distributed across the born-again status categories.

The Dixon et al. (1992) analysis indicated that the relationship between born-again status and sociopolitical conservatism is significant. More importantly, their

analysis showed that whether or not one is born-again, versus how one is born-again is important. For example, Dixon et al. (1992) found the conservatism mean for those born-again gradually (48.6%) was very similar to the mean for those born-again suddenly (50.8%). Whereas, the conservatism mean for those not born-again was 33.3%, and the conservatism mean for all who were born-again was 49.2%.

The conservatism index developed by Dixon et al. (1992) produced similar findings. The conservative responses for the index items were very similar for those born-again gradually and those born-again suddenly. In fact, Dixon et al. claim that only one opinion item showed any significant differences between those born-again gradually and those born-again suddenly. When asked if "any American women should have the right to a legal abortion in the case of rape, incest, serious defects in the baby, or danger to the mother's health" those who were born-again gradually gave significantly more liberal responses than those who were born-again suddenly. These results cast doubt on whether measurement items designed to elicit differences in how one is born-again is useful for survey research (Dixon et al. 1992).

Regrettably, the distinction between those gradually and suddenly born-again has never been made by the NES. However, differences in the NES born-again questions do exist. The 1988 born-again question elicits identification. The born-again question used in the other years elicits a response about a conversion experience. "The conceptual difference between the two items is substantial" (Jelen, Smidt, Wilcox 1993: 203). Being born-again may reflect the expectations of some larger group rather than a conversion experience of some kind. Lyman A. Kellstedt (1990) has shown the born-again identification of a southerner, whose born-again status is more common, is not as strong a

predictor of political conservatism as the born-again identification of a northerner, whose born-again status is much less common.

Given the conceptual difference between these two measures we might expect some empirical differences. However, Table 2:1 indicates there is no significant difference between the born-again measure used in 1988 and the born-again measures used in other years. Regardless of the measure employed born-again status is a significant predictor of conservative opinions on social issues such as abortion, women's roles in society, and prayer in school.

The results of Dixon et al.'s study and the results from Table 2:1 reveal several important points. First, the relationship between born-again status and social issue conservatism is not dependent upon the type of conversion experience. Second, whether operationalized as a conversion experience or an identification born-again status is a significant predictor of social issue conservatism. Finally, it appears either measure may be used to identify the Christian Right.

Interpreting Scripture

The second measure used to identify members of the Christian Right in survey research involves an item that elicits views about the authority of the Bible. Considerable differences occur in the use of Biblical authority measures. However, the emphasis placed on the Bible by the Christian Right is helpful for distinguishing the Christian Right from other Christians (Smidt 1989). Yet, there is little agreement on the Christian Right's position on Biblical authority (Kellstedt 1989). Should an individual that

Mean Score of Political Variables by Alternative Versions of the NES Born-Again Item

Table 2:1

Born-Again Item		Abortion	Women's Role	Prayer in School
1988				
Yes	Mean	2.65*	3.18*	2.51*
	(N)	(544)	(529)	(328)
No	Mean	2.05	2.36	2.29
	(N)	(881)	(847)	(766)
All	Mean	2.2	2.68	2.37
	(N)	(1425)	(1376)	(1240)
1996				
Yes	Mean	2.59*	2.74*	2.44*
	(N)	(429)	(422)	(394)
No	Mean	1.95	2.11	2.25
	(N)	(753)	(745)	(679)
All	Mean	2.18	2.34	2.32
	(N)	(1182)	(1167)	(1073)

* Mean score differences statistically significant at the .05 level or lower.

believes in a strict word for word interpretation of the Bible be considered Christian Right, and an individual that holds other Christian Right beliefs, but believes that the Bible is "only" the inspired word of God be excluded from a Christian Right classification?

Before assessing that question or considering the variety of Biblical interpretations in context with sociopolitical-conservatism a few definitions are in order. Evangelicals adhere to three different, but interrelated, views of Biblical authority: inspired, inerrant, and literal. These views of the Bible can be represented according to rigor and religious conservatism on a spectrum running from left to right.

Inspired----------Inerrant----------Literal

With increasing credence being given to literal views of the Scripture as individual beliefs fall further to the right.

The inspired view of the Bible (sometimes called infallibility) is the least stringent position of interpretation and would lie on the left of our spectrum of Biblical interpretation. "Those who subscribe to an infallible view of Scripture believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and that it is true in all that it teaches. As such, it is the Word of God to mankind-but it is not literally the words of God" (Smidt 1989: 32). Those who subscribe to the inspired viewpoint would argue that the creation account in Genesis 1 "is written in poetic form, may reveal truths about creation, but such accounts are not to be understood as a general scientific statement" concerning creation (Smidt 1989: 33).

The inerrant position is more rigorous than the inspired position. "The inerrancy position posits that the Bible is, at least in terms of original documents, totally without error in all its statements whether they relate to religious faith, historical event, or natural occurrences" (Smidt 1989). Many inerrantists would insist that the account of creation in Genesis 1 may be reconciled with most scientific accounts of the origins of the universe, but would concede that the account is "poetic" or metaphoric (Smidt 1989).

Biblical literalism, the most stringent position on the scriptural interpretation spectrum, suggests that Scripture is to be taken "without qualification whatsoever" (Jelen 1989). While the inerrant position allows for metaphoric interpretation of the term "day" in the account of creation, the literalist position would adhere to a strict historical, six-day creation (Smidt 1989).

After reading the definition of an inspired, inerrant and literal view of Biblical interpretation, it is clear operationalizing these views will be difficult, especially considering the available data. The debate surrounding Biblical authority measures bring into question subtle differences, which may or may not be significant. Therefore, as with the born-again indicator, we shall consider views of Biblical authority with regards to sociopolitical conservatism.

Numerous authors have agreed that views on Biblical authority are related to social and political conservatism. In 1990, Dixon, Jones, and Lowery tested Nancy T. Ammermon's (1982) hypothesis that the literalness question sorts out fundamentalists from other evangelicals. Analysis of Ammermon's hypothesis revealed that it is not supported. However, evidence is offered that suggests various forms of Biblical authority questions do tap the same concept. A whole Bible interpretation and a creation story interpretation measure were created. The first response for each question was worded: "the Bible (or story of creation) was written by humans who recorded the actual word of God, and all that is says should be taken literally, word for word." Individuals who chose the first response for the Bible and creation story were classified as literalists; other responses were not analyzed. A conservatism index quite similar to the index employed in the analysis of born-again respondents was used to examine if significant relationships exist between literalists and sociopolitical-political conservatism. Dixon et al. found Biblical or creation literalism and sociopolitical conservatism were related significantly, at the $p<.001$ level for both forms of the question. Unfortunately, Dixon et al.'s analysis did not make use of the inerrant response nor the response indicating the Bible is not of divine origin to determine if a significant difference exists.

A recent attempt to test these differences, completed by Adrian S. Clark (1990) confirmed that the relationship between choosing the most stringent Biblical response category and conservatism is positive. Clark's data indicated that a majority of "Literlaists" versus "Non-Literalists" believed that abortion should be illegal in all circumstances or legal only in the case of incest and rape. Literalists, were also more conservative on the issue of homosexuality, with 80% of Literalists believing homosexuality should be illegal compared to 51% of Non-Literalists that supported homosexuality. Also, Literalists were much more likely to consider themselves conservative than Non-Literalists. But again, this analysis does not completely solve our problem.

Evidence has been offered that various forms of the Bible measures tapping the literalist point of view are related to sociopolitical conservatism (Dixon et al. 1990); and that literalists are significantly different from non-literalists (Clark 1996). But what of Jelen's assertion, that the distinction between inspired, inerrant, and literal survey responses are unimportant to survey research, because members of the Christian Right are likely to respond affirmatively to an answer that emphasizes the authority of the Bible, regardless of their view of the Bible?

Jelen et al. (1990) asked respondents a variety of questions about their religious and political attitudes. Of interest are the questions asked about scriptural authority. Below is the question used by Jelen et al. to tap literal, inerrant, and inspired views of the Bible:

"Here are four statements about the Bible, and I'd like you to tell me which is closest to your own views:"

- "The Bible is God's Word, and is meant to be taken literally, word for word."
- "The Bible is God's Word, and all it says is true, but not all of it is meant to be taken literally."
- "The Bible was written by men, inspired by God, but contains human errors."
- "The Bible is a good book because it was written by wise men, but God had nothing to do with it."

This measure is "unusual because it contains both a literal and inerrant response." Generally, surveys will include a response representing one or the other view.

Jelen et al.'s (1990) analysis compared respondents who held various Biblical authority positions across religious and political attitudes. The political variables included an index of social issue attitudes on women's rights, gay rights', abortion, and school prayer, an index measuring the subjective connection between religion and politics, a respondents affect toward the Moral Majority, and other political variables. The results indicate the Bible item behaves in a linear fashion with respect to the social issue index. Those that hold a literal point of view are more socially conservative, than those that hold an inerrant point of view, and those that hold an inerrant point of view are more socially conservative, than those that hold an inspired view of the Bible. More importantly though, the results of this analysis indicate that Jelen's (1989) assertion is valid, "those undertaking secondary analysis of survey data with one or the other of the

two common Bible questions may treat the most authoritative responses as largely interchangeable" (Jelen et al. 1990: 312).

Various questions have been used in the NES to measure views of the Bible, but none of the measures used by the NES have ever tapped all three forms of Biblical interpretation. The following questions have been used in the NES between 1980 and 1996:

1980-1988

"Here are four statements about the Bible, and I'd like you to tell me which is the closest to your own view."

- "The Bible is God's work and all it says is true."
- "The Bible was written by men who were inspired by God but it contains some human errors."
- "The Bible is a good book because it was written by wise men, but God had nothing to do with it."
- "The Bible was written so long ago that it is worth little today."

1992-1996

"Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feeling about the Bible?"

- "The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word, or
- "The Bible is the word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word, or
- "The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God."

Note the various forms of the questions employed. The question used between 1980 and 1988 elicits inerrant, inspired, and non-divine responses. The question used between 1992 and 1996 elicits literal, inspired, and non-divine responses. Whether the mass public can pick up the "nuances" concerning Biblical authority questions in the NES is still in question. Given the finding from above, we might expect that those who accept the authoritative nature of the Bible may respond affirmatively to any of the answers that emphasize the Bible is the word of God whether he or she holds a literal, inerrant, or inspired point of view.

Table 2:2 confirms Jelen's findings (1989). "Those undertaking secondary analysis of survey data with one or the other of the two common Bible questions may treat the most authoritative responses as largely interchangeable" (Jelen et al. 1990: 312). Both Biblical authority items are significant predictors of social issue conservatism. The opinions of those who hold a high view of the scripture whether literal/inspired or inerrant/inspired are significantly more conservative on issues such as abortion, women's roles in society, and prayer in school than those who hold a "low" view of the scripture. Therefore, we may conclude using literal, inerrant, and inspired responses to the Bible items in the NES are a valid method of identifying the Christian Right.

Born-Again and Bible Measures Combined

As stated earlier, various approaches to identify evangelicals exist. One approach is to categorize evangelicals according to stipulated characteristics such as born-again status and opinion of the authority of the Bible. It appears from the results above both the

Mean Score of Political Variables by Alternative Versions of the NES Bible Item

Table 2:2

Born-Again Item		Abortion	Women's Role	Prayer in School
1988				
Inerrant/Inspired	Mean	2.26*	2.63	2.37*
	(N)	(1297)	(1255)	(1285)
Non-orthodox	Mean	1.65	2.44	2.02
	(N)	(146)	(134)	(134)
All	Mean	2.20	2.65	2.33
	(N)	(1425)	(1389)	(1419)
1996				
Literal/Inspired	Mean	2.22*	2.37*	2.34*
	(N)	(1184)	(1158)	(1072)
Non-orthodox	Mean	1.40	1.66	1.83
	(N)	(233)	(235)	(212)
All	Mean	2.09	2.25	2.25
	(N)	(1417)	(1393)	(1294)

* Mean score differences statistically significant at the .05 level or lower.

NES born-again and Bible items are valid predictors of sociopolitical conservatism. However, some questions about using either of these two measures to identify evangelicals remain.

Many political scientists' charge using either the born-again or Bible items in the NES to identify evangelicals skew results because both items receive socially desirable responses (Jelen, Smidt, and Wilcox 1993). Many of those same political scientists believe the Bible item is especially skewed because a high number of individuals "who profess no religious preference" respond affirmatively to the most authoritative views of the Bible (Kellstedt and Smidt 1993: 194.)

The NES born-again and Bible items can be combined to form an evangelical measure to address these problems (see Table 2:3). While requiring individuals to fulfill both the born-again requirement and the Bible requirement is not the only answer to this

Mean Score of Political Variables by Christian Right Measure

Table 2:3

Born-Again Item		Abortion	Women's Role	Prayer in School
1988				
Yes	Mean	2.65*	3.18*	2.50*
	(N)	(457)	(448)	(457)
No	Mean	2.05	2.38	2.30
	(N)	(783)	(749)	(766)
All	Mean	2.27	2.68	2.38
	(N)	(1240)	(1197)	(1223)
1996				
Yes	Mean	2.59*	2.76*	2.44*
	(N)	(421)	(412)	(385)
No	Mean	1.95	2.11	2.25
	(N)	(759)	(753)	(686)
All	Mean	2.18	2.34	2.32
	(N)	(1180)	(1165)	(1071)

* Mean score differences statistically significant at the .05 level or higher.

problem it appears to be a satisfactory one. The number of evangelicals (approximately 30% of the population in 1988 and 1996) produced by this measure corresponds well to previous measures of the group (Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Kellstedt et al. 1994). Furthermore, the measure performs well according to the validity test results found in Table 2:3. Those who are born-again and believe in the authority of the Bible, no matter which NES measures is used, are significantly more conservative on social issues such as abortion, women's role in society, and prayer in school.

Conclusion

The development of valid measures to identify evangelicals is central to this thesis. Numerous approaches to identifying evangelicals have been employed, sparking

debate among scholars over the concepts actually tapped by the operational choices of researchers. At the heart of this debate is the question of validity. Validity concerns the relationship between concept and indicator, and whether or not the indicator adequately reflects the concept in question.

Generally, evangelicals are defined as those who emphasize that conversion or salvation through Jesus Christ is the first step in the Christian life and who regard the Bible as the basis of religious belief. This definition of an evangelical is a good definition, though often employed out of necessity; it can be operationalized using two measures: a born-again measure and a Biblical authority measure.

There is question whether or not these measures capture the variety and depth of evangelical beliefs; however, a review of the literature provides evidence of the validity of these measures with regard to the study of the Christian Right. Theoretically, being born-again and believing in the authority of the scriptures is correlated with conservative social and political views. Evidence is available that supports this correlation. Demonstrating the construct validity of the born-again and Bible measures.

This chapter does not claim to provide the definitive answer to the validity of the born-again and Biblical authority measures. It does, however, purport to provide a good review of a methodological controversy in the political science literature, a clear example of assessing the validity of a measure, and a good strategy for identifying the constituency of the Christian Right.

Chapter 3

Electoral Transformation: The Contribution of the Christian Right

"The term contribution used in this study simply counts what ultimately matters in elections; namely votes."

Robert Axelrod

The Social Determinism Model, Party Coalitions, and the Christian Right

The book *Voting* (1954) best represents the social determinism model of electoral behavior. The authors of the book, Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee "described voting as an act stemming from group influences" (Luttbeg and Gant, 1995: 12) such as socioeconomic status, religion, and place of residence. The social determinism model, while out of favor today, is useful for the study of the electoral influence of groups such as the Christian Right.

Political scientists have devoted increasing attention to the interaction of religion and politics since the rise of the Christian Right in the late 1970's. Once ignored by mainstream political scientists, religion is now viewed as an important force in American politics. However, few scholars have actually measured over time the *contribution* of Evangelical Protestants and other religious groups to the coalitions of the two major parties in America. Due to the changing nature of religious politics the time has come to determine if the religious aspects of the Republican and Democratic Party coalitions have changed since the rise of the Christian Right.

The coalitions of the Democratic and Republican Parties are normally associated with the New Deal Era party coalitions. The Democratic Party is traditionally viewed as a coalition of the poor, blacks, union members, Catholics, Jews, Evangelical Protestants, Southerns, and city dwellers. The Republican Party is traditionally viewed as a coalition of the non-poor, whites, non-union members, Mainline Protestants, Northerns, and those outside the central cities (Axelrod 1972; Abramson, Aldrich, and Rhode 1995). Party coalitions, however, are not static. They change in dramatic and subtle ways (Key 1955; Key 1959). The role religion plays in the changes, however, remains undetermined.

To analyze the role of the Christian Right in the American party coalition system over the past twenty years, the contributions of the major religious groups in America to the electoral coalitions of the two major parties will be measured. The contribution of the major religious groups in America to the major parties will be determined by following the method of analyzing party coalitions developed by Robert Axelrod (1972).

The Christian Right and the Republican Party

While the Christian Right is not the only example of a religious group active in contemporary politics, it may be the most recognizable. The Christian Right has received a lot of attention from journalists, especially those with a "penchant for horse race coverage" (Green, 1995: 5). The "horse race" mentality of journalists, however, has led to a deep misunderstanding of the Christian Right and its activities.

The Christian Right is a group, principally made-up of Evangelical Protestants, dedicated to restoring traditional values in public policy (Green, 1995). The rapid rise of the group surprised many scholars. In fact, "of all the shifts and surprises in contemporary political life, perhaps none was so wholly unexpected as the political resurgence of evangelical Protestantism in the 1970's" (Wald 1987: 182). The tale of the ascension of the Christian Right is well known. Essentially, the Christian Right "arose in response to a complex array of liberal and secular trends, ranging from the eradication of religion in the schools, to easy availability of abortion, to tax policies that adversely affected the traditional family" (Moen, 1994).

During the late 1970's and the early 1980's, the Christian Right tried to use the power of the federal government to constitutionally stem the tide of the liberal and secular forces that offended it's moral vision. However, the group was unsuccessful in enacting public policy favorable to it's beliefs (Fowler, 1993), for several reasons (Moen, 1994). One, the group was lead by political amateurs, who offended many leaders on Capitol Hill. Second, the group focused on issues such as gay rights using "moralistic language" like sin. Third, the fundamentalist leaders of the Christian Right were intolerant of other evangelicals, such as charismatics and pentecostals, which effectively limited the scope and size of the group (Green 1995; Wilcox, 1992).

Some journalists and scholars, while citing the Christian Right's failures, heralded the group's political demise. The leadership of the Christian Right, however, learned from its mistakes. After disbanding organizations like the Moral Majority in the mid-1980's the leaders of the Christian Right retooled. The mistakes of the late 1970's and early 1980's

were examined and more attractive political strategies were developed (Moen, 1994). Moreover, the Christian Right transformed itself in several important ways from a simple protest group to a partner in the Republican Party coalition.

First, the sophistication of the Christian Right's leaders increased (Green, 1995; Moen, 1996). They learned the art of compromise, one of the first principles of the political world, and as a result another important transformation occurred. The "moralistic language" of the 1970's and 1980's was dropped and in it's place the rhetoric of rights, equality, and opportunity were adopted (Moen, 1996). The new language of the Christian Right aided the groups' efforts "to frame issues to maximize support" and avoid the pitfalls of the early 1980's (Moen, 1994). Issues such as school prayer, gay rights, and abortion were recast in terms familiar to most observers of American politics such as freedom of religious expression, no special rights, and the rights of the unborn.

Second, the Christian Right transformed itself from a "religiously particular" group of fundamentalist Christians into a group that includes doctrinally conservative Christians from many backgrounds. Most importantly, the group was expanded to include charismatic and evangelical Christians. The presidential campaign of Pat Robertson is responsible for attracting charismatics and evangelicals into the group (Hertze, 1993; Moen, 1994; Moen, 1996). The successful expansion of the Christian Right into a group including fundamentalists, evangelicals, charismatics, and other conservative Christians resulted, of course, in a much larger group. The size of the Christian Right is its principal strength. White fundamentalist, charismatics, and evangelicals, the principal members of the Christian Right, make up about 25% of the national population. Even more

impressively, Evangelical Protestants are more numerous in the electoral vote rich states of the South and the Mid-West.

Finally, the Christian Right returned to the grassroots. By shifting the emphasis away from national politics toward state, local, and party politics, the Christian Right has been able to infiltrate the Republican Party, which helped the Christian Right in several ways. First, the party provided a crucial forum for assembling a broader coalition of conservatives. Second, the party offered the Christian Right more political opportunities within the party structure. Renewed emphasis on grassroots politics has been a successful strategy for the Christian Right. In fact, according to John F. Parsinos, the Christian Right controlled 18 Republican State parties and was an important component of 13 others in 1994 when the Republicans gained control of Congress for the first time in 40 years (1994).

From the early 1980's to the mid 1990's the Christian Right changed. The group's organizations and leaders adjusted "to the traditional practices of American politics" and became partners in the Republican Party coalition (Moen 1994). Moreover, the Christian Right's ascension to the status of party partner had important partisan implications. Specifically, the Christian Right has changed the party coalitions of both parties.

Coalition Partner or the Enemy Within

As a partner, the Christian Right poses serious challenges for the Republican Party. Whether rightly or wrongly, the Christian Right is often blamed for the electoral failures of

the Republican Party, such as the loss of the presidency in 1992 (Bruce 1994, Leege 1993). The Christian Right receives the blame for such losses for two reasons: the group's controversial views on social issues such as abortion and school prayer; and the counter-mobilization of group's opposed to the political activity of the Christian Right (Green 1995).

Organizationally, the Christian Right is no different than any other group. For example, the Christian Right is represented by organizations such as the Christian Coalition, Focus on the Family, and Concerned Women of America. Other groups such as women and blacks are represented by organizations like the National Organization for Women and the NAACP. Each of these organizations is important to the Republican and Democratic Party, respectively. However, the opinions expressed by the leaders of these groups cause both the Democratic and Republican Party serious problems. Within the Republican Party, the abortion issue is a serious source of conflict between moral conservatives and economic conservatives. Attempts to reach a compromise on the issue or debates about abortion's role in the party's agenda almost always end in public conflict, threats to bolt the party, or supporters staying home on election days.

Another challenge faced by the Republican Party, as a result of the Christian Right's status, is the counter mobilization of the group's opponents. The Christian Right has many powerful opponents among the religiously liberal and secular population. The primary organizations representing these groups are the People for the American Way, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Anti-Defamation League. The Christian Right also has opponents within the Republican Party. In fact, "polls taken during Pat

Robertson's campaign for Republican Party presidential nominee showed that his campaigning brought out more people who were against him than for him" (Bruce 1994: 238).

Vanguard of an Electoral Transformation

As stated earlier, party coalitions are not static. Given the role of religion in contemporary politics, the coalitions of the two major parties probably changed after the rise of the Christian Right in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Assuming the coalitions of the Democratic and Republican Parties reflected the New Deal party coalitions in 1976 we would expect to find the major religious groups in America within the following party coalitions (Kellstedt et al. 1994 and 1996; McCormick 1986):

- Democratic Coalition: Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Atheists, Agnostics, and other non-traditional religions.
- Republican Coalition: Mainline Protestants.

By 1996, we expect to find the following changes in the coalitions of the two major parties due to the rise of the Christian Right:

- Democratic Coalition: Catholics, Jews, Atheists, Agnostics, and other non-traditional religions.
- Republican Coalition: Evangelical Protestants and Mainline Protestants.

Measuring the Contribution of Religious Groups

Axelrod (1972) developed the following formula to determine the contribution of a group to a party's electoral total:

Contribution = (Size * Turnout * Loyalty) ÷ (National Turnout * National Loyalty)

Where: Size = The percentage of all adults of voting age who are members of that group.

Turnout = The percentage of a group that voted in a given election.

Loyalty = The percentage of the votes of a group that are cast for a particular party.

National Turnout = The percentage of all adults who voted.

National Loyalty = The percentage of all votes that are cast for a particular party

The "formula says that if you multiply the size, turnout, and loyalty of a given group, and divide the result by the product of the national turnout and national loyalty, you get the magnitude of the contribution of that group to the electoral coalition of the party (Axelrod 1972: 12)." Axelrod's formula is valuable because it allows us to analyze the contribution of Evangelical Protestants, the principal members of the Christian Right, to the two major party coalitions between 1976 and 1996 and to compare it to the contribution of other important religious groups.

National Election Survey (NES) data for the six presidential elections that occurred between 1980 and 1996 are used for the analysis. The data on national turnout and loyalty are also from the NES. While the NES tends to exaggerate voter turnout and loyalty toward the winning candidate it is the best available source of data. A potential problem with this analysis is that voter turnout and loyalty data for 1976 are from the 1980 NES questions that ask respondents about voting behavior in the 1976 election. The 1980 NES is used because respondents were not asked a born-again or biblical authority question in the 1976 NES. Though the reliability of information about the 1976 election may be questioned it is used to develop a baseline for Evangelical Protestant voting behavior and it is the best information available.

Major religious groups; such as Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, were identified by aggregating the denominational affiliation of each respondent as they are classified in the NES religious summary variable. The following groups were then identified: Mainline Protestants, Evangelical Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and Others and None. Mainline Protestants are those Protestants who did not meet the doctrinal requirements for Evangelical Protestants. Evangelical Protestants are Protestants who have been born-again and believe in the authority of the scriptures. Catholics and Jews were self-identified. Other and None are atheists, agnostics, and those from non-traditional religious groups.

The size of a group is the percentage of all adults of voting age who are members of the group. The turnout of a group is the percentage that voted in a given election. The loyalty of a group to a party is the percentage of the group's vote that is cast for the party.

Finally, national turnout is the percentage of all adults who voted, and national loyalty is the percentage of the votes given to the party (Axelrod 1972).

It is important to note that since any group or combination of groups may be analyzed some overlap may take place (Axelrod 1972). However, since the analysis here is restricted to religious groups we will not be concerned with overlap. It is also important to note that in 1980, 1992, and 1996 there were significant third-party candidates. The effect of third-party candidacies was tested using the two-party vote to determine contribution levels. The analysis using the two-party vote showed only minuscule changes in the coalition contributions of the groups in question. Therefore, the analysis presented in Table 3:1 is based on the total vote instead of the two-party vote.

The Religious Vote from 1976 - 1996

How did Evangelical Protestants and other religious groups vote between 1976 and 1996? The answer to that question can be found in the table on the following page. Table 3:1 shows the contribution of the major religious groups in America to the Democrat and Republican vote.

Mainline Protestants are Protestants who did not meet the doctrinal criteria for Evangelical Protestants. The contribution of Mainline Protestants (see Figure 3:1) to the Democratic Party vote ranged from 30 percent in 1996 to 39 percent in 1976. Overall, the contribution of Mainline Protestants to the Democratic Party decreased a steady 23 percent between 1976 and 1996.

Religious Groups and the Democratic and Republican Party Coalition: 1976 - 1996

Table 3:1

Religious Group	Size	Turnout	Republican Loyalty	Democratic Loyalty	U.S. Turnout	U.S. Republican Loyalty	U.S. Democratic Loyalty	Contribution Republican Coalition	Contribution Democratic Coalition
1976									
Mainline Protestant	44	81	52	48	82	46	53	49	39
Evan. Protestant	19	83	42	56	82	46	53	18	21
Catholic	23	86	43	56	82	46	53	23	26
Jewish	3	88	30	70	82	46	53	2	5
Other and none	10	78	37	58	82	46	53	8	11
1980									
Mainline Protestant	44	69	55	35	71	51	39	46	38
Evan. Protestant	19	77	50	47	71	51	39	20	25
Catholic	23	73	50	41	71	51	39	23	25
Jewish	3	88	36	48	71	51	39	3	5
Other and none	10	61	46	31	71	51	39	8	7
1984									
Mainline Protestant	42	71	63	35	74	57	41	45	35
Evan. Protestant	20	72	59	40	74	57	41	20	19
Catholic	26	79	53	45	74	57	41	26	31
Jewish	2	86	31	69	74	57	41	2	5
Other and none	10	68	47	51	74	57	41	8	11

Religious Groups and the Democratic and Republican Party Coalition: 1976 - 1996

Table 3:1 (Continued)

Religious Group	Size	Turnout	Republican Loyalty	Democratic Loyalty	U.S. Turnout	U.S. Republican Loyalty	U.S. Democratic Loyalty	Contribution Republican Coalition	Contribution Democratic Coalition
1988									
Mainline Protestant	38	70	58	40	70	52	47	43	33
Evan. Protestant	27	68	55	44	70	52	47	28	25
Catholic	24	75	47	52	70	52	47	23	29
Jewish	2	82	27	73	70	52	47	1	3
Other and none	10	62	39	59	70	52	47	6	11
1992									
Mainline Protestant	34	76	37	46	75	34	48	37	33
Evan. Protestant	26	73	44	41	75	34	48	32	21
Catholic	24	81	30	50	75	34	48	23	27
Jewish	2	97	8	76	75	34	48	1	4
Other and none	15	67	20	58	75	34	48	8	16
1996									
Mainline Protestant	30	75	38	53	77	38	53	30	30
Evan. Protestant	29	79	49	44	77	38	53	38	25
Catholic	25	81	37	55	77	38	53	26	27
Jewish	2	90	0	92	77	38	53	0	4
Other and none	14	65	22	62	77	38	53	7	14

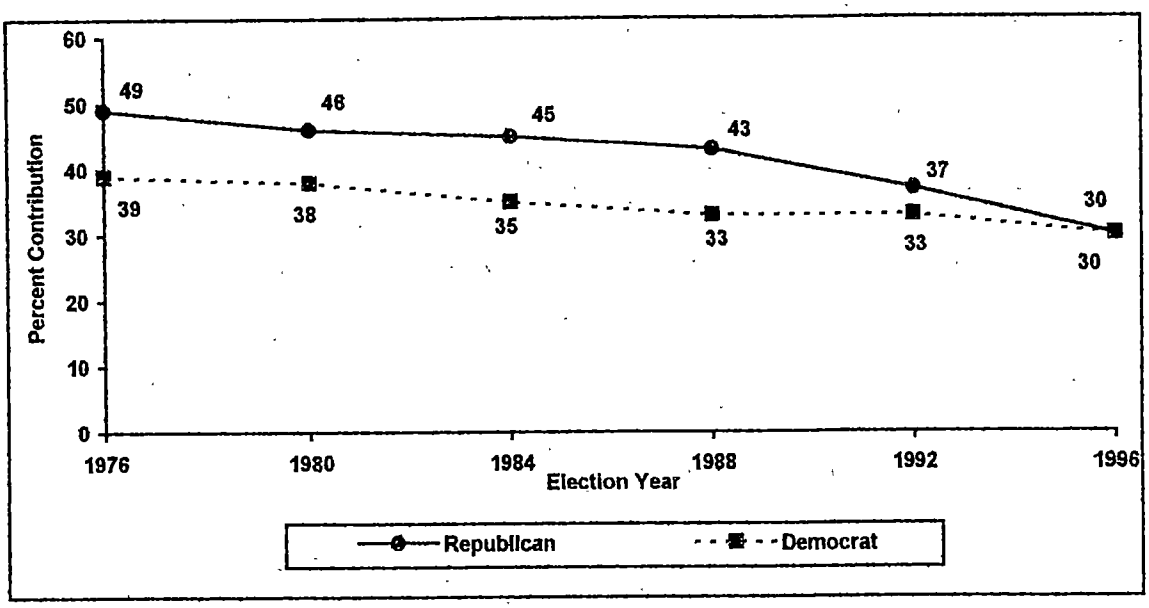


Figure 3:1

Mainline Protestant Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 – 1996

While the contribution of Mainline Protestants to the Democratic coalition decreased, the group's contribution to the Republican Party also decreased. Mainline Protestant contribution to the Republican Party ranged from 49 percent in 1976 to 30 percent in 1996. After the election of President George Bush in 1988, the contribution of Mainline Protestants to the Republican vote steadily decreased. Overall, the contribution of Mainline Protestants to the Republican Party decreased 39 percent during the period in question.

There are several possible explanations for the corresponding decrease in the contribution of Mainline Protestants to the votes of the major parties. First, the number of Mainline Protestants decreased. In 1976, 44 percent of NES survey respondents were identified as Mainline Protestants, whereas only 30 percent of NES survey respondents

were identified as Mainline Protestants in 1996. The decrease in the number of Mainline Protestants compares favorably with the increase size of Evangelical Protestants and with the findings of other research describing the decreasing size of Mainline Protestantism (Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Kellstedt et al. 1994). Second, the loyalty of Mainline Protestants is shifting. For example, 63 percent of Mainline Protestants voted Republican in 1984, but only 38 percent of Mainline Protestants voted Republican in 1996. The decrease in Mainline Protestant loyalty may be due to the Christian Right's advances within the Republican Party; a counter-mobilization of less theologically conservative Mainline Protestants.

Evangelical Protestants are those Protestants who are born again and believe in a literal, inerrant, or inspired interpretation of the Bible. Figure 3:2 shows the Evangelical Protestant contribution to the Democratic Party ranged from 19 percent in 1984 to 25 percent in 1996. The contribution of Evangelical Protestants to the Democratic Party vote remained relatively stable between 1976 to 1996. The group's contribution to the Democratic coalition, however, reached its low point during Ronald Reagan's landslide defeat of Walter Mondale in 1984.

Evangelical Protestant contribution to the Republican vote ranged from 18 percent in 1976 to 38 percent in 1996. Evangelical Protestant contribution to the Republican Party increased steadily from 1984 to 1996, which coincides with the retooling of the Christian Right in the late 1980's and Pat Robertson's bid for the Republican Presidential nomination in 1988.

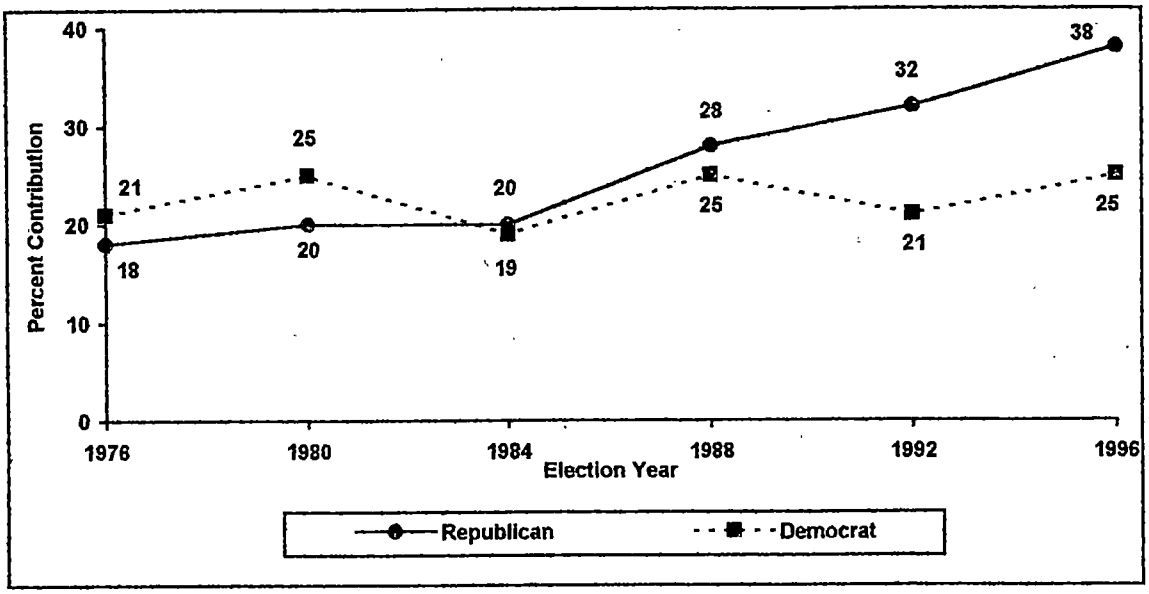


Figure 3:2

Evangelical Protestant Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 – 1996

The best explanation for the increased contribution to the Republican Party made by Evangelical Protestants is increased size. The number of Evangelical Protestants increased between 1976 and 1996, while the size of other Protestant groups decreased. In 1976, only 19 percent of NES survey respondents were identified as Evangelical Protestants, but in 1996 29 percent of NES survey respondents were identified as Evangelical Protestants. Other research has shown similar (though not as dramatic) gains in the Evangelical Protestant population. Interestingly, most of this research indicates Evangelical Protestant churches have drawn most of their new members from Mainline Protestant churches (Leege and Kellstedt 1993; and Roof and McKinney 1987). In the past Mainline Protestants were very loyal Republicans. Therefore, it appears new Evangelical Protestants, who were probably Mainline Protestants in the past, maintained

their previous partisan affiliation. This extrapolation corresponds well with the findings of the authors of *The American Voter* (Campbell et al. 1960) who that found individuals tend to maintain the partisan preference they form first.

Catholics are NES respondents who identified themselves as Roman Catholic. The contribution of Catholics (see Figure 3:3) to the Democratic Party ranged from 25 percent in 1980 to 31 percent in 1984. The contribution of Catholics to the Republican Party ranged from 23 percent during four election cycles to 26 percent in 1984 and 1992. During the period in question, the contribution of Catholics to the Democratic Party and Republican Party remained relatively stable.

The term "Reagan Democrats" and turnout may explain the fluctuations in Catholic contribution to the two major parties. Many life-long Democrats voted for Ronald Reagan in 1980 and 1994. Catholics appear to have been no different. A majority of Catholics voted Democratic during every election except two between 1976 and 1996. During the elections of 1980 and 1984 a majority of Catholics supported Reagan. After Reagan left office Catholic loyalty returned to the Democratic Party. Interestingly it appears the decreased turnout of Evangelical Protestants in 1984 and 1988 are responsible for the increases in Catholic contribution to the Democratic coalition during the same years. The turnout of Evangelical Protestants, the second largest religious group, reached a low in 1984 and 1988 amplifying the contribution of Catholics, the third largest religious group.

Jews are NES respondents who identified themselves as Jewish. Though the contribution of Jews to either party is not as great as the three previous groups, Jews are

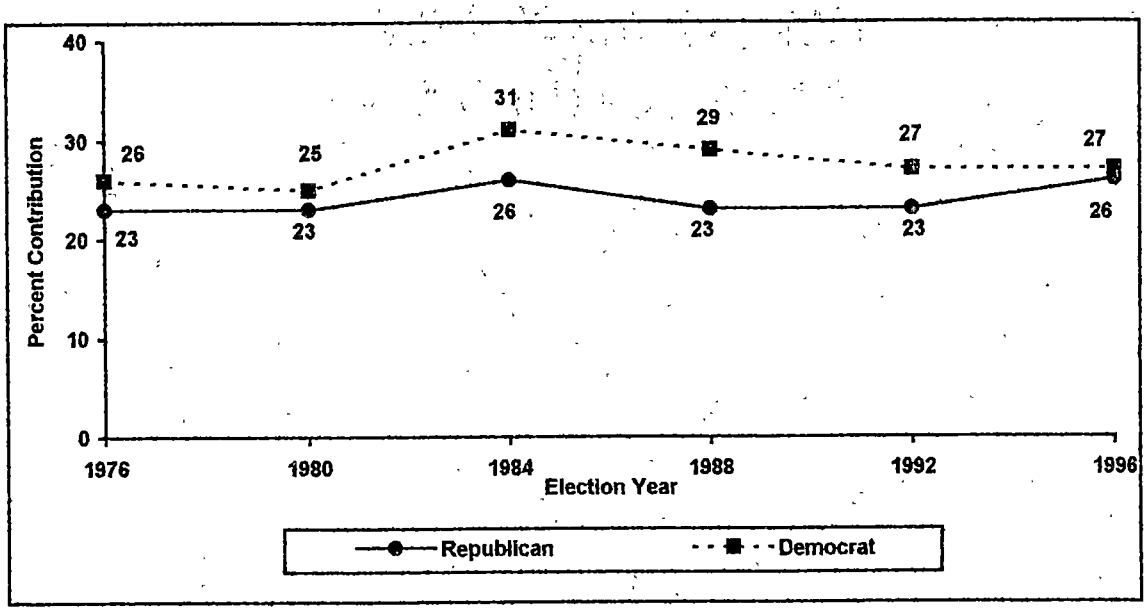


Figure 3:3

Catholic Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 – 1996

an important group. The contribution of Jews (see Figure 3:4) to the Democratic Party ranged from 3 percent in 1988 to 5 percent during several elections. The contribution of Jews to the Republican Party ranged from 0.002 percent in 1996 to 3 percent in 1980. The small number of Jews found within the NES samples make it difficult to interpret the fluctuations in Jewish contribution to the two major parties, but one explanation for the decline in Jewish contribution to the Republican Party may be counter-mobilization. The Christian Right, whether rightly or wrongly, has been associated with anti-Semitism throughout its history (Schwartz 1994). Given the history of Judaism it is understandable Jews would leave any party that includes a group suspected of anti-Semitism.

Atheists, Agnostics, and other non-traditional religions (Other and None) are an increasingly important group. The group's contribution (see Figure 3:5) to the Democratic

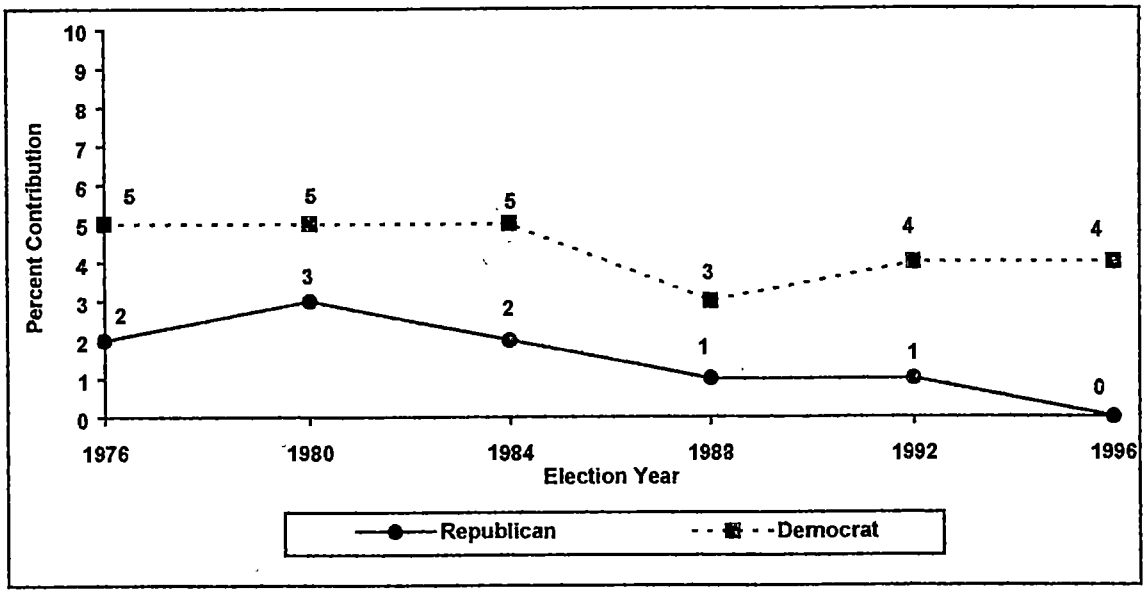


Figure 3:4

Jewish Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 – 1996

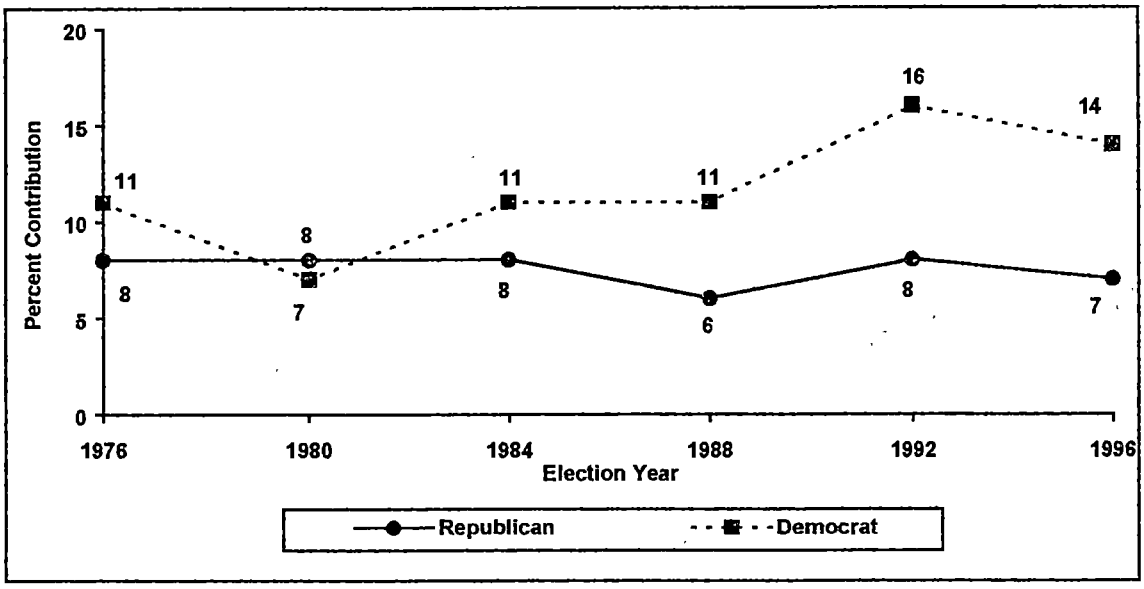


Figure 3:5

Other and None Contribution to the Two Major Parties: 1976 – 1996

vote ranged from 7 percent in 1980 to 16 percent in 1992. The contribution of atheists, agnostics, and other non-traditional religions to the Democratic Party increased between 1976 and 1996. The group's contribution to the Republican vote ranged from 6 percent in 1988 to 8 percent in 1976, 1980. 1984, and 1992. Overall, the contribution of atheists, agnostics, and other non-traditional religions to the Republican Party remained steady between 1976 and 1996.

What explains the higher contribution to the Democratic Party made by atheists, agnostics, and adherents to non-traditional religions? In part, this may be due to growing opposition to the influence of the Christian Right in the public sphere. Since the rise of Evangelical Protestant influence within the Republican Party in the early 1980's atheists, agnostics, and other non-traditional religious groups have become overwhelmingly Democratic. For example, in 1984 47 percent of the group voted for the Republican presidential candidate, but by 1996 only 22 percent of the group voted for the Republican presidential candidate. Another explanation is increased size, data from the NES indicate the group has grown substantially since 1976, from 10 percent to 15 percent of the population. Other research has also indicated the secular population in America has grown substantially in the past twenty years (Kellstedt et al. 1994).

Religion and the Parties Coalitions

"The most obvious fact about American party coalitions is that they are very loose. They are loose first in the sense that most group loyalties are not total" (Axelrod 1972:

17). Given the changing nature of religious politics over the past twenty years this finding will not surprise scholars who specialize in religion and politics. However, the religious underpinning of the changes within the traditional Democratic and Republican Party coalitions will probably surprise other scholars. The following tables show the overall changes in both the Democratic and Republican Party coalitions.

Table 3:2 indicates our expectations about the make-up of the Democratic coalition are somewhat supported. Generally, when asked where Democrats get their votes the answer is that the Democratic coalition is a diverse mix of minority groups (Axelrod 1972). When asked where Democrats got their votes in 1996 the answer is from a number of minority groups such as Catholics, Jews, Atheists, Agnostics, and other non-traditional religions as expected. Unexpectedly, the answer is also from larger groups like Mainline Protestants and Evangelical Protestants.

Most political observers stereotypically assume Evangelical Protestants do not vote Democratic. This stereotype is obviously wrong. During every election between 1976 and 1996 Evangelical Protestants made up a least one-fifth of the Democratic coalition. Moreover, Mainline Protestants, who are also stereotypically viewed as Republican, were the largest contributors to the Democratic coalition in every election year during the period in question.

Table 3:3 indicates our expectations about the make-up of the Republican Party coalition in 1996 are supported. When asked where Republicans get their votes the answer is usually from non-minority groups (Axelrod 1972). When asked where Republicans got their votes in 1996 the answer is from Mainline Protestants, Evangelical

Contribution of Religious Groups to the Democratic Coalition: 1976 - 1996

Table 3:2

Religious Group	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996
Mainline Protestant	39	38	35	33	33	30
Evangelical Protestant	21	25	19	25	21	25
Catholic	26	25	31	29	27	27
Jew	5	5	5	3	4	4
Other and None	11	7	11	11	16	14

Contribution of Religious Groups to the Republican Coalition: 1976 - 1996

Table 3:3

Religious Group	1976	1980	1984	1988	1992	1996
Mainline Protestant	49	46	45	43	37	30
Evangelical Protestant	18	20	20	28	32	38
Catholic	23	23	26	23	23	26
Jew	2	3	2	1	1	0
Other and None	8	8	8	6	8	7

Protestants, and Catholics. Some unexpected changes, however, did occur within the Republican Party coalition.

The increased contribution of Evangelical Protestants to the Republican Party was the largest change observed in the electoral behavior of religious groups over the past

twenty years. The second largest change was the decreased contribution of Mainline Protestants to the Republican Party. Undoubtedly, the rise of the Christian Right within the Republican Party played a large role in the changes observed in Mainline Protestant political behavior. Moreover, the changes observed in the behavior of Mainline Protestants and Evangelical Protestants may point to "a new kind of party alignment" (Kellstedt et al. 1994).

Religion and Realignment

Obviously, "religion" matters in electoral politics (Axelrod 1972: 19). The extent to which religion underlies the changes occurring in the Democratic and Republican Party coalitions, however, is surprising. Party coalitions have always been loose and group loyalties to one or the other party have never been complete, but the wholesale shifts in the behavior of the two largest religious groups in America may signal a realignment of party coalitions (Kellstedt et al. 1996).

A small group of political scientists, who for over a decade have studied religion and politics, signaled the changes we observed after the elections of 1988, 1992, and 1994 (Green and Guth 1990; Guth and Green 1991; Kellstedt et al. 1994, and Kellstedt et al. 1996). In fact, in 1996 they stated that "if realignment is conceived as a process involving changes in the partisan alignments of major groups" then realignment might have occurred (Kellstedt et al. 1996: 296).

Though the sweeping changes in the traditional Democratic and Republican party coalitions are obvious by merely analyzing group membership, turnout, and vote; Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt, use a variety of other variables to explain the realignment of religious groups including: 1) measures of religious devotion; and 2) political issues. Using these variables, they demonstrate that in all religious traditions the religiously devout were more conservative on social issues than those who were less devout. Furthermore, they suggest that in the future party competition will be between religious and non-religious voters of all traditions (Kellstedt et al. 1994 and 1996).

The coalitions of the Democratic and Republican parties are in flux and it appears Evangelical Protestants are the "fulcrum on which both present and future party alignments rest" (Kellstedt et al. 1994: 309). The rise of the Christian Right in the late 1970's and early 1980's was a vanguard of deep changes occurring within the American electorate. If group behavior helps explain voting behavior as the social-determinism model suggests, political observers might be wise to watch closely the behavior of religious groups in America because changes in the behavior of these groups may signal greater changes in the future.

Chapter 4

Issue Voting and the Christian Right

"People who take their religion seriously, who rely on their understanding of God for motive force in their public and political personalities - well they're scary people. Not only scary, but maybe irrational too."

Stephen L. Carter

Democratic Practice and Democratic Theory

According to democratic theory, the will of the people forms the foundation for government decision making. The people or the citizens in a democracy, according to the same theory, are supposed:

- to be interested in politics and participate in political affairs,
- to be well-informed about political affairs, to know the issues, the context surrounding the issues, the relevant alternatives, where the parties stand on the issues, and the consequences of the various available courses of action,
- to vote on the basis of principle, with regard to his or her own interests as well as the common good, and
- to act rationally, when coming to a voting decision.

Individual voters, however, "seem unable to satisfy the requirements" for a citizen in a democratic government (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954: 312).

Since the advent of survey research, political scientists have attempted to assess whether citizens fulfill the requirements listed above. In study after study, they found Americans are ignorant of basic political facts, inattentive, and basically uninterested in

politics or voting (Page and Shapiro 1992). They found most voting decisions are overwhelmingly influenced by socioeconomic status, party attachments, or candidate images rather than the rational evaluation of the issues of the day (Berelson et al. 1954; Campbell, Converse, Stokes, and Miller 1960, and Converse 1964). In fact, some scholars have concluded, "if the democratic system depended solely on the qualifications of the individual voter, then it seems remarkable that democracies have survived through the centuries" (Berelson et al. 1954: 311). More recent research, however, has been positive about voters using issues to decide how to vote (Fiorina 1981, Carmines and Stimson 1980; Goren 1997; Gopian 1993; Miller and Shanks 1996). Still, as we said earlier, issue voting is an elusive concept and most positive evaluations of policy-oriented voting suggest voters use "short cuts" (Fiorina 1981; Lodge, Stroh, and Wahlke 1990) when deciding on which candidate to vote for rather than rationally evaluating the issues of the day as classical democratic theorists suggest.

Attempts to reconcile the conflict between democratic practice and democratic theory drove the development of all the major approaches to political behavior: the sociological approach, the social-psychological approach, and the rational-choice approach. The originators of the earliest approach to political behavior, the sociological approach, set out to test a consumer or individual preference model of political behavior. According to the consumer preference model, "each party was seen as presenting a product to the public, the campaign was seen as an advertising campaign during which the competing products were weighed by the public, and the voters were seen as recording their final choices when they stepped into the booth on election day" (Niemi and Weisberg 1993: 7-8). The appeal of the consumer preference model is obvious, in

that it parallels democratic theory. However, in the 1940 Erie County study, little support was found for the consumer preference model. This led Berelson et al. (1954) to conclude voting is an act stemming from group influences such as socioeconomic status, religion, and place of residence rather than any specific individual preference for the platform offered by one or the other party.

In the social-psychological approach individual attitudes toward parties are emphasized rather than group membership as in the sociological model. In fact, in the social-psychological model "party loyalty replaced demographic characteristics and personal influences as the prime mover of political behavior" (Page and Shapiro 1992: 5). Moreover, party loyalty or party identification so dominated the model that party identification became known as the "unmoved mover." Party identification, according to Campbell et al. (1964), is a long-term psychological force that predisposes individuals to participate in politics and to vote for their own party's candidate. The absence of any issue influence on the vote led the authors of the *American Voter* to conclude "there seems to be widespread ignorance and indifference over many policy matters" (Campbell et al. 1964: 186). In the seminal study of the quality of voters, Philip E. Converse, the greatest defender of social-psychological approach, found "large portions of the electorate do not have meaningful beliefs, even on the issues that have formed the basis for intense controversy among elites" (1964: 243).

Unlike the previous approaches, the rational-choice approach assumes the citizen is capable of rational action in the political arena. Applying economic theory to political behavior Anthony Downs (1957) basically stated voters decide to vote for a candidate or party by weighing the issue stances of the parties and then voting for the party that will

provide him or her the greatest benefit. Downs' theory is important because it brought issues back into the study of political behavior and because it is congruent with classical democratic theory. The key to Downs' formulation of the rational-choice approach is the cost of information. According to Downs', democratic citizens need information to weigh the issues and to decide for whom to vote, but because the costs (usually time) of gathering information are so high and the fact that the citizen only has one vote among many he or she will rationally discount the utility of gathering information and voting. Thus, Downs' theory suggests the rational course of action for the typical citizen in a democracy is to abstain from voting. To solve the problem of not voting, Downs' introduced the concept of citizen duty. It is citizen duty, the desire to see democracy work that propels individuals to bear the cost of information gathering and voting. However, as Downs' critics point out, by assigning responsibility for the act of voting to a psychological variable the analysis of voting is removed from a rational choice model.

All three major approaches to political behavior lead to the same conclusion: the average citizen does not measure up to the standard of democratic theory. Interestingly, the controversy between democratic practice and democratic theory does not appear to have affected the religion and political behavior subfield of political science. In fact, within the subfield "there is little dispute" that the political activity of religious conservatives is *issue* based (Wilcox, Jelen, and Linzey 1995: 264). Over the past two decades, scholars within the religion and political behavior subfield charged mainstream political scientists who study political behavior with ignoring the importance of religion's impact on politics. Ironically, it appears scholars within the religion and political behavior subfield should be charged with ignoring mainstream research. Otherwise, how

could the two streams of research reach such contradictory conclusions?

The Rationality of the Christian Right

The rise of the Christian Right in the late seventies and early eighties surprised most political scientists. In response, research into religion and politics exploded. Most of the early research focused on two issues: measuring support for the Christian Right and studying the motives the supporter's of the Christian Right (See chapter 1 for a discussion of support for the Christian Right). Some scholars feel one of the most impressive achievements of the religion and politics subfield is the repudiation of "the hypothesis that religiously based political activity results from individual psychological pathologies" (Jelen 1998: 115).

In the early 1980's journalists identified televangelists as the source behind support for the Christian Right. Supporters of the Christian Right were called uneducated and easy to command (Morin 1993). Some political observers even claimed the concerns of Christian Right supporters were the frivolous views of unsophisticated followers of "clever elites" (Moen 1994). More sophisticated, yet damning, explanations were advanced by scholars. "Supporters of the Christian Right were accused of being authoritarian, dogmatic, alienated, anxious about their social status, motivated by feelings of inadequacy, of projecting self-hatred outward, and of being motivated by other non-political factors" (Wilcox et al. 1995: 263-264). Research, however, has cast doubt on these pathological explanations for the political behavior of Christian Right supporters.

For example, research indicates support for the following pathological models of

support for the Christian Right is sparse. The status discontent model, one the most popular early explanations, assumes those who are anxious about their social status, generally those whose status is declining in comparison to some other group in society, will support right-wing groups such as the Christian Right. Research indicates, however, that the status discontent model of the political behavior does not explain the actions of the Christian Right (Conover 1983; and Wood and Hughes 1984). Another popular explanation for the political behavior of Christian Right supporters is authoritarianism. Some research has shown submission to authority is linked with support for the right (Wilcox et al. 1995: 265). Most research indicates, however, that there is little if any evidence to support an authoritarian model (Wald, Hill, and Owen 1989;). In fact, Wald et al.'s (1989) research indicates it is the authority of the Bible rather than the authority of any particular leader that is the stronger predictor of Christian Right support. Overall, most research has found that policy preferences are a much stronger predictor of Christian Right support than individual pathologies (Wilcox 1989).

Today, the Christian Right is viewed as a social movement similar to other movements and is defined by its goals and membership. John C. Green defines the Christian Right as a "movement that seeks to restore traditional values in public policy by means of mobilizing Evangelical Protestants" (1995: 2). In this sense, joining the Christian Right is as rational for Evangelical Protestants as is joining the Sierra Club or National Organization of Women for environmentalists and feminists. Following this perspective, support for the Christian Right appears rational. Individuals who support the positions of movements like the Christian Right do so because these groups articulate their religious, moral, and political sensibilities (Wilcox 1996).

Religion and the Culture Wars

During the late 1980's and the 1990's research on religion and politics has been increasingly focused on issues, especially culture war issues such as abortion, prayer in school, and women's role in society. Many religion and politics scholars believe some dramatic changes are occurring within the electorate as a result of the debate surrounding culture war issues. The most popular view is that a new cleavage is forming within the electorate that pits individuals who remain committed to traditional religious beliefs and practices against individuals who have abandoned traditional beliefs in favor of more modern views (Green and Guth 1991, Hunter 1991, Kellstedt et al. 1994, Kellstedt et al. 1996, Layman 1997, and Layman 1999). An electoral cleavage of this kind would be new in American history because religious affiliations such as Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish were more important in the past. Recent research, however, indicates the traditional loyalties of religious groups are changing (see chapter 3). In fact the changes in religious group loyalties are so dramatic Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt (1996) believe "one type of realignment is underway: a religious one."

Kellstedt et al. believe the realignment of religious groups is the "first rumbling of an electoral culture war" (1994). An electoral culture war would produce party coalitions very different from past coalitions. In fact, the GOP would become the party of Evangelical Protestants and other conservative believers, while the Democratic Party would become the party of cultural minorities, seculars, black Protestants, and liberal believers from all faiths (Kellstedt et al. 1994). From the evidence presented in chapter 3 it appears the major religious groups are realigning in the manner Kellstedt et al. suggest.

According to Kellstedt et al. religious groups such as Evangelical Protestants are realigning because of the polarization over culture war issues. By analyzing the relationship between religious groups and various political variables including party, vote choice, and issue positions Kellstedt et al. have demonstrated that Evangelical Protestants and religiously conservative Mainline Protestants and Catholics generally support the Republican Party and hold politically conservative positions on social issues. Kellstedt et al. have also been able to demonstrate that seculars, Jews, and religiously liberal Mainline Protestants and Catholics generally support the Democratic Party and hold politically liberal positions on social issues. (Kellstedt et al. 1994; and Kellstedt et al. 1996)

Kellstedt et al.'s conception of realignment is two pronged. First, they think of realignment "as a process involving changes in the partisan alignments of major groups" (Kellstedt et al. 1996: 296). Second, they view realignment along ideological lines. Basically, Kellstedt et al. assume that culture war issues are emerging as the source of political division between conservative and liberal religious believers of all religious faiths. Furthermore, they assume it is issue stances that are driving conservative and liberal believers to support the Republican and Democratic Party respectively.

Some scholars feel Kellstedt et al.'s "understanding" of religious realignment is "arguably" the most impressive achievement of the religion and politics subfield (Jelen 1998). Without a doubt, Kellstedt et al.'s findings are instructive. However, Kellstedt et al.'s reliance on issues to explain the changes in religious group political behavior appears to be dubious.

The religion and politics subfield like other subfields of political science was built from the "bottom up" (Jelen 1998). Within political science generalizations are normally

the result of an accumulation of empirical studies. Earlier empirical findings provide the foundation on which general theories are built. Thus, within the religion and politics subfield the "falsification" of pathological theories of support for the Christian Right produced an acceptance of issue based explanations for the political behavior of the Christian Right. Mainstream political behavior research, however, casts doubt on issue based explanations of the political behavior of voters therefore the following research question needs to be answered: Do Evangelical Protestants, the constituency of the Christian Right, fulfill the requirements of citizens in a representative democracy as articulated by classical democratic theorists?

Abortion Issue Voting

To answer the research question, abortion issue voting is analyzed. Abortion issue voting is assessed for the two reasons. The potential for issue based voting on the abortion issue is high because the issue has been on the political agenda a long time and is an example of an issue that divides the Republican and Democratic Parties (Abramowitz 1995). Abortion is also a good example of an issue that lies at the heart of the culture war (Hunter 1991 and 1994) and an issue with the capacity to "instill fundamental and permanent changes in the party system" (Adams 1997: 719). Secondly, abortion and women's rights are the only culture war issues included the 1996 NES in which respondents are asked about their position on the issue, the two major parties position on the issue, and the importance of the issue. Women's rights is not analyzed because a large majority of Evangelical Protestants (68%) support women's rights and, as

we saw in chapter 1, opinions about women's rights are not related to Christian Right support.

A number of scholars have pointed out the importance of the abortion issue and studies have shown abortion is a strong predictor of vote choice. In fact, some studies have demonstrated abortion is a stronger predictor of vote choice than the state of the economy and partisanship under certain circumstances (Cook, Jelen, and Wilcox 1994; Abramowitz 1995). The potential for voting on the basis of the abortion issue may be higher among Evangelical Protestants, the base of the Christian Right, than among the general population. Research indicates Evangelical Protestants are more likely to use abortion as a criterion in voting than others (Tamney, Johnson, and Burton 1992). Furthermore, many Evangelical Protestants, believe traditional values are under attack and research shows commitment to traditional values is related to pro-life stances (Johnson, Tamney, and Burton 1994).

According to Abramson, Aldrich, and Rohde (1995) and others (Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes 1960) a voter needs certain information before an issue can influence his or her vote. First, the voter must have an opinion about the issue. Second, the voter must perceive the positions of the two major parties on the issue. Third, the voter must see a difference between the positions of the parties. Fourth, the voter must believe the issue is important. If a voter fulfills the requirements listed above, it is believed the voter can and will act rationally. Several testable hypothesis result from these requirements and the research described above:

Hypothesis 1

A sizable majority of Evangelical Protestants have an opinion about the issue of abortion.

Hypothesis 2

A majority of Evangelical Protestants know the Democratic and Republican Party position on the abortion issue.

Hypothesis 3

A majority of Evangelical Protestants see a difference between the abortion position of the two major parties.

Hypothesis 4

A majority of Evangelical Protestants believe the abortion issue is important.

Hypothesis 5

A majority of Evangelical Protestants possess the necessary information and attitudes to cast a vote based on the abortion issue.

Hypothesis 6

The abortion issue is a strong influence on the vote choice of Evangelical Protestants who fulfill the requirements for issue voting.

Data from the 1996 NES are utilized to test these hypotheses. The 1996 NES includes several questions related to the abortion issue including: a question asking the respondents position on the issue, a question about the respondents view of the importance of the issue, and a couple of questions about the respondents perception of the position of the Democratic and Republican Party on the issue.

Respondents are classified as Evangelical Protestants if they are Protestant, born-again, and believe in either a literal, inerrant, or inspired interpretation of the Bible. According to Table 4:1 approximately one-third of the total population are Evangelical Protestants. Estimates of the number of the Evangelical Protestants vary, but the current estimate falls within the range of other reports (Leege and Kellstedt 1993, Smidt 1993).

Number of Evangelical Protestants in 1996

Table 4:1

Group	Percentage	N
Others	71.0	1206
Evangelical Protestants	29.0	492

Usually, African-Americans are excluded from any analysis of the Christian Right and its supporters, Evangelical Protestants. African-Americans, however, were not excluded in this analysis because many leaders of the Christian Right point to the African-American community as a potential source of increased mobilization because a higher number of evangelicals are found among the African-American population (Smidt 1993).

In the 1996 NES, individuals are asked to choose from four alternatives to indicate their opinion on the abortion issue. Response alternatives ranged from the least restrictive alternative to the most restrictive alternative: 1) abortion should not be limited because it is a woman's choice; 2) abortion should be allowed if there is a clear need; 3) abortion should be allowed in the case of rape, incest, or to save the life of the mother; and 4) abortion should never be permitted (Note: responses were reordered to range from least restrictive to most restrictive). Table 4:2 shows how our sample of Evangelical Protestants responded to this question.

Though the leaders of the Christian Right claim to speak for Evangelical Protestants it should be noted support for the Christian Right's pro-life stance is not monolithic. Nearly 40% of Evangelical Protestants support one of the two pro-choice positions. Furthermore, a higher percentage of Evangelical Protestants support the least restrictive abortion position than support the most restrictive abortion position. However, one thing is certain from Table 4:2 almost every Evangelical Protestant has an opinion

Abortion Position of Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:2

Abortion Position	Evangelical Protestants
Always As A Personal Choice	25.4
If Clear Need	12.9
Rape, Incest, Danger To Mother Only	41.0
Never Permitted	20.6
Percent Evangelical Protestants With Opinion	97.6

about the abortion issue. Clearly, hypothesis 1 is supported by the data.

Despite the extraordinary number of individuals who possess an opinion on abortion, a substantial number of Evangelical Protestants fail to satisfy the second requirement for issue voting. Only 55.9% of Evangelical Protestants (See Table 4:3) know the positions of the Democratic and Republican Party on the abortion issue. Obviously, hypothesis 2 is supported, though 44% of Evangelical Protestants do not know the position of the two major parties. Interestingly, the results from the test of hypothesis 2 impact the test of hypothesis 3. Table 4:4 shows approximately 81% of Evangelical Protestants perceive a difference between the position of the two major parties. Hypothesis 3 appears to be substantially supported. However, one must be aware that respondents were not required to perceive a difference between the proper position of the parties they were required merely to perceive a difference, whether correct or incorrect. Overall, it appears almost one-fifth of Evangelical Protestants think the Democratic and Republican Party do not differ on the issue of abortion. It is clear from the data that hypothesis 4 is supported (See Table 4:5). Almost every single Evangelical Protestant polled believes the abortion issue is important. One must remember, however, that all Evangelical Protestants do not agree with the Christian Right's pro-life view.

Knowledge of the Abortion Position of the Democratic and Republican Party: Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:3

Know Position	Evangelical Protestants
Don't Know Either Party's Position	10.1
Know One Party Position	33.9
Know Both Party's' Position	55.9

Perceive Difference In the Abortion Position of the Democratic and Republican Party: Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:4

Perceive Difference	Evangelical Protestants
No Difference Perceived	19.1
Perceived Difference	80.9

Abortion Issue Important: Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:5

Position Important	Evangelical Protestants
No, Abortion Issue Is Not Important	6.6
Yes, Abortion Issue Is Important	93.4

Examining the individual requirements for issue voting does not fully answer the question at hand. However, by combining the individual requirements the picture becomes much clearer. According to Table 4:6 approximately 53.7% of potential Christian Right supporters fulfill the conditions necessary for the abortion issue to influence their political behavior. This finding corresponds well with the research of Abramowitz (1995), who showed in his study "It's Abortion, Stupid" that only 51% of all 1992 NES survey respondents fulfilled similar requirements. Hypothesis 5 is supported; a majority of Evangelical Protestants do possess the necessary information and attitudes

Fulfill Abortion Issue Voter Requirements: Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:6

Fulfill Requirements	Evangelical Protestants
No, Respondent Does Not Fulfill Requirements	46.3
Yes, Respondent Does Fulfill Requirements	53.7

to cast a vote based on the abortion issue. The potential number of Evangelical Protestant issue voters, however, may not be as high as the figures from Table 4:6 suggest given the requirements for issue voting were not applied stringently (i.e. not required perceive a difference between the correct positions of the two major parties).

Political Impact of Abortion Issue Voting

Abramowitz (1995) showed the abortion issue was the most influential factor in a voter's decision making process during the presidential election of 1992 if the requirements for issue voting were satisfied by that voter. According to Table 4:7, Informed Evangelical Protestants were more inclined to identify themselves as Republican rather than Independent or Democrat. Table 4:7 also indicates Informed Evangelical Protestants overwhelmingly voted for Dole in 1996. Obviously, knowledge related to the abortion issue has the capacity to influence party identification and vote choice toward the Republican Party and Republican presidential candidate respectively. However, a more stringent test of the influence of the abortion issue on the political behavior of Evangelical Protestants is needed. To compare the impact of the abortion issue with the impact of other issues on the candidate choice of Evangelical Protestants logistic regression will be employed. Following the lead of Abramowitz (1995), two

Party Identification and Candidate Choice: Informed Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:7

Variable	Informed Evangelical Protestants
Party Identification	
Democrat	25.0
Independent	26.4
Republican	48.6
Vote Choice	
Clinton	31.2
Perot	6.9
Dole	61.8

models will be developed, one for all Evangelical Protestant voters and one for Evangelical Protestant voters who fulfill the requirements for issue voting.

The logistic model of candidate choice for all Evangelical Protestants and Informed Evangelical Protestants appears in the tables on the following pages. The dependent variable candidate choice is coded "1" for Dole and "0" for Clinton (Perot votes were excluded from the analysis). The policy issues defense spending, welfare spending, affirmative action, and national economic conditions were included in addition to the abortion issue. Other political variables in the model were ideology and party identification. The demographic variables included in the model were age, education, family income, gender, region, and race. All the independent variables were coded to maintain a consistent positive relationship with a vote for Dole.

Overall, the logistic model of all Evangelical Protestants performed well (see Table 4:8). The model is statistically significant as both the log likelihood and model chi-square has a probability of .00. Furthermore, 95% of the cases in the model were correctly predicted with almost half of the prediction error reduced (tau-p = .48). The model presented in Table 4:8 supports the traditional view of the Republican voter, but

Logistic Model of Candidate Choice: All Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:8

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Probability	Odds Ratio
Age	.03	.03	1.22	.27	1.03
Education	.11	.29	.14	.70	1.12
Income	.13	.09	1.88	.17	1.14
Male	1.36	.79	2.92	.09	3.89
South	-.83	.88	.90	.34	.43
White	2.08	1.31	2.52	.11	8.00
Ideology	1.12	.42	7.04	.00*	3.05
Party Identification	1.34	.27	24.89	.00*	3.81
Abortion	.43	.36	1.39	.24	1.53
Defense Spending	.83	.34	5.81	.02*	2.29
Welfare Spending	-.05	.94	.00	.96	.95
Affirmative Action	.25	.40	.39	.53	1.29
National Economy	.86	.33	6.88	.00*	2.37
Constant	-23.05	6.24	13.63	.00	-

* statistically significant at the .05 level or lower

-2 Log Likelihood = 254.60 p = .00
Model Chi-Square = 201.49 p = .00
Tau-p = .48 p = .03
Correctly Predicted = 95.38%

more importantly, the model indicates the issue of abortion did not significantly effect the political behavior of all Evangelical Protestants.

Party identification, ideology, national economic conditions, and defense spending were the only significant predictors of a vote for Dole in the model. The coefficients for all the other variables were not statistically significant. Republican Evangelical Protestants were almost four times more likely to vote for Dole. Politically conservative Evangelical Protestants were three times more likely to vote for Dole than their politically liberal counterparts. Those with a negative view of the economy were 2.4 times more likely then those with a positive view of the economy to vote for Dole. Finally, Evangelical Protestants who support increased defense spending were 2.3 times

more likely then those who don't to vote for Dole. Each of the significant indicators impacted vote choice in the expected manner.

Table 4:9 presents the logistic model of candidate choice for Evangelical Protestants who satisfy the requirements for abortion issue voting. Overall, the model performed well. The model was statistically significant (log likelihood and model chi square probability of less than .00), correctly predicted 97% of the cases, and reduced the prediction error by a little more the two-fifths (tau-p = .41). Abortion, ideology, and party identification were the strongest significant predictors respectively. Again, politically conservative Evangelical Protestants were more likely (4.3) to vote for Dole than politically liberal Evangelical Protestants and Republican Evangelicals Protestants were three times more likely to vote for Dole than Democratic Evangelical Protestants.

Abortion was the only policy issue to significantly influence the decision between Clinton and Dole among Informed Evangelical Protestants. Hypothesis 6 is supported by the data. In the logistic model presented in Table 4:9 the abortion issue had an odds ratio of 5.9 which indicates pro-life Evangelical Protestants are six times more likely to vote for Dole than pro-choice Evangelical Protestants. These results reconfirm the findings of Abramowitz (1995) only for a smaller portion of the population, those who are Evangelical Protestants. But more importantly, the results of the logistic model for Informed Evangelical Protestants answers the research question of concern. Evangelical Protestants, the individuals Christian Right leaders hope to mobilize in favor of policies supporting traditional values, do vote overwhelmingly for the Republican candidate if they possess the information necessary for an issue to influence the vote. Nevertheless, Table 4:6 indicated that little over half of the Christian Right's base possessed the

Logistic Model of Candidate Choice: Informed Evangelical Protestants

Table 4:9

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	Chi-Square	Probability	Odds Ratio
Age	.01	.03	.05	.82	1.01
Education	-.51	.57	.79	.37	.60
Income	.23	.17	1.95	.16	1.26
Male	1.61	1.28	1.57	.21	4.99
South	-2.18	1.63	1.78	.18	.11
White	3.17	2.42	1.72	.19	23.79
Ideology	1.46	.69	4.42	.04*	4.31
Party Identification	1.11	.54	4.25	.04*	3.05
Abortion	1.78	.91	3.85	.05*	5.93
Defense Spending	.73	.63	1.34	.25	2.08
Welfare Spending	-.31	1.31	.06	.81	.73
Affirmative Action	-.01	9.58	.00	.99	.99
National Economy	.47	.47	1.01	.32	1.60
Constant	-21.79	48.20	.20	.65	-

* statistically significant at the .05 level or lower

-2 Log Likelihood = 142.95 p = .00
Model Chi-Square = 116.68 p = .00
Tau –p = .41 p = .02
Correctly Predicted = 96.52%

necessary information to connect their traditional religious beliefs to their political behavior

Building a Bridge

Many scholars, journalists, and average citizens believe attitudes toward social issues such as abortion compel Evangelical Protestants to support the Republican Party. According to this analysis, party identification is the strongest and most stable influence on the voting decision of Evangelical Protestants. Abortion views were found to influence the voting behavior of Evangelical Protestants, when the requirements for issue

voting were met. However, when Evangelical Protestants do not possess the necessary information and attitudes they are not likely to vote on the basis of the abortion issue.

Should Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt's argument that religious groups such as Evangelical Protestants are realigning because of the polarization over culture war issues be disregarded due to these findings? No, Kellstedt et al.'s basic realignment argument is valid. A religious cleavage between Republican and Democratic voters does exist. The role issues play in forming this cleavage, however, appears questionable.

The appeal of the sociological approach of Kellstedt et al. lies in the fact that much of what is contested in American politics is defined in terms of group competition and in the fact that the sociological perspective is highly flexible. Sociological research designs are malleable to researchers who are attempting to elicit evidence supporting certain hypotheses. For instance, Kellstedt et al. believes realignment is a process involving changes in the partisan alignments of groups (1996). Demonstrating changes in the voting patterns of groups, even religious groups are not difficult. Explaining the changes, however, is much more difficult. Kellstedt et al. thinks "issues" are a good place to begin to explain the realignment of religious groups (1996).

Kellstedt et al. believe the changes in the political behavior of religious groups were caused by "social issue polarization" (1994). Basically, they believe Evangelical Protestants left the Democratic Party for the Republican Party because of the liberal stance of the Democratic Party on issues such as abortion, school prayer, and homosexuality. Changes in the voting behavior of individuals and groups have been interpreted in a similar fashion for a long time. In the early 1950's the election of Dwight Eisenhower was explained in a similar manner. Elites basically concluded that changes

in mass voting (from Democrat to Republican) that lead to the election of Eisenhower reflected a shift in the public mood from liberal to conservative. Converse, however, demonstrated that the electorate was too unsophisticated to view the election as a choice between a liberal and conservative platform. Converse concluded, instead, that the arguments made by the elite about the changes in the electorate were "thoroughly implausible" (Converse 1964).

If issues are not a good place to start to explain the religious cleavage between the Democratic and Republican Party where is a good place to start? It may be possible religiously motivated voters engage in issue voting without benefit of the memory based information required by the three major perspectives on political behavior. Newer models of political behavior not bound by the inability of individuals to recall information may produce a greater understanding of the impact of religion on politics. In fact, on-line processing models (Gant and Davis 1984; Lodge, Stroh, and Wahlke 1990; and Lodge, Steenbergen, and Brau 1995) probably present the best opportunity for a greater understanding of religion's role in political behavior. The on-line processing model assumes voter's process information as they receive it, compare the new information to some ideal of the world, and then discard the information. As a result, a voters candidate choice, whether made in response to a survey question or in the voting booth, represents a running tally of all the information processed and discarded in the candidate evaluation process. Research has clearly shown individuals who make a conscious connection between faith and politics utilize their religious beliefs in their political decision-making (Guth, Green, Kellstedt, and Smidt 1996). Therefore, it is possible religiously motivated voters receive political information, compare it to their

religious beliefs, and then discard the information once a new tally has been made.

By contributing to the mainstream debate the gap between the study of political behavior in the mainstream and the study of political behavior in the religion and politics subfield may be bridged. Yes, those who studied political behavior ignored the impact of religion on politics for many years. But, scholars concerned about the impact of religion on politics have ignored the mainstream study of political behavior for a greater number of years. The work on issue voting is just one example of mainstream research ignored by the religion and politics subfield. Research alternatives available to mainstream political scientists would undoubtedly contribute great insight into the relationship between religion and political behavior. A bridge between these two bodies of knowledge offers endless possibilities: not the least of which is bringing the expertise of political science into the study of an overtly political phenomenon.

Conclusion

Political Behavior and Religion: Prospects for the Future

"Religion may have been hidden under a bushel two decades ago, but it has now emerged as salt to season the study of politics and light to illuminate for our colleagues and interested citizens the role religious faith plays in American democracy."

Lyman A. Kellstedt

Religion Matters

Religion matters politically. It is no longer true that religion is the "neglected variable". Scholars now pay close attention to the impact of religion on political behavior. Articles on the topic of religion and political behavior have been published in the top political science journals. An organized section of the American Political Science Association devoted to the subject has formed. More colleges and universities have started offering courses on religion and politics. And the number of religious items included in the National Election Studies has expanded. And yet, despite these important milestones some scholars feel "the literature on religion and politics has not permeated the study of political behavior" to the degree they would like (Kellstedt 1993: 299).

There are a number of reasons the literature on religion and politics has not widely impacted the study of political behavior. The most important reason is that religion and politics scholars have not done a good job making their insights and contributions accessible to other scholars (Jelen 1998). Part of the problem is the focus of the literature on religion and politics. Most scholars who study religion and politics spend more time describing the operation of their independent variable than accounting for the variation in a dependent variable. Research in religion and politics might benefit if more attention were given to the dependent variable such as vote choice.

The study of political behavior in mainstream political science has benefited from this approach. As we have seen, attempts to account for the variation in the vote led to the development of the three major approaches to the study of political behavior. Questions about the conflict between democratic practice and democratic theory that were identified following the earliest approach (the sociological approach) remain with us today. Religion and politics scholars would do well to contribute more to our understanding in this manner.

In this thesis, I analyzed the question: Do the members of the Christian Right fulfill the requirements of citizens in a representative democracy as articulated by classical democratic theorists? The question helped illustrate the following point: religion and politics scholars have ignored the mainstream study of political behavior. Why is this point important? If the literature on religion and politics is to hold any influence over the study of political behavior the focus of the literature must change.

Focus and Findings

Context and time may bind the influence of the contemporary literature on the political role of religion without a change in focus. Recent interest in the role of religion in political behavior dates back to the rise of the Christian Right. But as we have seen, support for the Christian Right is not widespread. By focusing on the Christian Right scholars interested in the study of religion and politics have placed their fortunes in the hands of a movement whose failure appears inevitable due to the increasing importance of coalition building and centrist politics (Bruce 1994).

The literature on religion and politics may also be bound by its focus on Evangelical Protestants, the base of the Christian Right. During the 1980's, the literature on methods in religion and politics revolved around measurement strategies for

identifying this doctrinally conservative group. Evidence presented in chapter 2 suggests a valid measurement strategy for identifying Evangelical Protestants existed in 1980. Again, by focusing on the nuances of the independent variable in question religion and politics scholars forfeited the opportunity to expand the literature and investigate other more liberal theologies of which we know very little. As it stands, "most of our measures of religious orthodoxy and commitment implicitly (or explicitly) appear to take the standards and practices of evangelical Protestantism as normative" (Jelen 1998: 128).

Arguably, the "most impressive achievement" of the religion and politics subfield is its account of the changes in the partisan alignment of religious traditions (Jelen 1998). In chapter 3, I demonstrated these changes by analyzing the contribution of the major religious traditions to the coalitions of the Democratic and Republican Party. Again, the value of this addition to the literature may be limited in scope. Denominational attachments and religious traditions do a make a difference politically (Kellstedt 1993), but only within the context provided by the researcher (Dennis 1991).

Theoretically, religious affiliation impacts attitudes about issues such as abortion, school prayer, and women's rights then in turn attitudes about these issues influence vote choice (Kellstedt 1993). Evidence suggests this theory may be faulty. In chapter 4, we learned that less than half of the members of the Christian Right possessed the necessary information to connect their issue preferences to their electoral decisions. Thus it appears the electoral decisions of the members of the Christian Right "are more like cultural tastes" rather "than individually deliberated decisions" (Dennis 1991). The problem with religion and politics account of the political realignment of religious groups then is its dependence on issues to connect religion to politics. Once again, this is a problem of focus. Religion and politics scholars are more interested in explaining the variation in religion's connection to politics than the variation in partisan affiliation or vote choice.

Changing the Focus

As I noted above, the primary reason the literature on religion and politics has not been incorporated into the mainstream study of political behavior is that religion and politics scholars have not made their findings accessible to other political scientists. Most political scientists interested in the study of political behavior are only tangentially interested in religion. Generally, these political scientists are exclusively interested how much of the variation in their dependent variable is accounted for by some religious variable. Often times the dependent variable these scholars are interested in are the traditional variables of turnout, partisanship, and vote choice.

To make the literature on religion and politics more accessible, scholars working in the subfield need to shift their focus from the independent variable (religion) to the dependent variable. This can be accomplished by asking research questions similar to the question asked in this thesis. From the evidence presented in chapter 4 it appears some members of the Christian Right do use moral issues to determine their vote choice. Given this evidence it appears religion and politics scholars could contribute more to the study of political behavior by further investigating issue voting. Undoubtedly, other avenues of research are also available.

Changing the focal point of the research in religion and politics is the first step scholars need to take to unifying the literature on religion and politics with mainstream research on political behavior. By addressing the traditional questions in political behavior religion and politics scholars will no doubt contribute great insights, but they will also go a long way toward changing the study of religion and political behavior into the study of political behavior and religion.

References

References

Abramowitz, Alan I. 1995. "It's Abortion, Stupid: Policy Voting in the 1992 Presidential Election." *The Journal of Politics* 57:1 176-186.

Abramson, Paul R., John H. Aldrich, and David W. Rhode. 1995. *Change and Continuity in the 1992 Elections*. Rev. ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Adams, Gred D. "Abortion: Evidence of an Issue Evolution." *American Journal of Political Science*. 41:.718-737.

Ammerman, Nancy T. 1982. "Opeerationalizing Evangelicalism: An Amendment." *Sociological Analysis* 43: 170-172.

Axelrod, Robert. 1972. "Where the Votes Come From: An Analysis of Electoral Coalitions, 1952 — 1968." *American Political Science Review* 66: 11-20.

Babbie, Earl. 1990. *Survey Research Methods*. 2nd ed. Blemont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Babbie, Earl. 1992. *The Practice of Social Research*. 6th ed. Blemont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Bell, Daniel. 1963. "The Radical Right." New York: Doubleday.

Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting:A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brody, Richard A. and Benjamin I. Page. 1972. "Comment: The Assessment of Policy Voting." *American Political Science Review* 66: 450-458.

Bruce, Steve. 1994. "The Inevitable Failure of the new Christian right." *Sociology of Religion*. 55: 229-242.

Buell, Emmett H. Jr. and Lee Sigelman. 1985. "An Army that Meets Every Sunday? Popular Support for the Moral Majority in 1980." *Social Science Quarterly* 66: 426-434.

Campbell, Angus, Phillip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Carmines, Edward G. and Richard A. Zeller. 1979. *Reliability and Validity Assessment*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE.

Carmines, Edward G. and James A. Stimson. 1980. " The Two Faces of Voting Issues." *American Political Science Review* 74: 78-91.

Clark, Adrian S. 1996. "Oliver North and the New Christian Right in the 1994 Senate Election." *Southeastern Political Review.* 24: 533-554.

Clark, Adrian S. 1998. "Religious Influences on Political Participation." *Southeastern Political Review* 26:2 293-311.

Conover, Pamela J. 1983. "The Mobilization of the New Right." *Western Political Quarterly* 36: 632-649.

Converse, Phillip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Politics." In David Apter (ed.) *Ideology and Discontent.* New York: Free Press.

Cook, Elizabeth A., Ted G. Jelen, and Clyde Wilcox. 1994. "Pro-life and Pro-choice Issue Voting." *Southeastern Political Review* 22: 409-426.

Cromartie, Michael. 1993. *No Longer Exiles: The New Religious Right in American Politics.* Washington, DC: Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Dennis, Jack. 1991. "The Study of Electoral Behavior." In William Crotty (ed.), *Political Science: Looking to the Future Volume Two--Political Behavior."* Chicago: Northwestern Univ. Press.

Dixon, Richard D., Lloyd P. Jones, and Roger C. Lowery. 1990. "Biblical Authority Questions: Two Choices in Identifying Conservative Christian Subcultures." *Sociological Analysis* 53: 63-72.

Dixon, Richard D., Roger C. Lowery, and Lloyd P. Jones. 1992. "The Fact and Form of Born-Again Respondents Conversions and Sociopolitical Conservatism." *Review of Religious Research* 34: 117-131.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy.* New York: Harpor and Row.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1981. *Retrospective Voting in American National Elections.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Fowler, Robert B. 1993. "The Failure of the Religious Right." In Michael Cromartie (ed.) *No Longer Exiles: the Religious Right in American Politics.* Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Gallup, George. 1979. "The Christianity Today-Gallup Poll: An Overview." *Christiantiy Today.* 23: 1663-1673.

Gant, Michael and Dwight Davis. 1984. "Mental Economy and Voter Rationality: The Informed Citizen Problem in Voting Research." *Journal of Politics* 46: 132-53.

Gant, Michael M. and Norman R. Luttbeg. 1987. "The Cognitive Utility of Partisanship." *Western Political Quarterly* 40:3 499-517.

Gopian, David J. 1993. "Images and Issues in the 1988 Presidential Election." *Journal of Politics* 55: 151-166.

Goran, Paul. 1997. "Political Expertise and Issue Voting in Presidential Elections." *Political Research Quarterly* 50: 387-412.

Green, John C. 1995. "The Christian Right and the 1984 Elections: A View from the States." *Political Science and Politics* 28: 5-8.

Green, C. John, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Smidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt. 1996. "Introduction: Religion and the Culture Wars." In John C. Green, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Smidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches From the Front*. New York: Roman and Littlefield.

Guth, James L. and John C. Green. 1986. "Faith and Politics: Religion and Ideology Among Political Contributors." *American Politics Quarterly* 14:3 186-200.

Guth, James L. and John C. Green. 1990. "Politics in a New Key: Religiousity and Participation Among Political Activists," *Western Political Quarterly* 53: 1 153-179.

Guth, James L. and John C. Green. 1991. *The Bible and the Ballot Box*. Boulder, CO: Westerview.

Guth, James L. and John C. Green. 1993. "Salience: The Core Conept?" In David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Rediscovering the Religious Facotr in American Politics*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Guth, James L.,John C. Green, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1995. "Onward Christian Soldiers: Religious Activist Groups in American Politics." In Allan J. Cigler and Burdett A. Loomis (eds.) *Interest Group Politics*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Guth, James L., John C. Green, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. "The Political Relevance of Religion: The Correlates of Mobilization." In James L. Guth, John C. Green, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt (eds.) *Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches From the Front*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Guth, James L., John C. Green, Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Margaret M. Poloma. 1997. *The Bully Pulpit: The Politics of Protestant Clergy*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Hertze, Allen D. 1993. *Echoes of Discontent*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Hopson, Ronald E. Ph.D. and Donald R. Smidt. 1999. "Changing Fortunes: An Analysis of Christian Right Ascendance Within American Political Discourse." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 38:1 1-13.

Hunter, James D. 1981. "Operationalizing Evangelicalism: a Review, Critique, and Proposal." *Sociological Analysis* 42: 363-372.

Hunter, James D. 1991. *Culture Wars*. New York: Basic Books.

Hunter, James Davison. 1994. *Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture War*. New York: The Free Press.

Jelen, Ted G. 1989. "Biblical Literalism and Inerrancy: Does the Difference Make a Difference." *Sociological Analysis* 49: 421-429.

Jelen, Ted G. (ed.) 1989. *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States* New York: Praeger.

Jelen, Ted G. 1990. "Religious Beliefs and attitude Constraint." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*. 29: 118-125.

Jelen, Ted G. 1991. *The Political Mobilization of Religious Beliefs*. New York: Praeger.

Jelen, Ted G. 1998. "Research in Religion and Mass Political Behavior in the United States: Looking Both Ways After Two Decades of Scholarship." *American Politics Quarterly* 26:1 110-134.

Jelen, Ted G., Clyde Wilcox, and Corwin Smidt. 1990. "Biblical Literlaism and Inerrancy: A Methodological Investigation." *Sociological Analysis 51: 307-313.*

Jelen, Ted G., Corwin E. Smidt, and Clyde Wilcox. 1993. "The Political Effects of the Born-Again Phenomenon." In David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Rediscovering the Religious Factor in American Politics*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Johnson, Janet and Richard A. Joslyn. 1995. *Political Science Research Methods*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Johnson, Stephen D., Joseph B. Tamney, and Ronald Burton. 1994. "Pro-Life and Pro-Choice Issue Voting." *Southeastern Political Review* 22:3 409-426.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1988. "The Falwell Issue Agenda: Sources of Support Among White Protestant Evangelicals." In M. Lynn and D. Mober (eds.) *research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*. JAI Press.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1989. "The Meaning and Measurement of Evagelicalism: Problems and Prospects." In Ted G. Jelen (ed.) *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States*. New York: Praeger.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1990. "Evangelical Religion and Support for Social Issue Policies." In Robert P. Steed, Laurence W. Moreland, and Ted A. Baker (eds.) *The Disappering South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1993. "Religion, the Neglected Variable: An Agenda for Future Research on Religion and Political Behavior." In David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Rediscovering the Religious Factor in American Politics*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1993. "Doctorial Beliefs and Political Behavior: Views of the Bible." In David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Rediscovering the Religious Factor in American Politics.* New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Kellstedt, Lyman A., John C. Green, James L. Guth, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1994. "Religious Voting Blocs in the 1992 Election: The Year of the Evangelical?" *Sociology of Religion* 55:3 307-326.

Kellstedt, Lyman A., John C. Green, James L. Guth, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. "Has Godot Finally Arrived? Religion and Realignment." In John C. Green, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Smidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches From the Front.* New York: Roman and Littlefield.

Kellstedt, Lyman A., John C. Green, James L. Guth, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. "Grasping the Essentials: The Social Embodiment of Religion and Political Behavior." In John C. Green, James L. Guth, Corwin E. Smidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt (eds.) *Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches From the Front.* New York: Roman and Littlefield.

Kessel, John H. 1972. "Comment: The Issues in Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 66: 459-465.

Key, V.O. Jr. 1955."A Theory of Critical Elections." *Journal of Politics.* 17: 3-18.

Key, V.O. Jr. 1959. "Secular Realignment and the Party System." *Journal of Politics.* 21: 198-210.

Key, V.O. Jr. 1966. *The Responsible Electorate: Rationality in Presidential Voting 1936-1960.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Layman, Geoffrey C. 1997. "Religion and Political Behavior in the United States: The Impact of Beliefs, Affiliations, and Commitment from 1980 to 1994." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 61: 288-316.

Layman, Geoffrey C. 1999. "'Culture Wars' in the American Party System: Religious and Cultural Change Among Partisan Activists Since 1972." *American Politics Quarterly* 27:1 89-121.

Layman, Geoffrey C. and Edward G. Carmines. 1997. "The Cultural Conflict in American Politics: Religious Traditionalism, Postmaterialism, and U.S. Political Behavior." *The Journal of Politics* 59:3 751-777.

Leege, David C. 1993. "Coalitions, Cues, Strategic Politics, and the Staying Power of the Religious Right, or Why Political Scientists Ought to Pay Attention to Cultural Politics." *Political Science and Politics.* 26: 198-204.

Leege, David C., Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Kenneth D. Wald. 1990. "Religion and Politics: A Report on Measures of Religiosity in the 1989 NES Pilot Study." Electronic Resources from the NES World Wide Wes Site (www.umich.edu/nes). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan. Center for Political Studies (producer and distibutor).

Leege, David C. and Lyman A. Kellstedt. 1993. *Rediscovering the Religious Factor in American Politics*. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Liebman, Robert. 1983. "Mobilizing the Moral Majority." In Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow (eds.) *The New Christian Right.* New York: Aldine.

Lipset, Seymour M. 1982. "Christian Conservatism as a Political Movement." *Political Science Quarterly* 97: 403-425.

Lipset, Seymour M. and Earl Raab. 1981. "The Election and the Evangelicals." *Commentary* 71: 25-32.

Lodge, Milton, Patrick Stroh, and John Wahlke. 1990. "Black-Box Models of Candidate Evaluation." *Political Behavior* 12: 5-15.

Lodge, Milton, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Shawn Brau. 1995. "The Responsive Voter: Campaign Information and the Dynamics of Candidate Evaluation." *American Political Science Review* 89: 309-326.

Lorentzen, Louise J. 1980. "Evangelical Lifestyle Concerns Expressed in Political Action." *Sociological Analysis* 41: 144-154.

Luttbeg, Norman R. and Michael M. Gant. 1995. *American Electoral Behavior 1952-1997.* 2nd ed. Itasca, IL: F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc.

Martin, William. 1996. *With God On Our Side.* New York: Broadway Books.

McCormick, Richard L. 1986. *Party, Period, and Public Policy.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Menendez, Albert. 1977. *Religion at the Polls.* Philadelphia: Westminster.

Miller, Warren E. and J. Merrill Shauks. 1996. *The New American Voter.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Moen, Matthew C. 1988. "Status Politics and the Political Agenda of the Christian Right." *Sociological Quarterly* 29: 429-437.

Moen, Matthew C. 1994. "From Revolution to Evolution: The Changing Nature of the Christian Right." *Sociology of Religion* 55:3 345-357.

Moen, Matthew C. 1996. "The Evolving Politics of the Christian Right." *Political Science and Politics* 29: 1-6.

Moore, Helen A. and Hugh P. Whitt. 1986. "Multiple Dimensions of the Moral Majority Platform: Shifting Interest Group Coalitions." *The Sociological Quarterly* 27:3 423-439.

Morin, R. 1993. "Getting a Hold on the Religious Right." *Washington Post Weekly Edition.* April 5-11: 37.

Nachmias, Chara F. and David Nachmias. 1992. *Research Methods in the Social Sciences.* 4th ed. New York: St. Martins Press.

Niemi, Richard G. and Herbert F. Weisberg. 1993. *Classics in Voting Behavior.* Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Page, Benjamin T. and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1992. *The Rational Public.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Persinos, John F. 1994. "Has the Christian Right Taken Over the Republican Party?" *Campaigns and Elections* Septemeber: 23.

Pomper, Gerald M. 1972. "From Confusion to Clarity: Issues and American Voters, 1956-1968." *American Political Science Review* 66:415-428.

Reed. Raaph. 1996. *Active Faith: How Christians Are Changing the Face of American Politics.* New York: Free Press.

Roof, Wade C. and William McKinney. 1987. *American Mainline Religion.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Rozell, Mark J., Clyde Wilcox, and John C. Green. 1998. "Religious Constituencies and Support for the Christian Right in the 1990s." *Social Science Quarterly* 79:4 815-827.

Schwartz, Alan M. 1994. *The Religious Right: The Assualt on Tolerance and Pluralism In America.* New York: Anti-Defamation League.

Shupe, Anson, and William Stacey. 1983. "The Moral Majority Constituency." In Robert C. Liebman and robert Withrow (eds.) *The New Christian Right.* New York: Aldine.

Sigelman, Lee, Clyde Wilcox, and Emmett H. Buell, Jr. 1987. "An Unchanging Minority: Popular Support for the Moral Majority 1980 and 1984." *Social Science Quarterly* 68: 876-884.

Sigelman, Lee and Stanley Presser. 1988. "Measuring Public Support for the New Christian Right: The Perils of Point Estimation." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 52: 325-337.

Simpson, John H. 1983. "Moral Issues and Status Politics." In Robert C. Liebman, and Robert Wuthnow (eds.) *The New Christian Right: Mobilization and Legitimation*. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.

Simpson, John H. 1985. "Socio-Moral Issues and Recent Presidential Elections." *Review of Religious Research* 27:2 115-123.

Simpson, John H. 1985. "Status Inconsistency and Moral Issues." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 24:2 119-236.

Simpson, John H. 1988. "A Reply to 'Measuring Support for the New Christian Right: The Perils of Point Estimation'." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 52: 338-342.

Simpson, John H. 1994. "The Mood of America in the 1980s: Some Further Observations on Sociomoral Issues." *Sociology of Religion* 55:3 291-305.

Smidt, Corwin E. 1987. "Evangelicals and the 1984 Election: Continuity or Change?" *American Politics Quarterly* 15: 419-444.

Smidt, Corwin E. 1988. "The Mobilization of Evangelical Voters in 1980." *Southeatern Political Review*, 16: 3-33.

Smidt, Corwin E. 1989. "Identifying Evnagelical Respondents." In Ted G. Jelen ed.) *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States*. New York: Praeger.

Smidt, Corwin E. 1993. "Evangelical Voting Patterns: 1976-1988." In Michael Cromartie (ed.) *No Longer Exiles: The New Religious Right in American Politics*. Washington, D.C.: Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Teixeira, Ruy A. 1992. *The Disappearing Ameican Voter*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.

Wald, Kenneth D. 1997. *Religion and Politics in the United States*. Washington D.C.: Congressional Quaterly Press.

Wald, Kenneth D., Dennis E. Owen, and Samuel S. Hill, Jr. 1989. "Habits of the Mind? The Problem of Authoriy in the New Christian Right." In Ted G. Jelen (ed.), *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States*. New York: Praeger.

Weyrich, Paul. 1999. *A Moral Minority?* Electronic resource from the Free Congress Research and Education Foundation world wide web site (www.freecongress.com). Washington, DC: Free Congress Research and Education Foundation [producers and distributors].

Wilcox, Clyde. 1987. "Popular Support for the Moral Majority in 1980: A Second Look." *Social Science Quarterly* 68: 157-169

Wilcox, Clyde. 1989. "The New Christian Right and the Mobilization of the Evangelicals." In Ted G. Jelen (ed.), *Religion and Political Behavior in the United States*. New York: Praeger.

Wilcox, Clyde. 1990. "Religion and Politics Among White Evangelicals: The Impact of

Religious Variables on Political Attitudes." *Review of Religious Research* 32:1 27-42.

Wilcox, Clyde. 1992. *God's Warriors*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univeristy Press.

Wilcox, Clyde, Ted G. Jelen, and Sharon Linzey. 1995. "Rethinking the Resonableness of the Religious Right." *Review of Religious Research* 36:3 263-276.

Wilcox, Clyde, Mark J. Rozell, and Ronald Gunn. 1996. "Religious Coalitions in the New Christian Right." *Social Science Quarterly* 77: 543-558.

Wilcox, Clyde, Matthew DeBell, and Lee Sigelman. 1999. "The Second Coming of the New Christian Right: Patterns of Popular Support in 1984 and 1996." *Social Science Quaterly* 80:1 181-192.

Wood, Michael and Michael Hughes. 1984. "The Moral Basis of Moral reform: Status Discontent vs. Culture and Socialization as Explanations of Anti-Pornography Social Movement Adherence." *American Sociological Review*. 49: 86-99.

Wuthnow, Robert. 1983. "The Political Rebirth of American Evangelicals." In Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow (eds.) *The New Christian Right*. New York: Aldine.

Appendix

Appendix

Coding of Variables

Christian Coalition Feeling Thermometer

I'd like to get your feelings toward some of our political leaders and other people who are in the news these days. I'll read the name of a person and I'd like you to rate that person using something we call the feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 degrees and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the person. Ratings between 0 and 50 degrees mean that you don't feel favorable toward the person and that you don't care too much for that person. You would rate the person at the 50 degree mark if you don't feel particularly warm or cold toward the person. If we come to a person whose name you don't recognize, you don't need to rate the person. Just tell me and we'll move on to the next one.

Support the Christian Right

Respondent rate Christian Coalition 80 degrees or higher?

0. No
1. Yes

Age

What is the month, day, and year of your birth?

Age 18-96
97 years or more

Gender

Respondent's sex is:

1. Male
2. Female

White (Race)

Respondent's race is:

0. Non-White
1. White

South

Respondents Census Region:

0. Non-South
1. South (AL, AR, DE, DC, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN , VA, WV)

Education

Summary of Respondents Education

1. 8 grades or less and no diploma or equivalency
2. 9-11 grades, no further schooling
3. High school diploma or equivalency test
4. More than 12 years of schooling, no higher degree
5. Junior or community college level degrees
6. BA level degrees; 17+ years, no advanced degree
7. Advanced degree

Family Income

Please look at the booklet and tell me the letter of the income group that includes the income of all members of your family living here in 1995 before taxes. This figure should include salaries, wages, pensions, dividends, interest, and all other income.

1. Less than $14,999
2. $15,000 – 19,999
3. $20,000 – 24,999
4. $25,000 – 29,999
5. $30,000 – 34,999
6. $35,000 – 49,999
7. $50,000 and up

Religious Tradition (1980 - 1988)

1. Mainline Protestant (Codes 100 – 156 NES Religious Summary Variable)
2. Evangelical Protestant (Codes 100 – 156 NES Religious Summary Variable, Born-Again, and Inerrant/Inspired response to Biblical Authority Item)
3. Catholic (Code 200 NES Religious Summary Variable)
4. Jewish (Code 300 NES Religious Summary Variable)
5. Other and None (Codes 700 – 998 NES Religious Summary Variable)

Religious Tradition (1992 - 1996)

1. Mainline Protestant (Codes 010 – 309 NES Religious Summary Variable)
2. Evangelical Protestant (Codes 010 – 309 NES Religious Summary Variable, Born-Again, and Inerrant/Inspired response to Biblical Authority Item)
3. Catholic (Code 400 NES Religious Summary Variable)
4. Jewish (Codes 500 - 503 NES Religious Summary Variable)
5. Other and None (Code 000 NES Religious Summary Variable)

Born-Again (1980 – 1984)

Some people have had a deep religious experience which has transformed their lives. I'm thinking of experiences sometimes described as "being born-again in one's life." There are deeply religious people who have not had an experience of this sort. How about you; have you had such an experience?

1. Yes
2. No

Born-Again (1988)

Do you consider yourself a born-again Christian?

1. Yes
2. No

Born-Again (1992 - 1996)

Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?

1. Yes
2. No

Bible Measure (1980 – 1988)

Here are four statements about the bible, and I'd like you to tell me which is the closet to you own view.

1. The Bible is God's work and all it says is true
2. The Bible was written by men who were inspired by God but it contains some human errors
3. The Bible is a good book because it was written by wise men, but God had nothing to do with it
4. The Bible was written so long ago that is worth little today

Bible Measure (1992 – 1996)

Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible?

1. The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word, or
2. The Bible is the word of God by not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word, or
3. The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God.

Church Attendance

Do you go to religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?

1. Every week
2. Almost every week
3. Once or twice a month
4. A few times a year
5. Never

Religious Guidance

Would you say your religion provides some guidance in your day-to-day living, quite a bit of guidance, or a great deal of guidance in your day-to-day life?

1. Some
2. Quite a bit
3. A great deal

Abortion

There has been some discussion about abortion during recent years. Which one of the opinions on this page best agrees with your view? You can just tell me the number of the opinion you choose.

1. By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice
2. The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest or danger to the woman's life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established.
3. The law should permit abortion only in the case of rape, incest or when the woman's life is in danger.
4. By law, abortion should never be permitted.

Homosexuals in the Military

Do you think homosexuals should be allowed to serve in the United States Armed Forces or don't you think so?

1. Homosexuals should be allowed to serve
5. Homosexuals should not be allowed to serve

Prayer in School

Which of the following views comes closest to your opinion on the issue of school prayer? Just give me the number of your choice.

1. By law, prayers should not be allowed in public schools
2. The law should allow public schools to schedule time when children can pray silently if they want to
3. The law should allow public schools to schedule time when children as a group, can say a general prayer not tied to a particular religious faith
4. By law, public schools should schedule a time when all children would say a chosen Christian prayer

Women's Rights

Recently there has been a lot of talk about women's rights some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running business, industry, and government. Others feel that a women's place is in the home. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Women and men should have equal roles
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. A women's place is in the home

Clinton Moral

Does moral describe Bill Clinton extremely well, quite well, not too well, or not well at all?

1. Extremely well
2. Quite well
3. Not too well
4. Not well at all

Party Identification

Summary Respondents Party Identification

0. Strong Democrat
1. Weak Democrat
2. Independent Democrat
3. Independent
4. Independent Republican
5. Weak Republican
6. Strong Republican

Turnout

In talking to people about elections, we often find that a lot of people were not able to vote because they weren't registered, they were sick, or they just didn't have time. How about you--did you vote in the elections this November?

1. Yes, voted
5. No, didn't vote

Presidential Vote 1996

Who did you vote for?

1. Bill Clinton
2. Ross Perot
3. Bob Dole
7. Other

Presidential Vote 1996 (Dummy Variable)

0. Bill Clinton
1. Bob Dole

Evangelical Protestants (Dummy Variable)

0. Other (Religious Summary Variable Codes 010 – 309 not Born-Again or Literal/Inspired response to the Bible Authority Item; Code 200, Code 300, and Codes 700 – 998)
1. Evangelical Protestants (NES Religious Summary Variable Codes 010 – 309, Born-Again, and Literal/Inspired response to Biblical Authority Item)

Respondent Knows Democratic Party Abortion Position

Respondent's placement of Democratic Party on abortion position:

1. Always as a personal choice
2. Clear need
3. Rape, incest, danger only
4. Never permitted

Respondent Knows Republican Party Abortion Position

Respondent's placement of Republican Party on abortion position:

1. Always as a personal choice
2. Clear need
3. Rape, incest, danger only
4. Never permitted

Respondent Knows Both Party's Abortion Position

0. Don't know either party's position
1. Know one party position
2. Know both party position

Respondent Perceived a Difference in Party's Abortion Position

0. No different
1. Different

Abortion Important

How important is this issue to you?

1. Extremely important
2. Very important
3. Somewhat important
4. Not too important
5. Not important at all

Abortion Important (Dummy Variable)

0. Not important
1. Important

Male

Respondent's sex is:

0. Female
1. Male

Ideology

We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Extremely liberal
2. Liberal
3. Slightly liberal
4. Moderate
5. Slightly Conservative
6. Conservative
7. Extremely Conservative

Defense Spending

Some people believe that we should spend much less money for defense. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that defense spending should be greatly increased. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between at points 2,3,4,5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?

1. Greatly decrease defense spending
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7. Greatly increase defense spending

Welfare Spending

If you had a say in making up the federal budget this year, for which of the following programs would you like to see spending increased and for which would you like to see spending decreased?

1. Increased
2. Decreased
3. Kept about the same
7. Cut out entirely

Affirmative Action

Some people say that because of past discrimination, blacks should be given preference in hiring and promotion. Others say that such preference in hiring and promotion of blacks is wrong because it gives blacks advantages they haven't earned. What about your opinion -- are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks?

1. For preferential hiring and promotion of blacks
5. Against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks

National Economy

Would you say that over the past twelve months, the state of the economy in the United States has gotten better, stayed about the same, or gotten worse?

1. Gotten better
2. Stayed about the same
3. Gotten worse

Vita

William Owen Westerfield II was born in Honolulu, Hawaii on March 24, 1972. He graduated from Cleveland High School in Cleveland, Tennessee, in May of 1990. He started work on his Bachelor's degree at Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee, in August 1990. At Lee University, he played two years of intercollegiate soccer for the Lee Flames before transferring to the University of Tennessee Chattanooga to complete his degree. In May 1995, he received a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of Tennessee Chattanooga. He entered the Master's program in Political Science at the University of Tennessee Knoxville in the fall of 1995. While pursuing his Master's degree, he worked with severally and persistently mentally ill adults at a local mental health center. Presently, he is working for the Tennessee Department of Health. At the Department of Health, he is working with the rural communities of Southeast Tennessee to evaluate their health status, address their health needs, and develop health care resources to produce healthier communities. He received his Master's Degree in Political Science in December 1999.