ABSTRACT

Look Who's Talking about Religion

Melissa Brianne Staha

Mentor: Paul Froese, Ph.D.

There is an ongoing debate about the health of America's civil society, the decline in participation of certain types of political activity, and the increasing rhetoric surrounding religion and politics. Using a national survey concerning religious and political beliefs, this paper examines which types of people are proselytizing, who is comfortable talking about religion and finally, how those two conditions influence opinions and actions concerning politics. We find that witnessing is about religious involvement and not necessarily about belief. Political conservatives who do not proselytize are more comfortable talking about religion. Those who are conservative, comfortable talking about religion, and who proselytize want religion to be in the public sphere and are less tolerant of other viewpoints. Finally, those who proselytize are interested in conversion and are not as politically active, while those who are comfortable talking about religion are more politically involved.
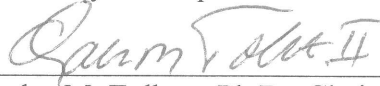
Look Who's Talking about Religion

by

Melissa B. Staha, B.A.

A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Sociology

_____

Charles M. Tolbert, Ph.D., Chairperson

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts

Approved by the Thesis Committee

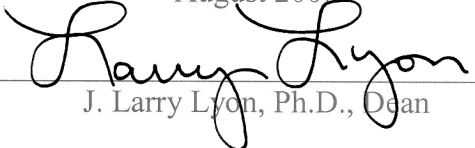_____

Paul Froese, Ph.D., Chairperson

_____

F. Carson Mencken, Ph.D.

_____

Charles M. North, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
August 2006

_____

J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Paul Froese for his guidance and patience as we worked through the ideas in this thesis. I would also like to thank Professor Carson Mencken and Professor Charles North for their assistance and contributions.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Civil Society

According to the old adage, one does not discuss religion or politics in polite

company. While this well-known axiom may help one avoid sensitive topics which can

lead to unwelcome quarrels, universal adherence to this rule may, ironically, be the

undoing of civil society. Civil society is defined by the freedom of expression, the

emphasis on democratic values, and the respect for others. These three qualities are

embodied in the art of conversation, as it is often called. Conversation is necessary for

the free exchange of ideas that is the backbone of our civil society. Knoke (1990) found

that those who discussed politics with people in their immediate network were more

likely to be involved in political activity and to have voted. Thus, productive

conversation fosters knowledge, understanding and ultimately, action.

Knowledge is necessary to make informed decisions. Tocqueville (1835:2003)

argues that "whenever each citizen is granted the right to govern society, recognition has

to be given to his capacity to choose between the different viewpoints which trouble his

fellow citizens and to appreciate the different facts which may guide his judgment" (211).

He then highlights many freedoms that contribute to the dissemination of information in

the United States, including the freedom of the press. However, what he touts as most

effective is the formation of free associations, which allow for unfettered exchange of

ideas and opinions.

Although associations tend to be organized by like-minded people and set out to achieve a united goal, they function as a counterweight to the majority opinion. In essence, they provide the information for another side of the conversation. These voluntary associations provide ways for people to both internally and externally transmit information and act as "forums of deliberation" (Putnam 2000, 339). The dissemination of information is important for civil society in the United States given that the U.S. has universal suffrage and thus everyone has the ability to participate in the democratic process by voting.

Finally, one must be acquainted with the "other" in society to avoid violence and intolerance. Appiah (2006) argues that although we live in one world, people have different interpretations of that world and many interpretations may not even be evident to us. However, if we are ever approached or confronted by those ideas, it is possible that our conversation will generate into productive debate about the merits of each side. However, it is also possible that the debate can degenerate into violence given certain people's proclivities.

Religion and Civil Society

Religion is one such divisive issue that, historically, has led to violence. In the United States, religious concerns are central to our civil society and this is seen in the culture wars that divide the public. Although Tocqueville (1835:2003) wrote that "…in the world of morality, everything is definite and settled" (341), at issue currently is the source of moral authority. Hunter (1991) argues that "few of us leave these discussions without ardently voicing our own opinions on the matter at hand. Such passion is completely understandable. These are, after all, discussions about what is fundamentally

right and wrong about the world we live in—about what is ultimately good and what is finally intolerable in our communities" (31). These culture wars, he argues, are played out every day across the U.S. at such places as the office, at school, in the doctor's waiting room and amongst friends, relatives and neighbors.

The source of moral authority matters given that political discourse should give rise to the enforcement of a political system that regulates what is right and what is wrong. It is the source of the authority that informs the moral views. The United States' political scene has degenerated into two groups: one group who defers to an omnipotent and binding authority and another group who believes in subjective and personal interpretations of whatever authority to which one may subscribe. The culture war is a debate about to which authority must we submit—our own or something greater than our own.

Not surprisingly, this debate follows religious lines. However, the culture war has brought together groups that were historically at odds: those Hunter (1991) labels as orthodox, or Evangelical Protestants, Conservative Catholics, Orthodox Jews, Mormons and other fundamentalist and conservative parties as opposed to those termed progressives, or secularists, liberal Christians and Jews, and those who tend to support a strict version of church-state separation. The orthodox try to link politics and religion while the progressives, of which many are religious, work to keep politics and religion separate. It is an uphill battle for both parties as they each fight to claim the mountain, whether that is popular opinion or control of the U.S. House, Senate, White House or Supreme Court, for their own.

There are many who argue and present sound evidence against the complete polarization of our society (Davis and Robinson 1996, Dimaggio, Evans and Bryson 1996). If there is no polarization of public opinion, then there is no broad culture war, as polarization is closely related to social tensions (Esteban and Ray 1994). However, even though the people may not be completely polarized, the polarized rhetoric may still exist. Rhetoric is important to the public sphere as it provides citizens with social definitions. We are recipients of rhetoric from places such as the media and politicians, which then informs our opinions and conversations (Mendelsohn 1996).

With the rise of the religious right and the Moral Majority, among other politically-oriented religious groups, religion and politics are at the forefront of our national conversations. As Tocqueville (1835:2003) wrote, "in America, religion governs not only behavior but extends its influence to men's minds" (341). Men's minds combine religion and politics and given the range of opinions, the result is that we are in the middle of a rhetoric war. However, like free associations (Putnam 2000) and political exchange (Tocqueville 1835:2003), religious conversation is necessary for individuals to understand the other, make informed decisions, live peacefully, and possibly unite to create action.

CHAPTER TWO

Religious Conversations

There are many ways in which ideas about religion are communicated. One type of conversation is persuasive in nature and typically is called witnessing, proselytizing, or sharing one's faith with others. Witnessing is more than just conversation in that the goal of it is conversion. It is practiced by many different Christian denominations, as well as many different religions. Another type of religious conversation is simply to discuss religion. This type of conversation could include witnessing, but it also may just be the simple exchange of ideas with other people. It may include the discussion of something relating to current events, general chatter at a cocktail party or debates on the merits of different churches in the area. Given our exaltation of freedom of religion and speech, and the fact that Americans are active in their religions (Finke and Stark 1992), we expect that Americans should be comfortable talking about religion.

Witnessing, or proselytizing, is the sharing of one's beliefs in order to convert someone else to one's religious faith. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses are encouraged to go from door-to-door in an effort to inform citizens about the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses. They offer literature, engage in discussions of a religious nature and encourage the recipient of the information to attend Bible studies and services at the Jehovah's Witnesses' local Kingdom Hall. In order to provide support for proselytizing activities, Jehovah's Witnesses submit field service reports about their witnessing activities. Besides Jehovah's Witnesses, witnessing is highly encouraged by many

Evangelical and conservative religious denominations and groups. When the demands of the religion revolve around the simple act of "accepting Jesus," spreading the word of God by encouraging conversion becomes very important.

We use the Baylor Religion Survey (BRS),[1] a nationwide study which asks religious and political questions to investigate American's witnessing activities. The witnessing question asks, "How often did you participate in the following religious activities last month… witnessing/sharing your faith with strangers?" There were four response choices: "not at all," "1-2 times," "3-4 times," "5 times or more." As Figure 1 shows, those who are active in proselytizing activities are a small portion of our sample. Only 3.2 percent of the respondents witnessed five or more times in the past month with strangers and 5 percent witnessed 3 to 4 times in the past month. However, 14.5 percent witnessed 1 to 2 times in the previous month. Less than 25 percent of the respondents replied that they participated in any witnessing activity or sharing of their faith with strangers. In all, few people are actually participating in proselytizing activities, especially more than twice a month.

Next, we look at those who feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers. Talking about religion is not necessarily witnessing and seeking to convert others. Those who are comfortable talking about religion with strangers can also be people who are comfortable with their opinions about religion and value conversation. As mentioned earlier, conversation is about gaining and sharing knowledge and developing an understanding of the other position. The question from the Baylor Religion Survey is "how comfortable would you feel talking about religion with strangers?" and the responses are "very comfortable," somewhat comfortable," "somewhat uncomfortable,"

---

[1] See Bader, Froese and Mencken, forthcoming.
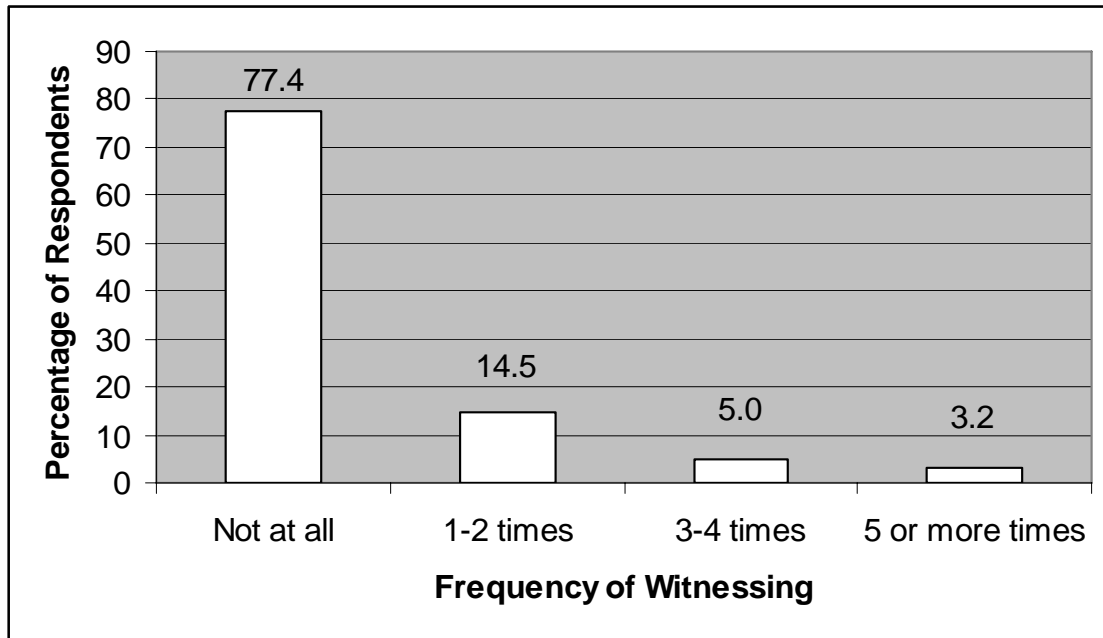
Fig. 1. Witnessing Activity in the Past Month

and "not at all comfortable." Given the wording of the question, the meaning of it is somewhat open to interpretation by the respondent.

Figure 2 shows the percentages of the respondents who answered in each category in comfort talking about religion. First, 23.2 percent of the respondents were not at all comfortable talking about religion while a little over one-fourth, or 25.4 percent, were somewhat uncomfortable. The plurality of respondents, or 29.8 percent, was somewhat comfortable. Finally, 21.6 percent were very comfortable. Over 50 percent of the respondents were somewhat or very comfortable talking about religion with strangers. Thus, people are much more comfortable talking about religion with strangers than they are witnessing to strangers.

In order to further investigate the action of witnessing to strangers and the attitude concerning comfort talking about religion with strangers, we use a mixture of institutional and individual factors. First, we look at the determinants of those who
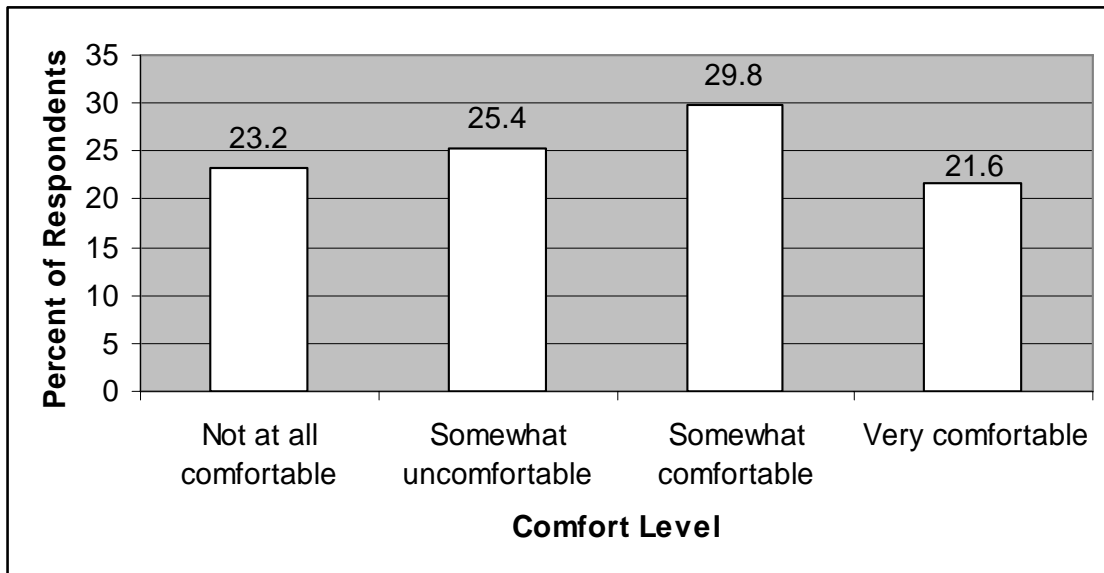
Fig. 2. Comfort Talking about Religion with Strangers

witness to strangers. Second, we separate those who witness and those who do not

witness and determine who is comfortable talking to strangers about religion. Finally, we

look at how witnessing to strangers and comfort talking about religion influences three

different measures of political activism—belief in church and state separation, political

tolerance and finally, political involvement.

CHAPTER THREE

Who Talks about Religion?

Theory

When studying religion, especially in other contexts, it is often important to combine both institutional and individual-level factors (Mears and Ellison 2000, Chaves and Gorski 2001, Brooks 2002). Brooks (2002) identifies religious influence theory by bringing together three religious influences—denominational membership, rates of church attendance and finally, denomination-specific influences—that are widely studied in the sociology of religion literature. However, it is important to include general religiosity as defined by Lehrer (2004), which includes commitment to the religion. Commitment is often measured as church attendance, strength of religious beliefs, including commitment to the teachings of the religion, and participation in religious activities, both alone and within a congregation.

Contrary to the argument that secularization is the current trend in religion, religious beliefs in the United States are robust (Sherkat and Ellison 1999). Sherkat writes that "often, interactions with religious resources are not driven primarily by religious schemas. The intersection between social structures and the transposability of schemata make it likely that religious choices will be influenced by non-religious factors" (Sherkat 1998, 1092). Thus, we should see non-religious factors, such as demographic variables, affecting religious variables such as witnessing activities and comfort talking about religion. However, there are some disparities between different demographic groups. Females are, in general, more religious and attend church more often (Lazerwitz

1961, Lenski 1953, De Vaus and McAllister 1987). Older Americans are more religious (Hout and Greeley 1987), although this may just be a cohort effect. African Americans attend church more often than Whites, especially in the rural South (Hunt and Hunt 2001, Lazerwitz 1961).

Education, income and region of the country also matter. Sherkat (1998) found that Baby Boomers who have higher levels of education are less biblically conservative but more likely to participate in religious services later in life (Sherkat 1998). However, Johnson (1997) and Lazerwitz (1961) found that there is a small negative effect of educational attainment on church attendance and on religious belief. Those with middle levels of household income are more religious (Lenski 1953). Finally, church membership is affected by the location of the church, not just the type of church that it is (Hadaway 1981, Stump 1998). Similarly, Southerners are more religiously active (Sherkat 1998). Social constructs may be regional, leading people to be more or less likely to want to discuss religion depending on which region in which they live.

Given the empirical evidence and that proselytizing is a religious activity, we expect that women, older Americans, African Americans, those with less education and Southerners will be more likely to proselytize. It is not clear what the effect of income on the probability of proselytizing will be. However, comfort in talking about religion may not be strictly a religious activity. It is possible that comfort talking about religion has nothing to do with how religious a person may be. Thus, it is possible that those who feel comfortable talking about religion bear no resemblance to those who are religious. We split the sample into those who witnessed to strangers in the past month and those who did not. From there, we looked at who is comfortable talking about religion with

strangers. Thus, we will predict that the demographic results for who are comfortable talking about religion with strangers will follow that of those who proselytized. However, of those who did not proselytize, those who are comfortable talking about religion may look different from those who are religious.

Denominations have their own history, create their own symbols and often have their own language or buzzwords for talking about religious ideas. They not only have different content of communication, but also differ in the way and ability in which they communicate (Regnerus, Sikkink and Smith 1999, Woodberry and Smith 1998). In the United States, there is high commitment to specific denominations as well as strength found at the religious-organizational level (Sherkat and Ellison 1999, Iannaccone, Olson and Stark 1995). Specifically, there is a social cohesiveness and even a sense of moral conservatism that is shared by evangelical Protestants (Wald, Owen and Hill, 1990). Steensland et al. (2000) provides a denominational classification scheme that better discerns both the differences and the similarities in denominations. Their "RELTRAD," or religious tradition, classification scheme is widely used (Wuthnow 2002, Beyerlein and Chaves 2003, Reimer and Park 2001). The classification of denominations is based on historical changes in those denominations, as well as terminology and belief. This classification scheme uses the following delineations—Evangelical Protestant, Black Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Other and None.

There are eight religious traditions included in the study: Evangelical Protestant, Black Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, those of "Other" religious traditions, those who are not affiliated with any religious tradition, or the "Nones" and finally, Orthodox. There were too few respondents in the Orthodox category, so it is

excluded in the study. These variables are binary variables. Given the literalist Biblical adherence of the Evangelical Protestants (Woodberry and Smith 1998) and thus their predicted involvement in witnessing activities, Evangelical Protestants are used as the reference group. As compared to Evangelical Protestants, Mainline Protestants and Catholics will be less likely to witness to strangers, Jews and Others will be even less likely to have witnessed in the past month and those who have no religious affiliation will be least likely to have witnessed in the past month to strangers. We predict that African Americans will be more likely to witness, so Black Protestants should be likely to witness. However, how those in the Black Protestant category compare to Evangelical Protestants is not obvious.

Of those who witnessed and of those who did not witness to strangers in the past month, it is not clear which denominations would be more comfortable talking about religion with strangers than the Evangelicals. If the responses for those who are comfortable talking about religion indicate a more strict religious belief, then, as compared to Evangelicals, the less strict or conservative denominations should be less comfortable. On the other hand, if comfort talking about religion indicates acceptance of broad beliefs, then those of the less strict denominations should be more comfortable than Evangelicals talking about religion with strangers.

Rates of church attendance, it is argued, influence all sorts of behaviors, both religious, such as religious commitment (Hoge and Carroll 1978, Iannaccone and Everton 2004) and non-religious, such as years of schooling (Loury 2004). Church attendance allows individuals to establish social-networks with prospectively like-minded people as well as provides forums for clergy to pontificate on a variety of subjects, including

religious behavior and politics (Wald, Owen and Hill 1988, McKenzie 2004). Religious socialization influences religious behavior, including belief, commitment and participation (Cornwall 1987, Cornwall 1989, Sherkat 1998). Sherkat (1998) found that those raised in conservative Protestant religions were more likely to participate in religion later in life.

Social structural factors, such as social networks, are important for both transmitting information and influence (Djupe 2000). Churchgoers tend to have larger social networks (Ellison and George 1994). Brooks (2002) finds that the social networks are activated at the levels of both the congregation and the leaders and he notes the importance of the religious institution itself in the formation of social networks. Religious institutions also encourage communication between members such that the members have their preexisting beliefs reinforced (Wald, Owen and Hill 1988, 1990). Similarly, Olson and Hadaway (1999) argue that religious pluralism may decrease social reinforcement of religious involvement due to a decrease in the number of close social ties who are of your religion. Thus we expect those who attended church as children, those who attend church as adults, and those who have more of their friends attend their church to be more likely to proselytize and be more comfortable talking about religion with strangers.

"Religious experiences" is an index of activities and feelings which people confirm that they either have or have not experienced. These include witnessing others speaking in tongues, personally speaking in tongues, feeling called by God, having a religious conversion experience, feeling filled with the spirit and being in a state of

religious ecstasy.[1] This index exhibits a high degree of internal consistency with an alpha

of 0.7981. Almost 24 percent of the sample did not experience any of the religious

experiences listed. However, only 11.6 percent of the sample does not affiliate with a

religious tradition. This means that there are a number of religiously affiliated

respondents who have not had these types of religious experiences.

In their article on classifying conservative Protestants, Woodberry and Smith

(1998) explain that Charismatics and Pentecostals stress religious experience as important

to one's relationship with God. [2] Rodney Stark (2001a) writes that "in the case of groups

that engage in various forms of collective 'ecstatic' experiences, they offer one another

direct *demonstrations* of the existence of a God or Gods" (178). Given that religious

experiences are important to religious confidence, it is possible that those with more

religious experiences are more likely to feel comfortable talking about religion with

strangers. We also predict that those with more religious experiences are more likely to

proselytize, not only because they have more confidence in God's existence, but also

because they have a story to tell based on their personal encounters.

Belief has been found to be important when determining religious behavior

(Lunn, Klay and Douglass 2001, Stark 2001b, Froese 2004). Cornwall found that belief

and commitment were the strongest predictors of Mormon religious behavior, with social

relationship, religious socialization and demographic variables less so (1989). If one

views comfort in talking about religion as a religious behavior, then we might expect

---

[1] See Appendix for a full listing of these experiences.

[2] According to Woodberry and Smith (1998), the Pentecostal movement was through primarily
Black churches, so people belonging to this group are in our Black Protestant group. Charismatics,
however, can be found in various Protestant denominations and thus are in our Evangelical Protestant
group.

religious belief and commitment to be most important. She argues that religious

behaviors are controlled by the group and that there are two methods of social controls—

acceptance, by the individual, of the particular value system prescribed by the religious

group and also the reinforcement of those behaviors.

Those in conservative protestant groups have a stronger preference for Bible-

based religion (Sherkat 1998). This could imply that those who hold conservative

religious beliefs are more likely to proselytize.[3] This seems especially likely because of

the push to "go forth and teach all nations," instructions that are given in the Bible.

However, the effect of people's religious beliefs on what people think about talking to

strangers about religion is unclear. As mentioned earlier, talking about religion with

strangers may be a religious behavior, it might be a measurement of personality, or it

could measure how close the respondent feels to the current culture.

It is unclear what kind of effect political ideology will have on those who recently

witnessed to strangers and on those who are comfortable talking about religion with

strangers. There is a dearth of research in this area, which is one of the reasons why we

include this variable. If politics and religion are really that far apart, we should see that

political ideology has no effect on either situation—those who proselytize and those who

feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers.

In conclusion, we predict that those people who are religiously affiliated with a

denomination, attend church, have religious experiences, and have more conservative

religious beliefs will be more likely to have witnessed to strangers in the past month and

also will be more comfortable talking about religion with strangers. In general, people

---

[3] We define conservative religious beliefs as believing that the your religion is the one, true way to salvation, having no doubts that God exists, and having a literalist view about the Bible.

who have some sort of religious relationship may be more likely to talk about religion simply because it is a part of their life. Those who are religiously affiliated with a denomination, especially a strict one, are receiving teachings that encourage them to witness to others. People who attend church more often than others have a system of accountability built into their church-going behavior. They have encouragement from the church to witness to others and it is possible that they have other church members following up with them concerning their witnessing activities. Those who have religious experiences have something to share with others. They may also have more impetus for talking to strangers about religion. Finally, those who are more conservative in both their denomination and their religious beliefs are more likely to believe in a strongly Bible-based code of conduct which includes witnessing to others and talking about religion.

Findings

In Table 1, our dependent variable is a binary variable that equals one if the respondent witnessed to a stranger within the past month and zero otherwise and we utilize a binary logistic model. We do not find anything demographically that is unordinary. Women are more likely to witness, while whites and those with higher household income are less likely to witness. The other demographic variables are not significant.

Not surprisingly, those who have no religious affiliation are less likely than Evangelicals to have witnessed in the past month. And although whites overall are less likely to have witnessed to strangers in the past month, Black Protestants are less likely than Evangelicals to have proselytized in the past month. All other denominations—Mainline Protestants, Catholics, those who are Jewish and those of other religions—are

Table 1. Determinants of those who Witness to Strangers

Variable	Witness to Strangers	
	Beta	Odds
Female	0.507*	1.660
Age	-0.004	1
White	-1.668**	0.189
Education	-0.127	1
Household income	-0.202**	0.817
South	0.044	1
Black Protestant	-2.057**	0.128
Mainline Protestant	-0.336	1
Catholic	-0.514	1
Jewish	-0.543	1
Other	0.152	1
None	-1.870**	0.154
Church attendance as kid	0.020	1
Church attendance as adult	0.098*	1.103
Religious experiences	0.221**	1.248
Number of friends who attend same church	0.142	1
Political Ideology	0.033	1
Beliefs about religious salvation	0.298	1
Belief in God	-0.340*	0.711
Christians in Heaven	-0.077	1
Beliefs about Bible	0.267	1
Talk to Strangers	0.811**	2.249
R^2	0.437	
Observations	843	

$**p < 0.01$ $*p < 0.05$

no different from Evangelicals in whether or not they witnessed in the past month. This result is surprising given that Evangelicals have a reputation for proselytizing. Our results suggest that Evangelicals have not cornered the market on sharing their faith with strangers, as they are commonly portrayed.

Church attendance as a child is not significant, but church attendance as an adult is positive and significant. Although Sherkat (1998) found that childhood church involvement affects adult participation, we find that current religious involvement impacts action much more than church attendance as a child. This result makes sense given that the religious activity of witnessing involves the sharing of one's current personal position as it relates to religion. Religious socialization affects religious behaviors but indirectly and current religious commitment matters most (Cornwall 1989). Thus it is possible for religious socialization to affect current church attendance but not really the act of witnessing.

The religious experiences variable is positive and significant, which means that people who have experiences to share are more likely to witness to strangers. What is surprising is that witnessing does not appear to really rely on belief as only one of the belief variables, belief in God, is significant. Those who have a stronger belief in God are less likely to witness to strangers, which seems to be a counter-intuitive result, given that witnessing is about convincing someone about faith in God. Finally, those who feel comfortable talking to strangers about religion are much more likely to proselytize.

In all, witnessing is predicted by religious involvement in a group and having experiences to share. We see this result with the positive results on church attendance and religious experiences and the negative result on the "None" category. These results imply that witnessing is partially about group identity and could explain why those with the strongest belief in God are less likely to witness to strangers. At the same time, those who witness are often sharing the manifestation of God in their life through religious experiences.

Next we divided out those who witnessed in the past month and those who did not and we looked at the determinants of who feels comfortable talking about religion using a binary logistic model. These results are reported in Table 2. Of those who witnessed in the past month, women are less likely to feel comfortable talking about religion. Those who have religious experiences and those who are more politically liberal are more likely to feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers. Finally, those who have a strong belief in God are much more likely to feel comfortable but those who believe Heaven is more exclusive are less comfortable talking about religion with strangers. Given that none of the religious group involvement variables were significant, we conclude that these people who feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers and witnessed to them recently do so because of their religious experiences. These people have something to share and they feel comfortable sharing it.

There were people in our sample who witnessed and they did not feel comfortable talking to strangers about religion. These people are witnessing because of group reasons. They do not feel comfortable sharing their faith but they still do so because it is encouraged by the group to which they belong. It also makes sense that those who believe Heaven is more exclusive would be less likely to feel comfortable talking about religion given that they, perhaps, do not know if their proselytizing is having the desired effect.

Interestingly, those who are more politically liberal and witnessed to strangers in the past month are more comfortable talking about religion with strangers. On the other hand, of those who did not witness, political conservatives are more comfortable talking

Table 2. Determinants of those who are Comfortable Talking to Strangers about Religion

| | Talk to Strangers | | | |
| | Witnessed | | Did not Witness | |
Variable	Beta	Odds	Beta	Odds
Female	-0.859*	0.424	-0.536	1
Age	0.021	1	0.011	1
White	0.169	1	-2.071*	0.126
Education	-0.012	1	-0.023	1
Household income	0.246	1	0.212*	1.236
South	-0.021	1	0.063	1
Black Protestant	0.738	1	0.194	1
Mainline Protestant	-0.771	1	0.576	1
Catholic	-0.626	1	0.479	1
Jewish	21.377	1	2.808**	16.569
Other	0.328	1	1.215	1
None	4.677	1	2.377**	10.772
Church attendance as kid	-0.039	1	0.023	1
Church attendance as adult	-0.052	1	-0.018	1
Religious experiences	0.257**	1.292	0.062	1
Number of friends who attend same church	0.180	1	-0.153	1
Political Ideology	0.331**	1.392	-0.182*	0.833
Beliefs about religious salvation	-0.275	1	-0.701*	0.496
Belief in God	1.785*	5.958	0.202	1
Christians in Heaven	-0.521*	0.594	-0.470*	0.625
Beliefs about Bible	0.035	1	0.417*	1.517
R^2	0.437		0.190	
Observations	215		628	

**$p < 0.01$ *$p < 0.05$

about religion with strangers. So, if political liberals are more comfortable talking about religion, they are out witnessing. The Democrats who are not comfortable talking about religion stay home. However, political conservatives are comfortable talking about religion but they are less likely to participate in the religious conversion of strangers.

Of those who did not witness, whites are less likely to feel comfortable talking about religion and those with higher household incomes are more likely to be

comfortable talking about religion with strangers. Interestingly, those who are Jewish and those who are of no religious preference are much more likely than those who are Evangelical Protestant to feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers. All other denominations are not statistically different from the Evangelicals.

Also, those who have strong beliefs about religious salvation and also those who believe fewer Christians will go to heaven are less comfortable talking about religion with strangers. It is understandable that someone who believes that access to heaven is limited would be less comfortable talking about religion, especially if the talk revolves around the person's idea of heaven. It is this exclusivity which helps to explain why they did not witness in the past month. Finally, those who have strong beliefs about the Bible and did not witness are more likely to feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers.

Thus, those who do feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers are either political liberals who witness to strangers or political conservatives with a literal interpretation of the Bible who do not witness to strangers. The Democrats who witness to strangers are acting on their comfort in talking about religion as they are out participating in religious conversion. However, the Republicans who are comfortable talking about religion are not out converting others. They are emboldened inasmuch as they are willing to talk about religion and this is due to the current political climate. However, they are not emboldened to take action inasmuch as they are not sharing their faith with strangers.

CHAPTER FOUR

Politics

Measurement

One of the things about the U.S. that so impressed Tocqueville (1835:2003) was the ability of people to hold religion as paramount but also to guarantee freedoms for all people. However, politicians and public figures from many different religious traditions use rhetoric and the ideas of civil religion to advance their ideas. Although there is a running debate in the literature over the definition and existence of a "civil" or "civic" religion (Wimberley et al. 1976, Cole and Hammond 1974, Thomas and Flippen 1972), politics and religion are intimately linked in the United States.

Based on the questions and answers in the Baylor Survey, we created additive scales to gauge opinions on church and state and political tolerance and to gauge political involvement. The respondent rates the answers for church and state and political tolerance from strongly agree to strongly disagree with undecided in the middle. Strongly agree corresponds to 5, undecided is 3 and strongly disagree is 1. These responses are then summed to create the scales. The higher the score for church and state is, the more the respondent wants the government to be involved with religion. The higher the score for political tolerance, the more tolerant the respondent is. For the political involvement question, the respondent has only two choices—yes or no. Yes is 1, no is 0 and the responses are summed. The higher the score for political involvement, the more involved the respondent is.

The church-state question asks the respondent "to what extent do you agree or disagree that the federal government should…" and then gives a range of situations. We use "advocate Christian values," "defend Christian values," fund faith-based organizations," "allow the display of religious symbols in public spaces," and "allow prayer in public schools." This index ranges from five to twenty-five and exhibits a high degree of internal consistency with an alpha of 0.8939.

The question about political tolerance asks the respondent "to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the educational system." The two questions are "an admitted homosexual should be allowed to teach at a high school" and that "a Muslim should be allowed to teach at a high school." This index runs from two to ten and exhibits an alpha of 0.8089.

The political involvement question asks the respondent "in the year leading up to the 2004 presidential election, did you…" and then gives a range of political activities. We chose "give money to a political campaign, party or candidate," "write, call or visit a public official," attend a political rally or meeting," "attend a class or lecture about social or political issues," participate in a public protest or demonstration," or "work for a political campaign or voter registration drive." This index runs from zero to six and has an alpha of 0.7200.

Theory and Past Results

Church-State Separation

Demographic variables affect political beliefs and actions. Bennett, Flickinger and Rhine (2000) found that in the United States, women talked more about politics, as did those with higher educational levels and income. However, they do note that that

general interest in the subject also mattered. Although there are no comprehensive studies on the predictors of the variety of church-state issues about which we ask, there are surveys on the separate components of our index. For example, Elifson and Hadaway (1985) found that those who were older and less educated supported allowing prayer in public school, a finding which is statistically significant. On the other hand, they also found that whites and males are less likely to support allowing prayer in school although these results are not significant in the discriminate analysis. At the same time, religious conservatives are more likely to support prayer in public schools, as are political conservatives (Elifson and Hadaway 1985). Kohut et al (2000) find that Evangelicals, Mainliners, Black Protestants and Catholics all favor less church-state separation than Jews and those who are secular.

Given the previous empirical studies, it is possible that older Americans will support less church-state separation. Those with higher education and higher incomes will agree with church-state separation. Also, the more conservative religious groupings should want less church-state separation. The Evangelical Protestants are the most conservative group, so they should favor less church-state separation than the other groups. Finally, in the vein of Elifson and Hadaway (1985), Republicans should be more likely to want church and state together.

Tolerance

Sullivan, Piereson and Marcus (1979) define political tolerance as "a willingness to permit the expression of those ideas or interests that one opposes" (784). Women are more likely to be politically intolerant (Gibson 1992) but they are intolerant of different

groups than men (Golebiowska 1999)[1]. Americans do not get more conservative over

time but due to cohort effects, older Americans are less politically tolerant (Cutler and

Kaufman 1975). African Americans are much less tolerant, as a group, of their least

tolerated group than Whites of their least tolerant group (Davis 1995). Those with more

education are also more tolerant (Beatty and Walter 1984, Gibson 1992). Social class

identification was not significant (Gibson 1992). Southerners are less racially tolerant

but the effects are decreasing over time (Tuch 1987). However, Sullivan et al. (1981)

note that social variables have an effect on political tolerance but it is an indirect effect.

Beatty and Walter (1984) find that some religious denominations are less tolerant

than others. Most Protestants were less tolerant than Jews and Catholics, Catholics were

in the middle of the pack and Congregationalists, Episcopalians and Jews were most

tolerant (323). Davis (1995) found that those who were white and religiously

fundamentalist were more intolerant than whites who were not religiously

fundamentalist. Finally, political traditionalists are more likely to be intolerant and

political modernists are more likely to be tolerant (Golebiowska 1995).

Based on previous work, women and older Americans should be less tolerant.

African Americans will be less tolerant. Those with higher education and higher incomes

will be more tolerant, while Southerners will be less tolerant. From a religious

perspective, it is not far fetched to expect to find similar results as Beatty and Walter

(1984). Those of "other" religions will be most tolerant because of the stigma they have

faced in society. Then, Mainline Protestants and Jews will be the next tolerant, followed

by the Black Protestants and Catholics. The Evangelical Protestants will be the least

---

[1] Golebiowska (1999) found that women are less tolerant of the KKK and abortion groups while men are less tolerant of militaristic groups.

tolerant (Smith 1990). So, given that the Evangelical Protestants are the reference group, all other groups will be more tolerant than the Evangelicals. Politically, Democrats should be the most tolerant.

Political Involvement

Nie, Powell and Prewitt (1969) found that people overall are not very active in politics. Women are less politically active due to differences in political education (Verba, Burns and Schlozman 1997). Older Americans are less likely to participate in politics except that they were more likely to participate in age-specific activities that contributed to politics, such as reading about issues in the newspaper concerning older Americans and attending meetings specifically for the elderly (Jennings and Markus 1988). African American and White political participation vary (Danigelis 1977), so it is difficult to determine which group is more politically active. However, people of higher socio-economic status, i.e. more educated and with higher incomes, are more politically active (Alford and Scoble 1968, Nie, Powell and Prewitt 1969). Finally, Southerners are more likely to vote (Harris 1994).

For African Americans, religion functions as an organizational and psychological resource for political activity (Harris 1994). Alford and Scoble (1968) did not find any statistically significant difference between Catholics and Protestants and political involvement on the local level. However, Latino Catholics were more likely to vote for School Board and Congress than Latino Protestants but denominational differences (Catholic versus Protestant) did not matter for Anglos (Jones-Correa and Leal 2001). Kohut et al (2000) explain that political participation results between religious groups shows some differences, but nothing overwhelming. It is important to note that those

who were religious were more involved overall than those who were considered secular. Finally, Carlson, Burrell and Dolan (1989) found that those who were at the extremes of the political parties, the self-identified most liberal Democrats and the self-identified most conservative Republicans, were the most active politically.

Thus, it is probable that women and older Americans will be less politically active. Also, African Americans will be less politically active. However, those with higher education and higher incomes and live in the South will be more engaged. Based upon previous work, it is not clear whether political involvement varies by denomination; although previous works suggest that those who belong to a denomination will be more likely to be involved than those who are secular. Thus we should see that the "Nones" are less politically active as compared to the Evangelical Protestants. Finally, it is unclear about which ideological base will be more politically active.

Religious Variables

It is also unclear if recent proselytizing activity and comfort talking about religion will have any effect on opinions of church-state separation, tolerance or political involvement. If proselytizing is just another religious activity and it is only practiced by those who are extremely religiously conservative, we should see it have the same effect on the political variables as the more conservative religious denominations. It is also possible that witnessing has nothing to do with politics and thus there is no relationship.

If comfort talking about religion is another religious behavior, we should expect it to have the same effect on the political variables as the other religious variables do. If comfort talking about religion is simply a measure of someone's outgoingness, then we should see no effect for church-state separation or tolerance but those people should be

more politically active. Finally, comfort talking about religion may be a measure of social integration, in which case those who feel comfortable talking about religion may also represent the current political climate.

<center>*Findings*</center>

The results of the demographic, religious and political variables on political activity are presented in Table 3. For the most part, the results are as predicted. Concerning church-state separation, women are more likely than men to think that church and state should not be separate. It is possible that this is a result of women being more religious than men (Lazerwitz 1961, Lenski 1953, De Vaus and McAllister 1987). As age increases, people support church and state being together, but this result declines over time. Those who are White, educated and have higher incomes support church-state separation. These results are not surprising given previous work (Elifson and Hadaway 1985).

Mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, those of other religions and the "Nones" all favor more church-state separation than the Evangelical Protestants. This supports the notion than the most conservative religious group wants less church-state separation. One of the reasons that Steensland et al. (2000) chose to create a grouping specifically for the Black Church is because of the commingling of the religious and social spheres and the mutual influence of each sphere on the other. While there are other groups which have a similar commingling, Black Protestants have a unique history. Woodberry and Smith (1998) argue that Black Conservative Protestants are often very different politically from white Conservative Protestants. However, the Black Protestants are not different from the Evangelicals on the issue of church and state separation. Perhaps this

is because although the Black Church does have a separate history from the Evangelical Protestants, the combination of religious and social spheres seems perfectly natural for those who are members of the Black Church. Thus, allowing prayer in school and having the federal government fund faith-based organizations just seems like an extension of their normal activities. However, the want for church and state to be together does not always cause misunderstanding. Williams and Demerath (1991) found that civil religion and church-state separation, though in tension, could co-exist within a town in the northeastern United States.

Table 3. Religion and Politics

Variable	Church-State	Tolerance	Involvement
Female	0.070**	0.021	-0.089**
Age	0.426**	-0.408**	-0.510**
Age squared	-0.353**	0.185	0.585**
White	-0.110**	0.067*	0.101**
Education	-0.120**	0.164**	0.146**
Household income	-0.102**	0.147**	0.088**
South	0.013	-0.066**	-0.014
Black Protestant	0.011	0.018	0.055
Mainline Protestant	-0.129**	0.137**	0.040
Catholic	-0.101**	0.116**	0.068**
Jewish	-0.146**	0.089**	0.028
Other	-0.140**	0.106**	0.089**
None	-0.336**	0.226**	0.087**
Political Ideology	-0.363**	0.253**	0.147**
Witness to Strangers	0.078**	-0.073**	0.046
Talk to Strangers	0.148**	-0.068**	0.114**
Political Involvement	-0.076**	0.010	
R^2	0.470	0.336	0.090
Observations	1323	1344	1375

$**p < 0.01 \ *p < 0.05$

Those who are politically liberal support church-state separation and those who are politically involved are more likely to support church-state separation. What is interesting about this result is that it seems to imply that those who are politically involved are more liberal politically. The test of this result is in the last section. Finally, both those who are comfortable talking about religion with strangers and those who witnessed to strangers in the past month favor less church and state separation. These are the people who want religion in the public sphere and they are not afraid to talk about it.

As people get older, they become less tolerant, although this may just be a cohort effect (Wilson 1994). Whites, those who are educated and those with higher incomes are more tolerant, as predicted. However, the results for religious tradition are a little different from expected. As compared to the Evangelical Protestants, the "Nones" are the most tolerant, followed by the Mainliners, the Catholics, those of other religious groups and finally the Jews.

The Black Protestants are not different from the Evangelicals. As discussed in the results section for church-state separation, Black Protestants do have the tradition of the intersection between religion and the social and political spheres. Thus, it is not far fetched to surmise that Black Protestants, although they should be more tolerant given their experience with historical intolerance, are actually less tolerant (and about as intolerant as Evangelicals) due to their more conservative religious beliefs. Evangelicals are more likely to believe in and support absolutist rhetoric (Tamney and Johnson 1997, Woodberry and Smith 1998). It is worth noting that Tamney and Johnson (1997) found that Mainline Protestants were intolerant when they were concerned about moral decay, rather than about theological matters.

The political liberals are more tolerant than political conservatives. Political liberals tend to be younger, better educated and more concerned with the broad application of substantive rights (Guth and Green 1991). Those who feel comfortable talking about religion with strangers and those who witnessed in the past month are not as tolerant. As Putnam (2000) argues, conversation and conversational forums are important to democracy. Ironically, talking about religion does not increase tolerance, as Tocqueville (1835:2003) argued it would.

Women are less politically active, which Verba, Burns and Schlozman (1997) argue is because of a difference in political education. As people get older they become less politically active, but at a declining rate. This could indicate a cohort effect for political participation. Whites, those with higher education and those with higher incomes are more politically active as we predicted. Salamon and Evera (1973) present evidence that "fear of intimidation frustrate(s) political participation for blacks" (1305) in the South. Also, it is possible that those with higher incomes and more education are more active because they have the time and money to be more active. At the same time, those with more education are more likely to believe what they were taught in civics class—that ours truly is a representative democracy.

Catholics, those of other religious affiliation, and those without a religious affiliation are more politically involved than the Evangelical Protestants. Thus, Black Protestants, Mainliners and Jews are all similar to Evangelicals in their political activity. This is opposing evidence to the previous literature that suggested that any denominational affiliation leads to more political activity (Kohut et al. 2000) given that those with no affiliation are more involved than the Evangelicals. This result is not

entirely unsurprising as Pat Robertson's Religious Right and Jerry Falwell's Moral

Majority both have a limited constituency (Woodberry and Smith 1998) and

Conservative Protestants are less likely to vote in presidential elections (Manza and

Brooks 1997). However, the political visibility of "Conservative Protestants" through

organizations such as the Religious Right and Moral Majority has increased (Reichley

1986). Catholics are more involved politically than Evangelicals. One of the reasons

could be that the Church recognizes its role in American politics and thus not only

informs its constituency about policy issues but also encourages action (Reichley 1986).

Those who are politically liberal are more politically active. Gershtenson (2002)

argues that Democrats and Republican political activism is contextual as Democrats were

more active in 1972 and 1984, while Republicans were more active in 1964. The context,

he argues, is that "more favorable circumstances in terms of the distribution of

partisanship and prospects for the general election outcome apparently discourage

activism" (706). This definition holds for the 2004 Presidential campaign, when

President George W. Bush, Jr. was clearly the favorite to win. Democrats were, in fact,

the embattled party.

Finally, those who witness to strangers are not statistically significantly different

from those who do not witness to strangers when looking at their political participation.

Given this result, it appears that those who are witnessing to strangers are really only

interested in conversion. However, those who feel comfortable talking about religion are

more involved in politics. These people are not necessarily more religious but they are

more conservative in mindset given that they approve of less church-state separation and

they are less tolerant.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

Civil society remains free from violence to the extent that individuals can tolerate and understand differences of opinion (Appiah 2006). Tolerance and understanding in turn rely on the extent to which individuals converse on divisive topics. In American society, religion is one such topic. While we find many Americans are comfortable talking about religion, these tend to be mainly politically conservative individuals. Ironically, they tend to be least tolerant of others.

Witnessing, however, is apolitical. Those who witness are not more likely to be of one political party or another and the level of witnessing activity is not significant to political involvement. Those who proselytize do not combine politics with their goal of conversion of others to their religion. In fact, those who witness to strangers do have strong political opinions in that they are less tolerant and would like less church-state separation. However, given that they are not more politically active, they really are more interested in saving souls than driving people to the polls.

Religious conversations allow citizens to listen to rhetoric, if they so choose, and to listen to each other. After this, they can make informed decisions. If there are no religious conversations it is possible that people are just swallowing the rhetoric they are spoon-fed at church and through the media. In order to have a healthy republic, both religious and political conversations (and sometimes in tandem) should be encouraged. Unfortunately, only one segment of the American population is comfortable talking about religion with strangers.

Political conservatives talk about religion in the public sphere. They are interested in church and state relations, although they are interested in changing the historical view of church-state separation. Political conservatives are also emboldened to be comfortable to talk about religion with strangers due to the political climate. Given the strong religiously-themed rhetoric of the current Bush administration, it is not surprising that those who share his point of view would be willing to share religious ideas in public. The religious views espoused by political conservatives tend to correspond with those of the Evangelical Protestants. In an ironic twist, though, Evangelical Protestants are less politically involved than the Catholics, those of "other" religious affiliation and those of no religious affiliation. Ideally, everyone should all feel comfortable talking about religion, but currently, the political conservatives have captured this topic. The result is that Americans' political health is in jeopardy given that civil society requires conversation about divisive issues, most especially politics and religion.

APPENDIX

Religious Experiences

Please indicate whether or not you have ever had any of the following experiences:
I witnessed or experienced a miraculous, physical healing
I witnessed people speaking in tongues at a place of worship
I spoke in tongues at a place of worship
I personally had a vision of a religious figure while awake
I felt called by God to do something
I heard the voice of God speaking to me
I had a dream of religious significance
I changed profoundly as the result of a religious experience
I had a religious conversion experience

Have you ever had an experience where you felt that:
You were filled with the spirit
You were one with the universe
You left your body for a period of time
You were in a state of religious ecstasy

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alford, Robert R. and Harry M. Scoble. "Sources of Local Political Involvement." *The American Political Science Review* 62 (1968): 1192-1206.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers. New York:Norton, 2006.

Bader, Chris, Paul Froese and F. Carson Mencken. "American Piety 2005: Methods, Content and Selected Findings from the Baylor Religion Survey." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, forthcoming.

Beatty, Kathleen Murphy and Oliver Walter. "Religious Preference and Practice: Reevaluating Their Impact on Political Tolerance." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 48 (1984): 318-329.

Bennett, Stephen E., Richard S. Flickinger, and Staci L. Rhine. "Political Talk over Here, over There, over Time." *British Journal of Political Science* 30 (2000): 99-119.

Beyerlein, Kraig and Mark Chaves. "The Political Activities of Religious Congregations in the United States." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42 (2003): 229-246.

Brooks, Clem. "Religious Influence and the Politics of Family Decline Concern: Trends, Sources and US Political Behavior." *American Sociological Review* 67 (2002): 191-212.

Carlson, James M., Barbara Burrell, and Kathleen Dolan. "Ideology and Campaign Activity at Three Levels of Government." *Political Behavior* 11 (1989): 273-287.

Chaves, Mark and Philip S. Gorski. "Religious Pluralism and Religious Participation." *Annual Review of Sociology* 27 (2001): 261-281.

Cole, William A. and Phillip E. Hammond. "Religious Pluralism, Legal Development and Societal Complexity: Rudimentary Forms of Civil Religion." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 13 (1974): 177-189.

Cornwall, Marie. "The Social Bases of Religion: A Study of Factors Influencing Religious Belief and Commitment." *Review of Religious Research* 29 (1987): 44-56.

Cornwall, Marie. "The Determinants of Religious Behavior: A Theoretical Model and Empirical Test." *Social Forces* 68 (1989): 572-592.

Cutler, Stephen J. and Robert L. Kaufman. "Cohort Changes in Political Attitudes: Tolerance of Ideological Nonconformity." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 39 (1975): 69-81.

Danigelis, Nicholas L. "A Theory of Black Political Participation in the United States." *Social Forces* 56 (1977): 31047.

Davis, Darren W. "Exploring Black Political Intolerance." *Political Behavior* 17 (1995): 1-22.

Davis, Nancy J. and Robert V. Robinson. "Are the Rumors of War Exaggerated? Religious Orthodoxy and Moral Progressivism in America." *The American Journal of Sociology* 102 (1996): 756-787.

De Vaus, David and Ian McAllister. "Gender Differences in Religion: A Test of the Structural Location Theory." *American Sociological Review* 52 (1987): 472-481.

DiMaggio, Paul, John Evans and Bethany Bryson. "Have American's Social Attitudes Become more Polarized?" *The American Journal of Sociology* 102 (1996): 690-755.

Djupe, Paul A. "Religious Brand Loyalty and Political Loyalties." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 39 (2000): 78-89.

Ellison, Christopher G. and Linda K. George. "Religious Involvement, Social Ties, and Social Support in a Southeastern Community." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 33(1994): 46-61.

Elifson, Kirk W. and C. Kirk Hadaway. "Prayer in Public Schools: When Church and State Collide." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 49 (1985): 317-329.

Esteban, Joan-Maria and Debraj Ray. "On the Measurement of Polarization." *Econometrica* 62 (1994): 819-851.

Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992.

Froese, Paul. "Forced Secularization in Soviet Russia: Why an Atheistic Monopoly Failed." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 43 (2004): 35-50.

Gershtenson, Joseph. "Partisanship and Participation in Political Campaign Activities, 1952-1996." *Political Research Quarterly* 55 (2002): 687-714.

Gibson, James L. "Alternative Measures of Political Tolerance: Must Tolerance be 'Least-Liked?'" *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (1992): 560-577.

Golebiowska, Ewa A. "Gender Gap in Political Tolerance." *Political Behavior* 21 (1999): 43-66.

Golebiowska, Ewa A. "Individual Value Priorities, Education, and Political Tolerance." *Political Behavior* 17 (1995): 23-48.

Guth, James L. and John C. Green. "An Ideology of Rights: Support for Civil Liberties among Political Activists." *Political Behavior* 13 (1991): 321-344.

Hadaway, Kirk. "The Demographic Environment and Church Membership Change." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 20 (1981): 77-89.

Hammond, Phillip E., Amanda Porterfield, James G. Moseley, and Jonathan D. Sarna. "Forum: American Civil Religion Revisited." *Religion and American Culture* 4 (1994): 1-23.

Harris, Frederick C. "Something Within: Religion as a Mobilizer of African-American Political Activism." *The Journal of Politics* 56 (1994): 42-68.

Hoge, Dean R. and Jackson W. Carroll. "Determinants of Commitment and Participation in Suburban Protestant Churches." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 17 (1978): 107-127.

Hout, Michael and Andrew M. Greeley. "The Center Doesn't Hold: Church Attendance in the United States, 1940-1984." *American Sociological Review* 52 (1987): 325-245.

Hunt, Larry L. and Matthew O. Hunt. "Race, Region, and Religious Involvement: A Comparative Study of Whites and African Americans." *Social Forces* 80 (2001): 605-631.

Hunter, James Davison. *Culture Wars*. New York: BasicBooks, 1991.

Iannaccone, Laurence R., Daniel V.A. Olson, and Rodney Stark. "Religious Resources and Church Growth." *Social Forces* 74 (1995): 705-731.

Iannaccone, Laurence R. and Sean F. Everton. "Never on Sunny Days: Lessons from Weekly Attendance Counts." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 43 (2004): 191-207.

Jennings, M. Kent and Gregory B. Markus. "Political Involvement in the Later Years: A Longitudinal Survey." *American Journal of Political Science* 32 (1988): 302-316.

Johnson, Daniel C. "Formal Education vs. Religious Belief: Soliciting New Evidence with Multinomial Logit Modeling." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36 (1997): 231-246.

Jones-Correa, Michael A. and David L. Leal. "Political Participation: Does Religion Matter?" *Political Research Quarterly* 54 (2001): 751-770.

Knoke, David. "Networks of Political Action: Toward Theory Construction." *Social Forces* 68 (1990): 1041-1063.

Kohut, Andrew, John C. Green, Scott Teeter, and Robert C. Toth. *The Diminishing Divide*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute, 2000.

Lazerwitz, Bernard. "Some Factors Associated with Variations in Church Attendance." *Social Forces* 39 (1961): 301-309.

Lehrer, Evelyn. "Religion as a Determinant of Economic and Demographic Behavior in the United States." *Population and Development Review* 30 (|2004): 707-726.

Lenski, Gerhard E. "Social Correlates of Religious Interest." *American Sociological Review* 18 (1953): 533-544.

Loury, Linda D. "Does Church Attendance Really Increase Schooling?" Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 43 (2004): 119-127.

Lunn, John, Robin Klay and Andrea Douglass. "Relationships Among Giving, Church Attendance, and Religious Belief: The Case of the Presbyterian Church (USA)." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 40 (2001): 765-775.

Manza, Jeff and Clem Brooks. "The Religious Factor in U.S. Presidential Elections, 1960-1992." *The American Journal of Sociology* 103 (1997): 38-81.

McKenzie, Brian D. "Religious Social Networks, Indirect Mobilization, and African-American Political Participation." *Political Research Quarterly* 57 (1994): 621-632.

Mears, Daniel P. and Christopher G. Ellison. "Who Buys New Age Materials? Exploring Sociodemographic, Religious, Network, and Contextual Correlates of New Age Consumption." *Sociology of Religion* 61 (2000): 289-314.

Mendelsohn, Matthew. "The Media and Interpersonal Communications: The Priming of Issues, Leaders, and Party Identification." *The Journal of Politics* 58 (1996): 112-125.

Nie, Norman H., Bingham Powell, Jr. and Kenneth Prewitt. "Social Structure and
Political Participation: Development Relationships, Part I and Part II." *The
American Political Science Review* 63 (1969): 361-378 and 808-832.

Olson, Daniel V.A. and Kirk C. Hadaway. "Religious Pluralism and Affiliation Among
Canadian Counties and Cities." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 38
(1999): 490-508.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000.

Regnerus, Mark D., David Sikkink and Christian Smith. "Voting with the Christian
Right: Contextual and Individual Patterns of Electoral Influence." *Social Forces*,
77:4, (1999), 1375-1401.

Reichley, A. James. "Religion and the Future of American Politics." *Political Science
Quarterly* 101 (1986): 23-47.

Reimer, Sam and Jerry Z. Park. "Tolerant (In)Civility? A Longitudinal Analysis of
White Conservative Protestants' Willingness to Grant Civil Liberties." *Journal
for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 40:4 (2001), 735-745.

Salamon, Lester M. and Stephen Van Evera. "Fear, Apathy, and Discrimination: A Test
of Three Explanations of Political Participation." *The American Political Science
Review* 67 (1973): 1288-1306.

Sherkat, Darren E. "Counterculture or Continuity? Competing Influences on Baby
Boomers' Religious Orientations and Participation." *Social Forces* 76 (1998):
1087-1114.

Sherkat, Darren E. and Christopher G. Ellison. "Recent Developments and Current
Controversies in the Sociology of Religion." *Annual Review of Sociology* 25
(1999): 363-394.

Smith, Tom W. "Classifying Protestant Denominations." *Review of Religious Research*
31 (1990): 225-245.

Stark, Rodney. *One True God.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001a.

Stark, Rodney. "God, Rituals, and the Moral Order." *Journal for the Scientific Study of
Religion* 40 (2001b): 619-636.

Steensland, Brian, Jerry Z. Park, Mark D. Regnerus, Lynn D. Robinson, W. Bradford
Wilcox, and Robert D. Woodberry. "The Measure of American Religion: Toward
Improving the State of the Art." *Social Forces* 79 (2000): 291-318.

Stump, Roger W. "The Effects of Geographical Variability on Protestant Church Membership Trends 1980-1990." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37 (1998): 636-651.

Sullivan, John L., James Piereson and George E. Marcus. "An Alternative Conceptualization of Political Tolerance: Illusory Increases 1950s-1970s." *The American Political Science Review* 73 (1979): 781-794.

Sullivan, John L., George E. Marcus, Stanley Feldman and James E. Piereson. "The Sources of Political Tolerance: A Multivariate Analysis." *The American Political Science Review* 75 (1981): 92-106.

Tamney, Joseph B. and Stephen D. Johnson. "Christianity and Public Book Banning." *Review of Religious Research* 38 (1997): 263-271.

Thomas, Michael C. and Charles C. Flippen. "American Civil Religion: An Empirical Study." *Social Forces* 51 (1972): 218-225.

De Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America.* Translated by Gerald Beven. New York: Penguin Books, 1835:2003.

Tuch, Steven A. "Urbanism, Region, and Tolerance Revisited: The Case of Racial Prejudice." *American Sociological Review* 52 (1987): 504-510.

Verba, Sidney, Nancy Burns, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. "Knowing and Caring about Politics: Gender and Political Engagement." *The Journal of Politics* 59 (1997): 1051-1072.

Wald, Kennth D., Dennis W. Owen and Samuel S. Hill, Jr. "Churches as Political Communities." *The American Political Science Review* 82 (1988): 531-548.

Wald, Kennth D., Dennis W. Owen and Samuel S. Hill, Jr. "Political Cohesion in Churches." *The Journal of Politics* 52 (1990): 197-215.

Williams, Rhys H. and N.J. Demerath III. "Religion and Political Process in an American City." *American Sociological Review* 56 (1991): 417-431.

Wilson, Thomas C. "Trends in Tolerance Toward Rightist and Leftist Groups, 1976-1988: Effects of Attitude Change and Cohort Succession." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 58 (1994): 539-556.

Wimberley, Ronald C., Donald A. Clelland, Thomas C. Hood and C.M. Lipsey. "The Civil Religious Dimension: Is it There?" *Social Forces* 54 (1976): 890-900.

Woodberry, Robert D. and Christian S. Smith. "Fundamentalism et al: Conservative Protestants in America." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1998): 25-56.

Wuthnow, Robert. "Religious Involvement and Status-Bridging Social Capital." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41 (2002): 669-684.