

ABSTRACT

Evangelical Democrats and Role Conflict

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Evangelical Protestants have increasingly aligned with the Republican Party in their voting patterns and opinions since the late 1970's. As a result, this alignment of Evangelical Protestantism with the GOP could present a dilemma for Evangelical Democrats, whose religious and political identities are perceived by many to be in conflict with one another. The present study tests whether Evangelical Democrats seek to avoid role conflict by having lower levels of investment in either the religious or political components of their lives. Results find that Evangelical Democrats avoid role conflict by maintaining a lesser adherence to the religious component of their identity. In a final analysis, Evangelical Democrats are found to attend church significantly less than Democrats of other religious traditions while maintaining religious beliefs that are more conservative than these Democrats. Implications for role conflict among Evangelical Democrats are discussed.

Evangelical Democrats and Role Conflict

by

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The past 30 years has seen much scholarly research on the impact of religious belief on political behavior, with a special focus on Evangelical Protestantism and its alignment with the Republican Party and a conservative social and political agenda. The Evangelical Protestant religious tradition, known for its theological conservatism and emphasis on proselytization and the importance of individual conversion, is widely and thoroughly associated with political and social conservatism in most of the scholarly literature since the rise of the Religious Right in the 1970's and 1980's.

Much of the research on Evangelical Protestants is based on an implicit assumption that Evangelicalism constitutes a monolithic conservative movement or a unified Republican bloc. We are aware of only a few studies that have specifically discussed differences *within* the Evangelical movement. However, these studies do not analyze political diversity; instead, they explore religious diversity by focusing on distinctive subgroups of Evangelicals such as Fundamentalists or Pentecostals (Ammerman, 1987; Marsden, 1987; Marsden, 1991; Smidt, 1988; Weber, 1991; Woodberry & Smith, 1998). Treating Evangelicals as uniform in their political behaviors and attitudes may lead to imprecise and potentially misleading appraisals of the Evangelical movement and its importance.

That there is a significant number of Evangelical Democrats is not a surprising fact to scholars. However, Evangelical Democrats are an understudied minority within the Evangelical Protestant tradition. This present study seeks to examine the ways in

which these Evangelical Democrats avoid or manage the tension that could be experienced by possessing two identities that are perceived by many to be in conflict with one another.

Evangelicals and the GOP

For the past 30 years, scholars have chronicled the movement of Evangelical Protestants out of the Democratic Party and into the Republican Party (Kellstedt, 1989; Kellstedt & Noll, 1990; Kohut, 2000; Regnerus & Smith, 1998; Wilcox, 2000). Though the religion of Evangelical Protestants remained mostly privatized since the 1925 Scopes Trial (Regnerus & Smith, 1998), and the political leanings of Evangelical Protestants aligned predominantly with the Democratic Party since Roosevelt's New Deal, the turbulent social upheaval and moral progressivism of the 1960's caused Evangelical Protestants to come out of hiding in support of what they viewed as pro-family and pro-Biblical alternatives to the liberalizing elements that appeared to be so pervasive in modern society.

The alignment of Evangelicals with the Republican Party manifested itself in conservative views regarding a host of social issues, or what many Evangelicals would label as "moral" issues. It is especially evident with issues relating to sexuality, reproductive rights, and gender (Davis & Robinson, 1996; Smith, 1998). Sexual morality is a consistently important issue for Evangelicals, and Petersen and Donnenwerth (1997) show that Evangelicals who attend church consistently, unlike Catholics and Mainline Protestants, showed no decline in their support for traditional views of pre-marital sex from 1972 to 1993. Numerous studies have also shown the opposition of Evangelicals toward gay rights (Burdette, Ellison, & Hill, 2005; Leege, Wald, & Kellstedt, 1993;

Wilcox & Jelen, 1990) and conservatism on issues like abortion (Cook, Jelen, & Wilcox, 1992), gender roles (Ellison & Bartkowski, 2002), and American foreign policy (Daniels & von der Ruhr, 2005). Studies also show that the conservative social-moral agenda, constituting issues like abortion, gay rights, and prayer in public schools, is strongly linked to religion; whereas the political agenda of liberals has a much weaker link to religion (Olson & Carroll, 1992).

American Evangelicalism is also strongly associated with Republican voting patterns. Evangelical Protestants continue to play a major role in the Republican Party, and their impact has been felt from the 1984 reelection of Ronald Reagan (Woodrum, 1988) to the 2004 reelection of George W. Bush (Guth, Kellstedt, Smidt, & Green, 2006), during which time the impact of religion on presidential vote choice increased (Layman, 1997). In the 2004 presidential election, for example, Evangelicals made up 39.8% of the GOP electoral commission, and a full 77.5% of Evangelicals voted for George W. Bush (Guth et al., 2006).

The alliance of Evangelical Protestantism with the GOP is a powerful reality, and it affects others' evaluations of both groups. Hout and Fischer (2002) conclude that it is exactly this equating of Evangelicals and the Republican Party that causes "Americans with moderate and liberal political views to express their distance from the Religious Right by saying they prefer no religion" (p.168). Similarly, it is also proposed that the public opinion that Christian fundamentalists have increasingly aligned with the GOP has become an important factor in creating negative opinions of the Republican Party among antifundamentalists (Bolce & de Maio, 1999).

Due to the strong association of Evangelical Protestantism with the Republican Party, it is reasonable to expect that individuals who possess an Evangelical Protestant identity while identifying with the Democratic Party would experience stress due to the conflicting perspectives held by the majority of those who identify with each of these two groups. As a framework for analyzing this potential stress, we now turn to role conflict theory.

Role Conflict Theory

Role conflict theory can be drawn from a number of social scientific perspectives, including structural theory, functional theory, or cognitive psychological theory, but this present study will rely on role conflict theory as developed within a framework of symbolic interactionism (Biddle, 1986). According to symbolic interactionist theory, roles evolve through social interaction (Mead & Morris, 1934): the expectations of other people are the major generators of the roles that individuals possess. When people do not hold consensual expectations for an individual's behavior, that individual is subject to dissonant pressures. This person will seek to resolve or avoid this felt stress by adopting some type of coping behavior or avoidance mechanism. Role conflict can arise when an individual experiences or anticipates the "concurrent appearance of two or more incompatible expectations for the[ir] behavior" (Biddle, 1986, p. 82).

Two different types of role conflict appear often in the literature. When an individual experiences incompatible expectations of their behavior due to their placement within one role, they are said to experience intra-role conflict. For example, a priest may experience one set of expectations from his bishop, and another different set of expectations from his congregation. These incongruent expectations of the way in which

he should fulfill his role as priest may create intra-role conflict for him (Dewey, 1971). On the other hand, an individual may experience incompatible expectations because he or she inhabits multiple roles that are perceived to be in conflict with one another. An example would be a woman whose concurrently-held roles of mother, wife, and employee make demands of her that somehow violate or inhibit her ability to meet each of those demands fully. In other words, her responsibilities at work make her feel like she must sacrifice her responsibilities as a wife or mother (Chassin, Zeiss, Cooper, & Reaven, 1985). It is this second type of role conflict, inter-role conflict, which will concern us in this study.

Empirically, the vast majority of the applications of role conflict theory deal either with role conflict experienced within family/gender roles, role conflict as experienced in organizational settings, or some combination of the two. For example, role conflict theory is often applied to mothers and wives in the work force who face competing expectations from their husbands, children, and employers and co-workers (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1983; Chassin et al., 1985; Coverman, 1989; Gibbs & Martin, 1964; Hall, 1972; Stack, 1978). Examples of work-related applications of role conflict theory include the stress experienced by clergy (Bradfield & Myers, 1980; Kay, 2000; Kemery, 2006), teachers and education administration personnel (Gross, 1958), labor negotiators (Friedman, 1992), and various managers and quality control inspectors (Pugh, 1966; Simmons, 1968).

As most of the studies mentioned in the preceding paragraph indicate, role conflict is typically studied as a set of incompatible expectations *perceived by the actor*, though this is not necessarily the case. The conflicting expectations for an individual

who possesses competing roles can also be perceived by *observers*, with no necessary stipulation that the actor is aware of incongruence in the expectations held. Put another way, “the term ‘role conflict’ may be somewhat misleading, carrying implications of necessary personal conflict. This refers, however, only to situations in which *the observer notes what appear to be* conflicting sets of expectations, i.e., to *potential* sources of difficulty for the actors” (first set of italics added, second set in original) (Seeman, 1953, p. 373).

Similarly, some research explores the ability of individuals to address *anticipated* role conflict. For example, it has been proposed that the reason why so few women become physicians may be linked to their avoidance of anticipated role conflict of being both a parent and a doctor (Fiorentine, 1987; Fiorentine & Cole, 1992). To put it in the words of Styker and Macke (1978), “those in *potentially* conflicting situations may devise coping strategies that eliminate the conflict otherwise experienced” (emphasis added) (p. 83).

The resolution or avoidance of role conflict can occur in several ways. Hall (1972) proposes three types of response: attempting to alter the expectations held by others; changing one’s own perception of the expectations or behavior; or adjusting one’s behavior. Van de Vliert (1981), in a modification of a previous theory (Gross, 1958), proposes another 3-step theory of role conflict resolution. When an individual is confronted with experienced or anticipated role conflict, their first course of action is to choose between the roles, a decision that is proposed to be the most common choice. If a choice between the roles is impossible or cannot be reached, a second alternative is to attempt to resolve the conflict by conforming only partially to both roles, otherwise

known as compromise. Finally, if neither choice nor compromise are found to be viable options, the third course of action is to conform to neither role, otherwise known as avoidance.

Hypothesis

Given the tendency for Evangelical Protestants to identify with the Republican Party, and the widespread public knowledge and perception of the connection between Evangelicalism and Republican politics, it follows that an Evangelical Democrat would anticipate or experience role conflict if he or she were to fully inhabit both roles. Because van de Vliert's (1981) model proposes that a choice between roles will be the most likely method of resolving or avoiding role conflict, I predict that Evangelical Democrats will avoid role conflict by maintaining lower levels of involvement in or identification with either the religious or the political components of their identities; i.e., *Evangelical Democrats will either maintain lower levels of Evangelical religious belief or practice than other Evangelical Protestants, or they will maintain lower levels of Democratic beliefs and political practices than Democrats of other religious traditions.*

CHAPTER TWO

Data and Methods

Data utilized for this analysis are from the first (2005) wave of the Baylor Religion Survey (BRS). The Baylor Religion Survey contains questions on a variety of areas ranging from civic engagement and trust to political tolerance, but the majority of the fixed content of the BRS is devoted to religion items, including batteries of questions devoted to religious affiliation, belief, and practices. Consisting of a random national sample of 1,721 U.S. citizens, the Baylor Religion Survey was administered and collected by the Gallup Organization. For further detail about the methodology behind the survey and how it compares to other national surveys, see Bader, Mencken and Froese (2007).

The Baylor Religion Survey is ideally suited for these analyses as it includes one of the most comprehensive batteries of religious items ever administered to a random national sample of US citizens. Further, the BRS includes necessary information for creating a detailed breakdown by denomination. Dougherty, Johnson and Polson (2007) created a modified RELTRAD typology based on the typology developed by Steensland et al. (2000). The BRS takes into account not only the religious tradition of the respondent, but also the specific denomination and the actual place of worship. Therefore, the BRS is able to place those respondents into a RELTRAD category who are themselves unaware of their specific religious family or denomination. Because the Baylor data take into account the place of worship attended by the respondent and the detailed denomination of the place of worship, they are able to code many respondents as Evangelical Protestants who, in previous versions of RELTRAD, would have been placed

in the category of “none” or “other.” In addition to detailed information on religious traditions, the BRS also includes many items to aid in the analysis of various political and social stances.

The “Evangelical Democrat” category is a combination of the respondents’ religious tradition and political affiliation. First, the respondent must fall into the “Evangelical Protestant” category of the RELTRAD typology created by Dougherty et al. (2007), as discussed above. A measure of political party identification is used in which the respondent is asked, “How would you describe yourself politically?” Respondents are given a 7 point scale including strong republican, moderate republican, leaning republican, independent, leaning democrat, moderate democrat, and strong democrat. The Evangelical Democrat category is comprised of those Evangelicals who chose any of the three “Democrat” responses as their political affiliation. All Evangelicals for whom the political identification variable is missing are omitted from the analysis.

Dependent Variables

Analysis will compare the religious and political beliefs and practices of Evangelical Democrats to those of Evangelical Republicans and Independents, and then to Democrats of the non-Evangelical religious traditions.

While scholars continue to disagree regarding the utility and definition of the word ‘Evangelical,’ four beliefs have emerged as consistent markers of the Evangelical movement (Green, Guth, Smidt, & Kellstedt, 1996): (1) a high (and sometimes literal) view of the Bible, (2) a belief that religious salvation comes from Jesus alone, (3) a stress on the importance of accepting salvation through Jesus, and (4) the importance of spreading the Christian faith through evangelism or missions. These four cornerstones of

Evangelicalism serve as the first four dependent variables of the study. Higher scores indicate more theologically conservative views on all four of these variables

As a measure of Biblical literalism, a question is used that asks respondents about their view of the Bible by selecting from four categories: 1="The Bible is an ancient book of history and legends," 2="the Bible contains some human error," 3="The Bible is perfectly true, but it should not be taken literally, word-for-word. We must interpret its meaning," and 4="The Bible means exactly what it says. It should be taken literally, word-for-word, on all subjects." Secondly, a measure is employed that asks about the respondent's opinions on the divinity or uniqueness of Jesus. "Which one statement comes closest to your personal beliefs about Jesus?" has five potential responses: 1="Jesus is a fictional character," 2="Jesus probably existed, but he was not special," 3="Jesus was an extraordinary person, but he was not a messenger of God," 4="Jesus was one of many messengers or prophets of God," and 5="Jesus is the son of God." A question about religious salvation serves as the third measure of Evangelical religious belief, "Which one statement comes closest to your personal view of religious salvation?" This item has three responses from which to choose: 1="I do not believe in religious salvation," 2="Many religions lead to salvation," and 3="My religion is the one, true faith that leads to salvation." The final measure of Evangelical religious belief is an index of five questions asking the respondent, "How comfortable would you feel talking about religion with..." a. your neighbors? b. your coworkers (if applicable)? c. your friends? d. your family? e. strangers? Respondents can choose along a four-point scale ranging from 1="not at all comfortable" to 4="very comfortable". Cronbach's alpha for the index is .893.

Next, I employ a battery of questions which measure the levels of both public and private religious practice engaged in by the respondent. Frequency of church attendance is measured in a nine-point ordinal scale ranging from 1="never" to 9="several times a week." Financial donations to place of worship asks respondents to choose from 12 ordinal categories that record the amount of money donated to their current place of worship in the last year. Responses range from 1="under \$500" to 12="\$10,000 or more." Frequency of Bible reading asks the respondent, "Outside of attending religious services, about how often do you read the Bible, Koran, Torah, or other sacred book?" Nine ordinal choices are offered, ranging from 1="never" to 9="several times a week or more often." Finally, frequency of prayer gives respondents a range of 6 choices from 1="never" to 6="several times a day."

Next, two dependent variables are isolated that measure the level of agreement with partisan social and political issues. I created two indices, higher scores indicating more traditional or conservative views. The first of these two indices is a summation of the respondents' attitudes on abortion. The abortion index is a combination of five items asking the respondent, "how do you feel about abortion in the following circumstances?" They are asked to select from a four-point scale ranging from "always wrong" to "not at all wrong" on the following 5 circumstances that may surround a woman's decision to have an abortion: the baby may have a serious defect, the woman's health is in danger, the pregnancy is the result of rape, the family cannot afford the child, and the woman does not want the child. Cronbach's alpha for the index is .907. The second index measuring views on partisan political issues is called the political liberal index. It is a combination of four items that ask the respondent's level of agreement with statements

about the government's responsibility. It asks to what extent the government should: distribute wealth more evenly, regulate business practices more closely, do more to protect the environment, and promote affirmative action programs. Cronbach's alpha for the index is .730.

The final set of dependent variables measures levels of political involvement. Two items are used. The first is a count of political experiences that the respondent had in the year leading up to the 2004 Presidential election. Nine experiences are summed, including "attend a political rally or meeting;" "work for a political campaign or voter registration drive;" "read newspaper or magazine stories about the election;" "visit Internet sites related to the election;" "give money to a political campaign, party, or candidate;" "write, call, or visit a public official;" "attend a class or lecture about social or political issues;" "participate in a public protest or demonstration;" and "watch or listen to a political debate." The second is a dichotomous item asking the respondents whether or not they voted in the 2004 Presidential election.

Control Variables

Several standard controls are included in the analyses. For education, respondents choose the highest education level completed, and are given seven choices ranging from 1="8th grade or less" to 7="postgraduate work/degree." Income is an ordinal variable with 7 levels: \$10,000 or less, \$10,001-\$20,000, \$20,001-\$35,000, \$35,001-\$50,000, \$50,001-\$100,000, \$100,001-\$150,000 and \$150,000 or more. Other control variables include: age (in years), gender (male=1), a marital status dummy variable (married=1), number of children, a race dummy variable (white = 1), and region of the country (south=1).

Two religious control variables are also used in the analyses. Frequency of church attendance, described above, is used in all regressions in which it is not the dependent variable. As a measure of Biblical literalism, the item described above is used that asks respondents about their view of the Bible by selecting from four categories. Both Biblical literalism and church attendance are treated as continuous variables, and higher scores indicate higher levels of church attendance and more conservative views of the Bible.

Analytic Strategy

The analysis begins with a comparison of Evangelical Democrats to other Evangelicals in an effort to discover the ways in which these groups differ regarding religious and political belief and practice. OLS regressions explore the religious beliefs and practices, as well as the political views. The analysis of political practice will entail logistic regression and a count model using the Poisson distribution. For all regressions, dummy variables of the religious traditions will be included, and Evangelical Democrats will be the omitted comparison category. Finally, the preceding analyses will be repeated, this time for a population of Democrats only. This will demonstrate the way in which Evangelical Democrats compare to Democrats of other religious traditions.

CHAPTER THREE

Results

According to the Baylor Religion Survey, approximately 23% of all Evangelical Protestants identify as Democrats, a proportion that is perhaps higher than one would expect given the typical treatment of Evangelicals as a monolithic Republican bloc. Given the large Evangelical Protestant representation in the nation as a whole, this figure means that almost 7% of American adults can be classified as Evangelical Democrats.

In order to obtain a preliminary understanding of what types of individuals constitute Evangelical Democrats in America, table 1 presents descriptive statistics comparing Evangelical Democrats to other Evangelicals and Protestant religious traditions, revealing some key differences between groups. Evangelical Democrats have the highest proportion of non-whites of all the Protestant religious traditions, excluding the Black Protestant tradition. As compared to Evangelical non-Democrats and Mainline Protestants, Evangelical Democrats are more female and have lower levels of education and income. They are older and less concentrated in the South than other Evangelicals, and are more concentrated in the South than Mainline Protestants.

Table 1
*Descriptive Statistics for Protestant Traditions
Including Evangelical Democrats*

Variables	Evangelical Democrats	Evangelical Non-Dem	Mainline Protestant	Black Protestant
<i>N</i>	118	394	439	39
Proportions				
White	.839	.941 ^a	.932 ^a	.061 ^a
Male	.324	.449 ^a	.469 ^a	.267
Living in South	.347	.483 ^a	.263 ^a	.438
College Graduate	.171	.270 ^a	.458 ^a	.211
Income over \$35,000	.527	.660 ^a	.712 ^a	.382 ^a
Means				
Age	54.2	47.0 ^a	52.8	50.6

^asignificant difference from “Evangelical Democrat” category ($p < 0.05$, 2-tailed t-test)

In order to explore the possible withdrawal of Evangelical Democrats from either the religious or the political component of their identity, a second analysis will examine Evangelical Democrats as they compare with two of their reference groups, Evangelicals and Democrats, on religious and political items. Table 2 presents an initial overview of the tendency of Evangelical Democrats to be “caught in the middle” on many of these items. These are only bivariate relationships, and will be explored in multivariate analyses below, but a few patterns emerge. Evangelical Democrats find themselves in the middle on all four of the religious categories, indicating that they are not quite as “Evangelical” or religious as all Evangelicals, but also that they are more religious and hold higher views of the Bible than Democrats overall. The only exception is the frequency of church attendance, where they show no statistical difference from Democrats. A similar pattern emerges with the abortion index, in which Evangelical Democrats hold beliefs that are more politically liberal than all Evangelicals, but are also more conservative than all Democrats. Notice that regarding the religious variables,

Evangelical Democrats tend to be a bit closer to the beliefs and practices of the Evangelicals, while they remain closer to the Democrats on the two political indices. Though these are only bivariate relationships, it appears that both the religious and the political components of their identity are exerting influence on the beliefs and practices of Evangelical Democrats. The extent of this influence can only be determined through multivariate analyses.

Table 2
Comparison of Evangelical Democrats to all Evangelicals and all Democrats on Religious and Political Items

Variables	All Evangelicals	Evangelical Democrats	All Democrats
N	564	118	602
Proportions			
Biblical Literalist	.478 ^a	.366	.173 ^a
Attends Church at least once per week	.453 ^a	.321	.259
Reads Bible at least weekly	.421 ^a	.318	.177 ^a
Prays at least once per day	.671 ^a	.549	.424 ^a
Means			
Views on Abortion Index	14.86 ^a	12.36	10.19 ^a
Political Liberal Index	10.92 ^a	8.49	8.07

^asignificant difference from “Evangelical Democrat” category (p<0.05, 2-tailed t-test)

For the next four regression tables, Evangelical Democrats are the omitted reference category, allowing for comparisons between Evangelical Democrats and all other religious traditions. Our primary interest is the comparison of Evangelical Democrats and the other Evangelicals. The non-Democrat Evangelicals are divided into Evangelical Republicans and Evangelical Independents, and they appear as separate

groups on the following tables.¹ Upon examining the differences in religious beliefs between Evangelical Democrats and the largest group of Evangelicals, the Evangelical Republicans, we find mixed results as to whether or not Evangelical Democrats hold religious beliefs that are noticeably less Evangelical than the rest of the group. Table 3 reports that though they hold a less literal view of the Bible than the Evangelical Republicans, and are more comfortable sharing their faith than Evangelical Independents, there are no other significant differences between the two groups. Regarding Evangelical religious beliefs, Evangelical Democrats do not seem to falter much in their orthodoxy.

In addition, if Evangelical Democrats are relatively similar in religious beliefs to other Evangelicals, one would expect to find a significant difference between Evangelical Democrats and the more theologically liberal religious traditions, and this is precisely what is found in two of the columns. Evangelical Democrats are significantly more conservative than Mainline Protestants, Catholics, and Jews in their views of the Bible and their beliefs regarding the exclusivity of their faith. They are also more conservative than the “others” and “nones” regarding views of the Bible and views of the divinity of

¹Two other analyses were also performed with different ways of comparing the Evangelical Democrats to other Democrats. In the first analysis, the Evangelical Republicans and Independents were combined into one group, which could be labeled “non-Democrat Evangelicals.” For the religious belief and practice items, the results varied only minimally. However, for the political practice items, a few differences emerged. For instance, as will be demonstrated below, the Evangelical Independents are less politically active than the Evangelical Democrats, and seemed to be diluting the political activity of the Evangelical Republicans, who prove to be just as politically active as the Evangelical Democrats. To maintain and explore their political distinctiveness, the Evangelical Independents remain separate from the Evangelical Republicans throughout this analysis. In the second analysis, the Evangelical Democrat category consisted only of those Evangelicals who choose “strong Democrat” or “moderate Democrat,” while the “leaning Democrats” were combined with Republicans and Independents. While this method certainly isolates those strongest Democrat categories, the author felt that the combination of “leaning Democrats” with Republicans and Independents diluted the political and religious beliefs of those Republicans and Independents. For example, combining the leaning Democrats with all other Evangelicals had the effect of liberalizing one of the religious belief items (Biblical literalism) of the larger Evangelical group, and removed the significant coefficient for table 3, model 1. The author believes that the combination of qualitatively different groups (Evangelical Republicans and Evangelical Democrats) creates a comparison group that lacks the homogeneity that is desired in such comparisons, leading to misleading appraisals of the ways in which Evangelical Democrats compare to the other Evangelical Protestants.

Jesus. As we explore the possibility that Evangelical Democrats maintain a weaker Evangelical adherence to avoid anticipated role conflict, it seems that they have not responded by lowering their level of orthodox Evangelical belief, other than slightly more liberal views of the Bible.

Table 3
OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Evangelical Belief Items

Variables	Model 1 Biblical Literalism	Model 2 Divinity of Jesus	Model 3 Exclusivity of One's Faith	Model 4 Comfort Sharing Faith
Controls				
White	-.048*	-.010	.051	-.084**
Married	.012	.003	-.018	.026
Male	-.013	-.033	.014	.021
South	.010	-.007	-.042	.067*
Income	-.130***	-.015	-.021	-.075*
Education	-.085***	.004	.020	.001
Number of Children	.035	.023	.000	.049
Age	.003	.004	.003	.015
Church Attendance	.346***	.066**	.230***	.187***
Biblical Literalism	---	.335***	.291***	.243***
Religious Traditions				
Catholic	-.177***	.021	-.106**	-.071
Jewish	-.107***	-.246***	-.122***	.026
Black Protestant	-.008	-.013	-.030	.047
Mainline Protestant	-.179***	-.006	-.100**	-.041
Evangelical Republicans	.094**	-.030	.012	-.012
Evangelical Independents	-.018	-.028	.026	-.083**
Other	-.171***	-.076***	-.020	.004
None	-.341***	-.485***	-.281***	.051
<i>N</i>	1414	1363	1269	1290
<i>R</i> ²	.486	.611	.430	.191

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 4 compares Evangelical Democrats to other religious traditions on measures of religious practice, both private and public. The most noticeable difference is regarding

church attendance, where Evangelical Democrats not only attend church less frequently than other Evangelicals, but also attend church less often than all Christian religious traditions (though they do attend church significantly more than the “none” group). The three measures of private religious practice, giving money to the church, frequency of Bible reading, and frequency of prayer, show no statistical difference between Evangelical Democrats and other Evangelicals.

Once again, if Evangelical Democrats are truly similar to other Evangelicals, we would expect to find higher levels of religious practice among them than among the Mainline Protestants and Catholics. Results are supportive. Evangelical Democrats pray and read their Bibles more frequently than Mainline Protestants, and they donate more money and read their Bible more frequently than Catholics.

In spite of these interesting differences, the most important feature of this table for our purposes is the comparison regarding church attendance. While maintaining levels of private religiosity that are comparable to their Evangelical Republican and Independent counterparts, Evangelical Democrats are less likely to attend church, even to extent that they attend church less than all other religious traditions except the Jewish tradition and the “none” group. We will revisit this tendency as we continue to explore the methods with which Evangelical Democrats avoid anticipated role conflict.

While it seems that Evangelical Democrats have a mixed comparison to Evangelical Republicans and Independents regarding religious belief and practice, we have yet to see the extent to which their political beliefs correspond to their political party. Table 5 reveals that Evangelical Democrats consistently maintain more liberal political beliefs than other Evangelical Protestants, scoring to the left on abortion and the

Table 4
OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Religious Practice Items

Variables	Model 1 Church Attendance	Model 2 Financial Donations to Place of Worship	Model 3 Frequency of Holy Book Reading	Model 4 Frequency of Prayer
Controls				
White	-.003	.069*	-.051*	-.036
Married	.120***	-.024	-.003	-.007
Male	-.081***	.059*	-.061***	-.177***
South	.073***	.100***	.018	.022
Income	-.009	.338***	-.074**	-.087***
Education	.103***	.047	.040*	.044
Number of Children	.048*	.071*	.036	.006
Age	.041	.024	.049*	.052*
Church Attendance	---	.436***	.481***	.344***
Biblical Literalism	.408***	.038	.178***	.209***
Religious Traditions				
Catholic	.114***	-.154***	-.270***	-.037
Jewish	-.006	-.029	-.020	-.048*
Black Protestant	.083**	-.001	.029	-.047
Mainline Protestant	.085*	-.049	-.139***	-.089**
Evangelical Republicans	.141***	.025	.045	.031
Evangelical Independents	.053*	-.040	-.016	-.008
Other	.099***	.037	-.001	.042
None	-.168***	.034	-.065*	-.175***
<i>N</i>	1414	1058	1411	1409
<i>R</i> ²	.393	.375	.565	.462

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 5
OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Political Belief Items

Variables	Model 1 Views on Abortion	Model 2 Political Liberal Index
Controls		
White	.029	.157***
Married	.022	.015
Male	-.014	.162***
South	-.036	.039
Income	-.067**	.146***
Education	-.043*	.071*
Number of Children	.058**	.096***
Age	-.076***	-.038
Church Attendance	.288***	.011
Biblical Literalism	.352***	.127***
Religious Traditions		
Catholic	.068*	.157***
Jewish	-.088***	-.031
Black Protestant	.042	-.029
Mainline Protestant	-.106**	.128***
Evangelical Republicans	.145***	.279***
Evangelical Independents	.031	.080**
Other	-.025	.049
None	-.023	.062
<i>N</i>	1363	1356
<i>R</i> ²	.513	.210

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

political liberal index described previously. Regarding the “political liberal” index, Evangelical Democrats are more liberal than both groups of Evangelicals, Mainline Protestants, and Catholics. The abortion index once again presents an example of the tendency of Evangelical Democrats to hang in the middle of the extreme ends of the spectrum, maintaining abortion beliefs that are more liberal than Evangelical Republicans and Catholics, yet more conservative than Mainline Protestants and Jews. This table clearly indicates that if Evangelical Democrats choose between roles in an attempt to avoid anticipated role conflict, it is not their Democratic opinions that they are abandoning. Their political views remain distinctly more liberal than those of the Evangelical Republicans and Independents.

In a final comparison of Evangelical Democrats to other Evangelicals, table 6 reveals that there are few differences between the political involvement of Evangelical Democrats and the political involvement of other religious traditions. Model 1 displays results from a Poisson regression determining which variables increase or decrease the amount of political experiences in which the respondent engages. While several of the control variables affect the number of political activities that are experienced, the only difference between Evangelical Democrats and the present groups is the tendency for Evangelical Independents to experience a lower number of these activities than Evangelical Democrats. This is likely an artifact of the tendency for Independents to be less politically involved than Republicans or Democrats of all religious traditions. The same results are found in model 2, a logistic regression of whether or not the respondent voted in the 2004 Presidential election. Evangelical Democrats are just as politically

active as Evangelical Republicans, indicating once again that they do not withdraw from the political component of their identity in order to avoid role conflict.

Table 6
Poisson Regression on Count of Political Involvement Experiences and Logistic Regression of Voting in 2004

Independent Variables	Model 1 Poisson Regression of Count of Political Involvement Experiences			Model 2 Whether or not Respondent voted in 2004	
	<i>beta</i>	<i>e^{beta}</i>	% change per unit increase	Standardized Estimate	Odds Ratio Point Estimate
Controls					
White	.025	-	-	-.074	-
Married	-.054	-	-	.037	-
Male	.133***	1.142	+14.2	.157**	1.78
South	-.038	-	-	-.070	-
Income	.026*	1.026	+2.6	.184**	1.24
Education	.056***	1.058	+5.8	.236***	1.31
Number of Children	-.013	-	-	-.024	-
Age	.002	-	-	.205***	1.02
Church Attendance	.031***	1.031	+3.1	.168*	1.11
Biblical Literalism	-.091***	.913	-8.7	-.079	-
Religious Traditions					
Catholic	-.031	-	-	-.031	-
Jewish	.131	-	-	.003	-
Black Protestant	-.052	-	-	-.058	-
Mainline Protestant	.001	-	-	-.178	-
Evangelical Republicans	.026	-	-	-.082	-
Evangelical Independents	-.197*	.821	-17.9	-.246***	.151
Other	.146	-	-	-.097	-
None	.140	-	-	-.091	-

N = 1414 for both models
 p*<0.05 *p*<0.01 ****p*<0.001

The first four sets of regressions present the religion of Evangelical Democrats as ambiguous in its comparison to the religion of Evangelical Republicans and Independents. While there is no difference regarding most of the religious variables measured, Evangelical Democrats do maintain lower levels of religious orthodoxy than other Evangelicals on two very key measures: views of the Bible and church attendance. However, they maintain political beliefs that are solidly in line with the Democratic Party. If this were the entire story, we may be left to conclude that these Evangelical Democrats are simply less religious because they are Democrats, and Democrats are simply less religious than Republicans. This line of reasoning may lead to the erroneous conclusion that the Evangelical component of their identity is non-existent or weak at best.

In order to fully understand whether or not Evangelical Democrats avoid role conflict by maintaining lower levels of religious or political belief or practice, we must compare them to the other reference group in question, the Democrats. In addition, this analysis aids in the exploration of the religious and political identities of Evangelical Democrats, and the influence of the Evangelical component of their identity on their beliefs and practices. If the Evangelical component of their identity exerts no influence on their beliefs and practices, we should discover here that Evangelical Democrats are just like all other Democrats on these measures. For the following four regression tables, only Democrats are included in the sample. Evangelical Protestants are the omitted reference category, allowing us to examine how Evangelical Democrats compare to Democrats of other religious traditions.

Table 7 reveals that Evangelical Democrats maintain some religious beliefs that are more conservative than Democrats of other religious traditions. Most importantly, Evangelical Democrats have more conservative views than other Democrats on one of the key hallmarks of Evangelical belief: views of the Bible. Even though table 3 showed Evangelical Democrats to hold more liberal views of the Bible than other Evangelicals, the results of table 7 indicate that the Evangelical component of their identity is shaping their views of the Bible, and it serves to separate them to some degree from other Democrats. In addition, Evangelical Democrats are more conservative than Democrats in the Jewish and “none” categories regarding the divinity of Jesus and the exclusivity of their faith, as should be expected. However, they are no more comfortable sharing their religious faith than other Democrats.

While table 7 reveals that Evangelical Democrats maintain more conservative views of the Bible than many other Democrats, table 8 examines the extent to which they may differ in terms of religious practice. For the most part, there are few differences in religious practice between Evangelical Democrats and Democrats of other religious traditions. They are no different than Mainline Protestant, Jewish, or Black Protestant Democrats in their frequency of prayer and Bible reading and in their financial contributions to their congregation. With the exception of Bible reading, they are also no different than Catholics on these measures.

One major exception is evident in the comparison of the religious practice of Evangelical Democrats to Democrats of other religious traditions: frequency of church attendance. We have already noted that Evangelical Democrats attend church less often than other Evangelicals, and this tendency for Democrats to attend church less often than

Table 7
OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Evangelical Belief Items
(sample of Democrats only)

Variables	Model 1 Biblical Literalism	Model 2 Divinity of Jesus	Model 3 Exclusivity of One's Faith	Model 4 Comfort Sharing Faith
Controls				
White	-.159***	-.065	-.012	-.050
Married	.045	.007	-.013	.017
Male	-.008	-.024	.030	.004
South	-.029	.033	.052	.057
Income	-.171***	.035	-.119*	-.061
Education	-.106*	-.050	-.019	.021
Number of Children	.044	.008	-.108*	.020
Age	.060	.069*	.152***	.070
Church Attendance	.290***	.036	.131**	.115*
Biblical Literalism	---	.275***	.259***	.248***
Religious Traditions				
Catholic	-.189***	.016	-.069	-.090
Jewish	-.122***	-.325***	-.128**	.085
Black Protestant	-.044	-.029	.001	.120
Mainline Protestant	-.247***	-.030	-.054	-.078
Other	-.216***	-.180***	-.084	.000
None	-.354***	-.494***	-.295***	-.003
<i>N</i>	505	480	442	454
<i>R</i> ²	.488	.623	.408	.215

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Table 8
*OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Religious Practice Items
(sample of Democrats only)*

Variables	Model 1 Church Attendance	Model 2 Financial Donations to Place of Worship	Model 3 Frequency of Holy Book Reading	Model 4 Frequency of Prayer
Controls				
White	-.004	.023	-.211***	-.121**
Married	.077	-.009	-.029	-.064
Male	-.124***	.033	-.077*	-.184***
South	.124**	.145**	.074*	.131***
Income	-.016	.277***	-.115**	-.090*
Education	.110*	.035	.092*	.069
Number of Children	.021	-.069	-.011	-.015
Age	.056	.063	.123***	.141***
Church Attendance	---	.456***	.374***	.253***
Biblical Literalism	.375***	-.020	.178***	.185***
Religious Traditions				
Catholic	.139**	-.089	-.230***	-.067
Jewish	.035	-.001	-.005	-.060
Black Protestant	.125*	-.037	-.024	-.064
Mainline Protestant	.154**	.054	-.073	-.060
Other	.087	-.061	-.045	.025
None	-.175***	-.024	-.137**	-.245***
<i>N</i>	505	350	504	502
<i>R</i> ²	.337	.281	.552	.475

*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001

Republicans has been found elsewhere (Kellstedt, Green, Guth, & Smidt, 1996).

However, the tendency of Evangelical Democrats to attend church less, even compared to a sample of only Democrats, is an important component of the role conflict story. The potential reasons for this pattern will be discussed later.

We now turn back to the measures of political views discussed above. The abortion index is once again the most interesting index in the comparison of Evangelical Democrats to other Democrats on their political beliefs, and provides strong evidence of the influence of religious identity on the political views of Evangelical Democrats. As seen in table 9, Evangelical Democrats hold more conservative abortion views than Democrats of every other religious tradition except Black Protestants and Catholics, again showing that the Evangelical component of their identity exerts influence on their belief system. However, Evangelical Democrats do not seem to maintain more conservative political views than other Democrats on the other measure. Regarding the political liberalism index, Evangelical Democrats are just as liberal as Democrats within the Mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish religious traditions, and more liberal than Democrats of the Black Protestant tradition.

Finally, table 10 concludes the exploration of Evangelical Democrats as they compare with other Democrats by examining the comparison of their political involvement. Evangelical Democrats do not maintain lower levels of political involvement than Democrats of most religious traditions, with the exception of the “Other” category, who engage in about 35% more political experiences than Evangelical Democrats. They are as likely as Catholic, Jewish, Black Protestant, and Mainline

Protestant Democrats to have voted in 2004, and experience relatively similar amounts of political involvement as these groups as well.

Table 9
*OLS Standardized Regression Coefficients for Political Belief Items
 (sample of Democrats only)*

Variables	Model 1 Abortion Index	Model 2 Political Liberal Index
Controls		
White	.004	.115
Married	-.059	-.029
Male	-.085*	.027
South	.028	.010
Income	.015	.033
Education	-.028	-.046
Number of Children	.058	.086
Age	.028	.024
Church Attendance	.179***	-.103
Biblical Literalism	.359***	-.003
Religious Traditions		
Catholic	-.044	.012
Jewish	-.166***	-.046
Black Protestant	.066	-.152*
Mainline Protestant	-.241***	-.015
Other	-.112**	-.068
None	-.114*	-.087
<i>N</i>	486	480
<i>R</i> ²	.461	.087

p*<0.05 *p*<0.01 ****p*<0.001

Discussion

Results indicate that Evangelical Democrats more closely resemble their Democrat reference group than their Evangelical reference group. Evangelical Democrats are less religious or orthodox than other Evangelicals. They hold significantly lower views of the Bible, an important indicator of Evangelical orthodoxy, than Evangelical Republicans, while also attending church less often. However, their

Table 10
Poisson Regression on Count of Political Involvement Experiences and Logistic Regression of Voting in 2004 (sample of Democrats only)

Independent Variables	Model 1 Poisson Regression of Count of Political Involvement Experiences			Model 2 Whether or not Respondent voted in 2004	
	<i>beta</i>	e^{beta}	% change per unit increase	Standardized Estimate	Odds Ratio Point Estimate
Controls					
White	.101	-	-	-.033	-
Married	.010	-	-	.268	-
Male	.137**	1.147	+14.7	.294	-
South	.005	-	-	-.150	-
Income	.022	-	-	-.380*	.646
Education	.052**	1.053	+5.3	.425*	1.599
Number of Children	-.023	-	-	.256	-
Age	.001	-	-	.008	-
Church Attendance	.034**	1.035	+3.5	.018	-
Biblical Literalism	-.065*	.937	-6.3	-.130	-
Religious Traditions					
Catholic	.001	-	-	.088	-
Jewish	.165	-	-	1.623	-
Black Protestant	.095	-	-	2.639	-
Mainline Protestant	.116	-	-	-.209	-
Other	.303**	1.354	+35.4	-.098	-
None	.187	-	-	-.100	-

N = 505 for both models

p*<0.05 *p*<0.01 ****p*<0.001

religiosity is not uniformly lower across all indicators. Evangelical Democrats are no different from other Evangelicals regarding beliefs about the divinity of Jesus, exclusivity of their faith, or sharing their faith, and are no different regarding practices like tithing, frequency of Bible reading, and frequency of prayer.

It would be an error, therefore, to assume that religion exerts little influence on the identity of Evangelical Democrats. When compared to their other reference group, Democrats of other religious traditions, the influence of religion on their beliefs and practices becomes even more evident. Evangelical Democrats, while maintaining lower views of the Bible than other Evangelicals, hold significantly higher views of the Bible than other Democrats. They are also more conservative than most other Democrats on views of abortion, a key moral issue to Evangelical Protestants. Though Evangelical Democrats are truly Democrats in terms of political views, they appear to be a more religiously orthodox and conservative group of Democrats.

One of the most interesting phenomena illustrating the way that Evangelical Democrats define and practice their religious and political beliefs is the tendency of Evangelical Democrats to attend church less frequently than Democrats of all other Christian religious traditions. The fact that Democrats usually attend church less often than Republicans would lead us to assume that Evangelical Democrats attend church less often than other Evangelicals, but how can one explain their lower levels as compared to other Democrats? If their Evangelical faith has positively influenced many of their beliefs and practices, why would the effect of Evangelicalism on church attendance be negative for Democrats?

Theories of role conflict resolution would explain this tendency as a method of avoiding the tension that may result from associating with Evangelicals who are perceived to be almost uniformly Republican. It could be that the association of Evangelicalism and Republican politics has had a strong effect on Evangelical Democrats, causing them to stay away from church in higher proportions than Democrats

of other Christian religious traditions. In other words, Evangelical Democrats may be more likely to feel out of place within their congregations than would a Mainline Protestant Democrat or a Catholic Democrat, leading to lower levels of church attendance.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

According to role conflict theory, people hold incongruent expectations of individuals who possess roles that are perceived to be in conflict with one another, resulting in stress for the possessor of the concurrently-held roles. This individual will seek to avoid or resolve this stress, usually by choosing to conform to only one of the roles at the expense of the other(s). Theories of role conflict resolution would predict that Evangelical Democrats will somehow choose or be forced to choose between these two components of their identity, and thereby would maintain lower levels of belief or practice in one of these two spheres of their lives. Anticipated role conflict may serve as an explanation as to why Evangelical Democrats are less likely to attend their Evangelical Protestant churches even though they maintain many of the same beliefs and private religious practices of most Evangelical Protestants.

Implications for future research are numerous. For one, role conflict theory has been applied empirically almost exclusively to circumstances in which the conflict is perceived by the actor, and mainly in the contexts of roles related to job, family, and gender. As described earlier, role conflict theory does not have to be applied only within these contexts. Early explanations of role conflict theory included the notion that a perceived conflict on the part of the actor is not a requirement for role conflict to be applied. Examinations of role conflict theory should be applied to a more diverse array of conditions, such as circumstances in which role conflict is anticipated rather than experienced, avoided rather than resolved, and perceived by the observer rather than only

perceived by the actor. Additionally, the impact of role conflict on the maintenance of religious and/or political identities is virtually ignored. The interplay of these identities has a voluminous literature devoted to it, but the stress that is potentially caused by their balance or imbalance deserves more attention.

A weakness of this study is its inability to determine causation. Because the data are cross-sectional and do not contain any data over time, we cannot say with confidence that Evangelical Democrats have withdrawn from Evangelical life *as a result of* Evangelicalism's alignment with the GOP. However, the purpose is not to prove the causal impact of experienced role conflict, but to use role conflict as a framework in which to examine the interaction of the religious and political identities of Evangelical Democrats. Unfortunately, these data cannot capture the extent to which Evangelical Democrats perceive role conflict as they balance their religious and political identities.

As a second research implication, the political diversity of Evangelical Protestantism should be explored, not merely assumed. Typically, the diversity that is explored among Evangelical Protestants concerns mainly differences in theology and church practices, such as the distinctions between Fundamentalists, Pentecostals, and other Evangelicals. Too often, scholars who examine the political beliefs of Evangelical Protestants are only tacitly aware of political diversity within the tradition; yet they do not explore this variance or the manner in which a diverse group such as Evangelical Protestants balance, define, or maintain their religious and political identities.

A fuller exploration of the political diversity of Evangelical Protestants will also aid in an understanding of the role that politics plays for Evangelicals as we enter what some have called a "post-religious right" America (Wallis, 2008). Recent trends indicate

a growing group of “progressive Evangelicals,” Evangelicals who care more about issues like the environment, the AIDS crisis, alleviating poverty and promoting human rights than they do about the “family values” issues like abortion and gay rights that have been the rallying points for the Religious Right for the past 25 years (Kuo, 2008; Luo & Goodstein, 2007). It seems that this is not a general liberalizing of Evangelical beliefs, but instead a shuffling of the relative salience of certain issues to a particular segment of Evangelicalism.

Taken together, these phenomena may indicate, at least temporarily, a weakening in the impact of religion on voting choice among Evangelical Protestants, and a weakening of the Evangelical-Republican alliance. If this is the case, it seems probable that the perception that all Evangelicals are Republicans will begin to erode in time, creating an environment within Evangelical Protestant congregations that is perceived by Evangelical Democrats to be a more hospitable one, leading to the gradual elimination of the role conflict that currently exists.

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