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[43] Ibid. (116)

[44] Cressey 1973.

[45] Clemmer 1958: 118.

[46] Owen 1988.

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[48] DiIulio 1987. (62)

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[54] Bowker 1980: 154-155.

[55] Bowker 1980; McCorkle et al. 1995.

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[57] Ibid. (152)

[58] DiIulio 1987: 25.

[59] Cited in DiIulio 1987.

[60] Sloop 1996.

[61] Flynn 1973; South Carolina 1976; DiIulio 1987.

[62] Cressey 1973: 141.

[63] McCorkle et al. 1995.

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[66] South Carolina 1976: 217.

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Religiosity, Presidential Campaign Discourse and The Democratic Party

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Abstract

This essay seeks to examine the effect religion, or at least the rhetoric of religion also called religiosity, has had on Republican and Democratic Party campaign discourse in the last twenty to thirty years. The influx of religious messages and themes, particularly in presidential campaigning, is widely accepted and understood to be an ongoing trend since the birth of our nation. Empirical evidence proves this is not the case. Rather, the recent rise in religiosity represents a shift in the general political debate that has impacted not only the Republican Party, but the Democratic Party as well.

Religion must be considered as a value that affects how issues are framed, how candidates campaign, and ultimately how citizens vote. Whether this religiosity is good or bad, however, is not the focus of the research at hand. Neither does this endeavor argue whether religion and politics should be mixed or what that mix means to the separation of church and state. While these are extremely important questions, this essay represents an attempt to look the rise in religiosity from a different point of view.

First, this research provides evidence of the increased religiosity in recent presidential campaign discourse and demonstrates that this rise is disproportionate with the nation's overall religiousness. Second, it considers why the conservative religious right became politically active when it did and how it influenced the Republican Party. Third, it demonstrates that this shift by the Republicans eventually forced the Democrats to shift their campaign messages as well. Finally, this essay argues that religion is an extremely important social factor influencing issues and candidate preferences for voters. Therefore, the use of religiosity as campaign rhetoric is worthy of careful scholarly attention.

Introduction

Religion or at least the rhetoric of religion (religiosity) has become more prevalent in recent Republican and Democratic Party campaign discourse resulting in a shift in the general political debate. Religion is a value[1] that effects how individuals frame issues and thus all candidates must address their opponent's religiosity messages. This reality has prompted many political scientists to debate whether religiosity is a good or a bad thing, if religion and politics should be mixed, and what it all means to the separation of church and state. While these are extremely important questions, this essay represents an attempt to look the rise in religiosity from a different angle.

First, this essay provides evidence of the increased religiosity in recent presidential campaign discourse and demonstrates that this rise is disproportionate with the nation's overall religiousness. Second, it considers why the conservative religious right became politically active when it did and how it influenced the Republican Party. Third, it demonstrates that this shift by the Republicans eventually forced the Democrats to shift their campaign messages as well. Finally, this essay argues that religion is an extremely important social factor influencing issues and candidate preferences for voters.

Semantics can easily cloud this discussion. In many ways, words have become weapons for opposing groups and many words have come to carry pejorative baggage. This essay has attempted to avoid such negative uses. The first challenge is what to call the organization or movement in question. While the Moral Majority, Christian Coalition, religious conservative, religious right and Christian Right are often interchanged, there is no one acceptable term to describe this movement. Each group is different and any attempt to paint them as monolithic in thought or demographics is inherently problematic. Conservative religious people observe many faiths. Combined with other sociological factors, religious people may be conservative on social issues, yet liberal on economic ones. Others might be conservative on both fronts. Therefore, for the purposes of this analysis, the term *conservative religious right* will be used as this term best embodies the conservative views of people of varying faiths who, until recently, tended to receive their political cues from a more traditionalist-American-values perspective. Second, religiosity is the primary focus of this discussion. While many of the individuals and players may be devout, neither the Democrats nor Republicans can honestly claim to be the party of God. Therefore although the campaign theme may be religion, religiosity is used to operationalize the message.

Rising Religiosity

This essay is based on the primary assumption that religiosity is more explicit in recent presidential campaigns, a topic that has been addressed by many fronts including the media, candidates, research organizations, political scientists, and party platforms. A survey of these players supports the primary assumption. The Washington Post wrote in 2000 "...that God is getting too much attention this election season" and that "a bidding war on religion, in which the question becomes which side is more devout," had ensued.[2] Ellen Willis from The Nation wrote "Al Gore and Joe Lieberman did their best to outdo the Republicans at religiosity."[3] Senator Lieberman stated in March 2001, "The role of religion in public life is no longer the underlying discussion. It is the discussion... After decades of being coy and hesitant, people of faith have finally given themselves permission to speak in public."[4] The Pew Charitable Trusts found the issue to be so important they invested $10 million in the Religious Communities and the American Public Square initiative. This is intended "to foster greater public understanding of the importance of the religious voice in the renewal of American democracy, and to provide people of faith with the institutional resources they need to translate their religious beliefs into a healthy civic engagement."[5]

Many political scientists agree. Robert Zwier declares, "Religion has invaded politics."[6] Mark Silk writes "Hardly had the 2000 campaign begun that Bush, most of the rest of the early Republican flock, and Vice President Al Gore were testifying to their faith more vociferously than any presidential aspirants in living memory."[7] Michael Kazin admits it was difficult to tell whether Bush or Gore was the more zealot Christian in 2000.[8] A survey by John C. Green revealed "an intensification of the traditional connections of particular faiths to party politics, aided by the religious rhetoric in the campaign."[9] Gerald Pomper and Bill Galston both agree that religion, whether the true practice or the rhetoric of religiosity, is certainly more evident today than it was in recent decades.[10]

Party platforms demonstrate that the current level of religiosity is extraordinary for both the Republicans and Democrats. Although proclamations of faith and God-given rights seem normal today, the trend has been more of an evolution rather than a perpetuation of tradition. As will

be discussed in more detail later, many cultural changes occurred in America throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Supreme Court decisions regarding desegregation, school prayer and the Equal Rights Amendment incensed many conservative religious constituents. Not until 1973, however, and the Roe v. Wade decision to decriminalize abortion did these conservative religious individuals begin to organize into vocal political activist groups. With dedicated leadership, organization and abundant funding, these groups were able to pressure the Parties to consider their positions on social issues. By the end of the 1970s, conservative religious organizations found a home in the Republican Party, thus becoming the *conservative religious right*. As platforms have been called the "barometers of changing public opinion and emerging trends across most of the nation's political history,"[11] a platform is the perfect tool with which to track this evolution of religiosity.

Republican National Platforms

First, the Republican Party platforms demonstrate the increased religiosity beginning with the 1972 platform, in which there is no direct reference to God. Instead, page 5 quotes founding documents "that all men are endowed with certain rights," but even the tone of this quote is much less religious than what will appear in the 1976 version. When referring to draft dodgers on page 10, the platform commends those who serve in the military for obeying "a higher *morality*." Yet still it is unclear whether this is a reference to a religious or secular moral code. Similarly, page 17 refers to the Carter Administration's policy on crime as "undermining the legal and *moral* foundations of our society." Page 26 affirms the Republican "view that voluntary prayer should be freely permitted in public places... thus preserving the traditional separation of church and state." This statement is particularly interesting given the current debate over church and state.[12] The only blessing mentioned in the platform is on page 33, which refers to the blessing of liberty and universal freedoms.

By the 1976 platform, the Republican religiosity is completely transparent. Page 3 clearly states "Our great American Republic was founded on the principle: 'one nation, under *God*[13], with liberty and justice for all'... 'That men... *endowed by their Creator* with certain *unalienable* Rights' and that those rights must not be taken from those to whom *God* has given them." Note the difference between this usage and that of the 1972 usage provided above. Page 8 begins the Republican pro-family[14] theme, which is important to the present discussion as it follows the language of Jerry Falwell, Phyllis Schlafly and other conservative religious right leaders.

Page 8 states "the structure of the family must be strengthened." This is expanded into a plank devoted to The American Family, which states "Families must continue to be the foundation of our nation... [as it is through our families that] our cultural and spiritual heritages are perpetuated, our laws are observed and our values are preserved." It continues "women's and men's concerns with their changing and often conflicting roles [and] high divorce rates... create a hostile atmosphere that erodes family structures and family values... We fear government may be powerful enough to destroy our families."

Abortion appears for the first time in the 1976 platform on page 9 when the Republican state they support "a position on abortion that values human life." This continues on page 11 with "The question of abortion is one of the most difficult and controversial of our time. It is undoubtedly a moral and personal issue but is also involves complex questions relating to medical science and criminal justice." This wording sounds more like Ronald Dworkin's liberal common ground argument[15] than the staunch Republican pro-life position that will follow (particularly by 1988 platform, which can be found in the appendix). In carries on with "We protest the Supreme Court's intrusion into the family structure through its denial of the parents' obligation and right to guide their minor children. The Republican Party favors a continuance of the public dialogue on abortion and supports the efforts of those who seek enactment of a constitutional amendment to restore the protection of the right to life for unborn children." Although this pro-life position is not shocking today, the evolution of religiosity from the more common ground wording in 1976 to an absolutist stance beginning 1988 coincides with the conservative religious activist focus on abortion. The growth of the movement and its impact on the Republican Party is easily tracked through this single issue. Page 12 mentions charitable institutions for welfare solutions and page 19 has entire plank on Morality in Foreign Policy. Under this added plank, the Republicans state they will "Honestly, openly, and with firm conviction... go forward as a united people to forge a lasting peace in the world based upon our deep belief in the rights of man, the rule of law and guidance by the hand of God."

The increase in religiosity from 1972 to 1976 is clearly evident. Much had changed in this time frame. The Equal Rights Amendment[16] was still awaiting ratification. Roe v. Wade had sparked a national debate with religious organizations mobilizing as pro-life pressure groups. Gay rights organizations, first formed in 1969, continued to grow. Many clergymen

became politically active as they began to see a fundamental need for religion in the public square. In addition, many of the 1976 messages have remained in all Republican platforms up to and including 2000. These messages include the pro-family stance, charitable institution involvement, and the need to blame Democratic liberal permissiveness for the nation's moral decline.[17] As the current analysis need only demonstrate when each party increased its religiosity, religious examples from the 1980 to 1988 Republican platforms are available in supplementary materials available upon request.

Democratic National Platforms

The Democratic National Platforms from 1972 to 1992 speak of religious freedom, morality and respect for those who are different. Yet there is not a single reference to God in any of these documents. Further, the 1988 platform is almost devoid of any direct moral references (as opposed to the rising Republican religiosity fervor in their 1988 platform). The fact that the word God does not appear in a Democratic National Platform until 1996 is stunning when you consider the Republican shift by 1976 as a result of rising conservative religious right pressure groups and the twelve years of Republican presidential leadership that followed. The assertion here is not that religion or Roe v. Wade were the causes for a Democratic Party decline, but that each played a part in that decline. As Elaine Kamarck indicates, this was certainly a period when the Democrats fell out of line with the mainstream and issues perceived as religious were part of the party's problem. Kamarck argues that the Democrats needed to find a way to talk about religion as they could no longer afford to cede God to the Republican Party.[18]

The 1992 Democratic National Platform stepped a toe in the religiosity water presenting itself as a "new covenant" and talking about American values of faith and family. Still, there was no explicit references to God prompting President Bush to say that the Democrat's platform had "left out three simple letters, G-O-D."[19] This changed by the 1996 presidential election. Following the 1994 Republican victory in the House of Representatives and their Contract With America agenda, the religious themes in the Democratic Party's platforms grew. In addition to the religious freedom and morality language of the past, page 1 states "We want an America that gives all Americans the change to live out their dreams and achieve their *God*-given potential." Page 39 references a "*sacred* responsibility" to family and page 42 states "We understand we have a *sacred* obligation to pro-

tect *God's* earth and preserve our qualify of life for our children and our children's children."

By 2000 the platform incorporated all of the religious references from the past and went much further. Page 14 talks about a "*God*-given right to work hard and live the American dream." Pages 18 and 24 discuss faith-based organizations and charitable choice for social services. Page 28 says "Democrats know that for all of us there is no more solemn responsibility than that of *stewards of God's creation*." Page 30 claims "America is *blessed*". Page 31 declares: "Democrats believe that *God* has given the people of our nation not only a chance, but a *mission* to prove to men and women throughout this world that people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds, of all faiths and creeds, can not only work and live together, but can enrich and ennoble both themselves and our purpose." Page 33 sums it up that we are "one America – one nation, under *God*[20], with liberty and justice for all."

Platforms Illustrate Shift in Religiosity

These platforms clearly demonstrate the rise in religiosity within presidential campaign discourse, but the reason for this change could be debatable. First, it could be argued that the parties shifted along with the rest of the nation, but this fails to explain why both parties did not shift at the same time. The Republicans began to shift in 1976. The Democrats did not shift until 1996. In addition, the argument that Americans had become more religious is dubious. Even if the Republicans simply caught on to the trend earlier and it took the Democrats twenty years to catch up, the data does not support a proportional rise in American religiousness. For example, church membership as a percentage of the population declined from 69.5 percent in 1965 to 64.4 percent in both 1970 and 1975, and to 63.3 percent in 1997.[21] The number of Americans who said religion was very important in their lives dropped from 70 percent in 1965 to 62 percent in 1998.[22] Church attendance remained basically the same with 41 percent in 1939, 46 percent in 1962, 40 percent in 1998 and most recently 42 in November 2001.[23] According to these numbers, the platform references to God should have either been present in the 1960s and 1970s or decreased proportionately in the platforms. Instead, they grew more explicit and stronger.

If not due to an increase in religiousness itself in America, why did religiosity increase in campaign discourse? As mentioned at the onset, this essay attributes the rise in religiosity to conservative religious right activism in the 1970s and the pressure these groups asserted on the Republican Party. This is not to say that religious groups did not oppose government policy prior to Roe v. Wade. Many credit the 1950s "civil religion" period (when God was added to both the Pledge of Allegiance and the national motto In Got We Trust) and the Barry Goldwater campaign in 1964 with the "upsurge in public religiosity."[24] In fact, religious Americans could be found on the left and right of issues throughout the 1960s, but their political involvement was different. Even though "churches and church leaders were in the forefront of the civil rights revolution, the anti-war movement and the war on poverty... [these] religious liberals used their faith to challenge rather than support prevailing government policies and social practices."[25] Up to this point in time, the conservative religious right was most concerned with the Supreme Court decisions against organized prayer and Bible reading in public schools. "The court said these decisions were necessary to protect religious freedoms, but they provoked strong opposition, especially among fundamentalists and other religious conservatives."[26]

The cultural angst of the 1960s, which also included desegregation, the Viet Nam war and protests, and the rise of anti-establishment religious groups (particularly with young Americans) resulted in what Elaine Kamarck calls a cultural realignment.[27] Others attribute the perceived moral and spiritual problems of today to a "cultural shock of the 1960s."[28] There were enormous changes taking place as groups were challenging inequality in foreign policy, race, and gender issues. By the 1970s, everyone was worried about the economy. "But for the incipient Christian Right, what inspired the first wave of activists was a series of key events around the questions of morality, gender, and family relations."[29]

In Sara Diamond's opinion, "The 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion was the single most galvanizing event in the history of the Christian Right."[30] While conservative Catholics and Christians of all denominations had been involved with recent political issues on the outskirts, this one issue brought them together in the right-to-life movement, which began by focusing on a constitutional amendment to ban abortion. Diamond also points to the 1970s battle against the Equal Rights Amendment. When ratification appeared likely, Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum (a

conservative religious organization originally called Stop ERA) mobilized a national effort to defeat ERA and eventually succeeded.[31] Schlafly remains an important conservative figure today, yet she is important to the present discussion as she was one of the first to "sound the alarm against what she saw as a full-scale 'threat' to the traditional family... She claimed the ERA would make gay marriages legal and prevent the reversal of Roe v. Wade. For Schlafly and others, the set of *profamily* issues was beginning to crystallize into a unified package, with potential action on many fronts."[32]

In 1979 the abortion issue, ERA and election of Jimmy Carter (a born-again Christian) convinced Jerry Falwell and a group of conservative religious leaders[33] that a " newly minted right-wing evangelical fervor" existed. These men "joined together to harness what they perceived as an untapped major political force."[34] They named this new organization the Moral Majority and it quickly became the largest conservative religious right group at that time. The Moral Majority organized state chapters, set up a Washington lobbying office and created a political action committee.[35] "Falwell's organization was well focused and financed... Ronald Reagan visited Falwell's Liberty College and was greeted by a host of religious broadcasters sporting bumper stickers proclaiming 'Christians for Reagan.' The movement brought new voters to the polls in several states..."[36] and has often taken credit for Reagan's 1980 presidential victory.

The rise in religious groups was also part of a larger phenomenon in 1970s, and that was the proliferation of interest groups, PACs and campaign money. It was the beginning of the permanent campaign. Robert Zwier notes that one "major reason for the greater interest in cooperation among groups is the decentralization in Congress as a result of the organizational changes in the 1970s... The average religious interest group... bring[s] legitimacy, stability, a larger constituency, and a moral dimension to such cooperative efforts."[37] So while the conservative religious right groups grew in power during this time due to their moral opposition to abortion and other religious issues, the changes in party organization, elections and campaign money certainly helped their efforts. Perhaps this point helps to explain why the rise in the 1970s is considered such a phenomenon. It is not so much that this was radical fringe. Rather, the religious interest group dynamics and actions represented a great departure from religious groups of the past.[38]

While it is quite contentious just how much of the 1980 Reagan

victory can be attributed to the Moral Majority, the group was determined to make voter registration its primary goal and credible estimates claim they succeeded in registering approximately two million voters.[39] Additionally, the number of Republican white evangelical Protestants grew about 9% between 1978 and 1987.[40] Borrowing from what the Democrats had employed so successfully with the labor unions,[41] the conservative religious right organized direct mail operations, get out the vote drives, and moral report cards[42] for church leaders to pass out the Sunday before election day. Continuing their coverage from 1976, media evangelists used their broadcast programs "to play a vital role in the political mobilization of their audiences."[43] By tapping into "preexisting social networks that have important ongoing significance in their members' lives"[44] and harnessing religious concerns regarding the decline of American morality, the conservative religious right convinced many voters that the Republican Party was the only religious choice in town. From a local, state and nation perspective, the conservative religious right movement opposed gay rights, pornography, abortion, and sex education. As they began to oppose these issues, the Republican platforms began to reflect the same trends often with identical language.

Many question the impact conservative religious right groups actually had on the 1980 Reagan victory. Michael Lienesch argues that their presence cannot be ignored. In fact, he calls the presence of religious activists, "who throughout the 1980s could be seen in ever-increasing numbers at political caucuses, campaign rallies, and party conventions" striking.[45] Ronald Reagan confirmed this when in an April 1980 speech before the Religious Roundtable National Affairs Briefing. He said, "I know you can't endorse me, ... but I want you to know that I endorse you."[46] According to Sara Diamond, "Reagan conveyed to the newly aroused Christian Right the message that he was their man, and that he would turn the White House into God's House... The 1980 election was a watershed event because it brought to power a new breed of Republican legislators, people who were more beholden than their predecessors to grassroots right-wing forces back home" both in the White House and Congress.[47] James Guth and John Green argue that "in the 1980s Republicans ardently wooed the religious with traditionalist appeals, apparently with considerable success. The New York Times / CBS Poll found that 81 percent of white 'born-again' Christians voted for Reagan in 1984... accelerating a long-term shift of theologically conservative Protestants (especially younger ones) toward the Republicans."[48] Diamond adds that over two-thirds of the new white religious voters in 1980 voted for Reagan over Carter and that 17 percent

fewer conservative religious voters voted for Carter in 1980 than in 1976.[49]

With the demise of the Moral Majority and Pat Robertson's failed 1988 presidential campaign, many political scientists and journalists were convinced that the conservative religious right movement had ended. Yet in 1989, Pat Robertson formed the Christian Coalition and made Ralph Reed the executive director. Reed and the Christian Coalition were instrumental throughout the 1990s including the Republican's Contract With America and Clinton's impeachment.[50] The conservative religious right groups had become more professional and astute in asserting religiosity into the American political debate. Republicans, according to Kamarck, had taken religiosity and made it a wedge issue for voters.[51] "Liberals criticized the [Christian] coalition for giving a religious cast to secular political issues. What troubles many people... is that certain planks of conservative ideology are made to seem synonymous with being Christian or being religious."[52] One survey that supports this argument found that when Americans were asked whether they thought churches should express their views on day to day political and social issues rather than staying out of politics, the number went up (22 percent agreed in 1965 and 29 percent agreed in 1996).[53] While this is hardly a majority, it represents a significant voting bloc with the today's marginal victories. It is even more interesting in light of the declining religiousness in America, as presented earlier in this essay.

The conservative religious right remain an important voting bloc for the Republicans and their current challenge is to maintain the religious vote while not alienating the moderate and independent voters.[54] By 1996, 78 percent of the conservative religious right were republicans, which differed greatly from the 28 percent of the general population and 30 percent of the general evangelical group.[55] The conservative religious right was made up of 58 percent women, 42 percent men and over 96 percent of white Americans (compared to 79 percent of the general population).[56] This group continued to make an impact in the 2000 Republican primaries for Senator John McCain, according to William Mayer. Mayer argues that McCain made great strides early on for his party's nomination, but he "may have undercut these efforts by delivering several highly publicized attacks on the 'evil influence' of the Christian right within the Republican party."[57] James Ceaser and Andrew Busch concurred stating "though McCain belatedly apologized and made a distinction between the leaders and their grassroots followers, the damage was done."[58]

Democratic Party Shift in Religiosity

Thus far this analysis has demonstrated the presence of religiosity, its effect on party platforms, the rise of conservative religious right groups, and their influence on the Republican Party. The present aim was to go one step further. It must now be established that the Democratic Party was forced to ratchet-up the religiosity in presidential campaign discourse in order to compete with the Republican Party for voters, particularly swing voters with conservative religious beliefs. Perhaps the best way to demonstrate this point is to go directly to the source.

According to Elaine Kamarck, one of the principal architects of the 1996 Democratic National Platform along with Bruce Reed, this shift in the party's campaign strategy was not an accident. It was a "concerted effort" to pull the party back to the center ideologically by telling many conservative Democrats leery of the party's commitment to religious values "Don't worry, you can trust us."[59] Andre Churney, the 2000 Democratic National Platform architect, even joked with Kamarck that he had managed to get *God in there* more than in 1996. Kamarck added that New Democrats consciously armed themselves with a new theme to remind voters that the Republican Party was not alone in representing God. The Democrats has suffered greatly from the 1960s to the early 1990s and the inclusion of religiosity was quite intentional to regain much needed territory.[60] E.J. Dionne, Jr. added a new dimension of this effort when he explained how a venture capitalist organization "arranged the [2000] Democratic ticket... to increase interest in the subjects of religion and politics."[61] Just as the word *family* had once been the buzzword and then became mainstream, the new buzzword is *faith*. "And just as 'pro-family' ideology is not confined to the political right but has influenced liberals, leftists, even feminists, what might be called 'pro-church' sentiment cuts across the political spectrum."[62]

As for the New Democrat shift, Kamarck admitted the focus was to use God, family and party (in that order) throughout the platforms as much as possible.[63] This strategy allowed the Democrats to concentrate "on blunting the strength of religious conservatives instead of competing for their votes." According to Hart, a Democratic pollster in a Survey for the People for the American way, "Democrats have gone out of their way to tell these people [religious conservatives] that they're not welcome in the party." His survey found that "voters' attitudes toward the religious right... found the public shared the movement's concern about a decline in

moral values and did not view the movement as a political threat. Hart's advice [to the Democratic Party] was to debate the specific policy positions advocated by religious conservatives rather than the strength of the religious right or the role of religion in society."[64] David Wilhelm, former Democratic Party chief, concurred when commenting in the early 1990s that the Christian "coalition and its founders... were trying to brand opponents as anti-religious."[65] He continued "that Democrats would be competing for the votes of the religious faithful, too. 'We're a party that in the 1980s lost the flag somehow... I do not want to let the party lose God or the Bible in this election.'"[66] At the time, Wilhelm was speaking about the 1992 presidential election and given the results, he was right.

Conservative Christian Right's Successes

Thus the religiosity in campaign discourse did increase disproportionately to the religiousness of the country. The prevalence of conservative religious right increased along with interest groups, PACs and money at the time. This resulted in an incredible influence of the religious activist groups on the Republican Party. Whether due to the saliency of religious issues by the conservative religious groups or the party itself, the religious interest groups evidently influenced the Republican Party's social policy positions and platform language. The party certainly welcomed the new Republican voters. Just as Falwell had sensed an "untapped major political force,"[67] so did the Republican Party. The Republicans began as early as 1976 espousing the religiosity of a pro-family, traditional values and God-given agenda. These messages evolved throughout the 1980s and 1990s to include social, international and economic policy issues.

The rise in religious discourse coincides with the rising importance of religion as a value thus influencing voter choice. The Republicans were able to make religion a wedge issue and subsequently forced the Democrats to incorporate religiosity into its campaign discourse as well. Kamarck and Churney openly admit this occurred and that the increased Democratic Party campaign religiosity was intentional for the last three presidential elections. Beginning with biblical imagery inserted in the 1992 platform, the Democrats followed up with more explicit references to God by 1996 and 2000.

Religiosity and Voter Choice

The final portion of this analysis draws on traditionally accepted party identification and voter analysis theories. Religion has long been considered one of the social factors effecting voter choice. With the voters of today relying more on issues and candidates than parties to make their choices, religiosity plays an ever increasing role in the decision making process. Conservative religious right groups can provide the necessary cues voters need to make rational vote choices.

Jerry Perkins argues that the shift from party politics in the 1960s to more candidate and issue centered politics in the 1970s was vital to the right of conservative religious groups, who were now "organized and vocal. The Religious Roundtable, Christian Voice, the National Christian Action Coalition, and, most notably, the Moral Majority led an assault on a perceived immorality of liberal government and the politicians who occupied it."[68] Perkins' study looks at the impact religious beliefs and convictions have on voting choices when mixed with partisanship and ideology. As he explains it, an individual's religious beliefs come before partisanship, ideology, or their evaluations of a conservative religious right group.

In this model, the party identification and ideology also come before the evaluations. All aspects of an individual's decision making process flow through their evaluation of the conservative religious group. In this sense, Perkins argues, the conservative religious groups serves as a conduit for religious fundamentalists, Republicans, and conservatives."[69] The ability of parties to incorporate the religious themes only strengthens this effect.

For many religious Americans, conservative religious right groups have replaced what the parties may have provided in the V.O. Key American Voter model. This is not to say that religion is the only decision factor, but it is an important. In fact, poll data shows that more Americans believed in 2000 that religion can answer all or even most of today's problems than did in 1985. (58 percent in 1985 and 66 percent in 3/2000).[70] Additionally, a 1996 poll indicated that that the majority of Americans (60 percent) believed the governing elite to be irreligious and 52 percent believed they were lacking character.[71] Andrew Kohut cites a Pew survey in which fewer Americans resisted the mix of religion and politics 1999 than in a 1965 Gallup Poll. (53 percent in 1965, 45 percent in 1999.)[72] The ability of conservative religious right groups to provide cues to voters also

gives legitimacy to the candidates and parties. Perhaps this explains why morality and character have become important campaign litmus tests. As David Maser explains, "Many Americans have found the community's emphasis on traditional family values and deep religious faith appealing. As a result, evangelicals have increased both in size and in political and cultural influence over the last 30 years. And many experts on religion expect the growth to continue."[73]

"Religion is a strong and growing force in the way Americans think about politics. It has a bearing on political affiliation, political values, policy attitudes and candidate choice. Its increasing influence on political opinion and behavior rivals factors such as race, region, age, social class and gender... More specifically, religion has a strong impact on the political views of Christian Americans who represent 84 % of the voting age population... Regardless of denomination, people who express more faith are more conservative. People who engage in more religious practices are more conservative. Those who say religion plays a very important role in their lives are more conservative." With the larger percentage of Americans self-identifying themselves as a member of some religion as opposed to agnostic or atheist, particularly following the attacks of September 11,[74] it is critical for both parties to at least neutralize the religious question in the minds of voters by embracing religious messages as part of campaign strategy. Then the question is no longer whether a party is religious, but where each stands on issues in light of that religious view.

John Green argues "The 2000 presidential race was one of the closest in American history, and one reason was a deepening division among and within America's diverse religious communities...The Bush vote was substantially an alliance of observant white Christians and less observant white Protestants. The key constituency was regular worship attending evangelical Protestants, who voted 84 percent for Bush... Taken together, all regularly attending white Christians accounted for almost three-fifths of the Republican presidential ballots... Minority religious faiths and secular votes accounted for one-quarter of Bush's total. The Gore vote was essentially a coalition of minority faiths plus secular voters and less observant white Christians. Black Protestants, who gave 95 percent of their ballots to Gore, formed his strongest constituency... The narrowness of each candidate's religious support helps explain the closeness of the election."[75]

While religion has long been considered a part of the American political process, the rise in religiosity coincides with a weakening of the

wall separating church and state.[76] The impetus for this shift began with the rise of the conservative religious right as a political force in the 1970s. Although this group may not have had a high rate of ballot box victories, it has succeeded in shifting the entire debate to a more religious one thus affecting the campaign promises and eventual policy proposals. The marginal difference in the 2000 election result only proves how much every vote counts, which codifies the need for both parties to appeal to a variety of conservative religious individuals. Religious conservatives are not going anywhere. They have become entrenched as a "political presence that cannot be ignored. For the Republican Party, they are clearly an important - and some say essential - base of political support. 'The Republican Party does not stand a chance of becoming a majority party in America or electing another president without the religious right."[77]

Similarly, the Democrats must find a way to attract many of the same conservative religious voters (other than the extreme right evangelicals). Democrats are just as religious as Republicans and may even agree on the problems. Each party, however, is religious in a different way resulting in different solutions to those same problems. This is what Hart implored the Democratic Party to consider. While embracing religiosity, Democrats must stress how their solutions would appeal to voters. In the end, the impact of the conservative religious right on the Democratic Party is undeniable. They "have wrought a lasting shift on the U.S. political landscape... [and] it is safe to predict that this mobilization will continue or even intensify in the future local, state and national elections."[78]

APPENDIX

Republican National Platforms 1980 to 1988

1980

P age 2 labels the Democratic politicians as "the chief architects of our decline." Page 4 continues "This malaise has become epidemic in Washington. Its cure is government led by Republicans who share the values of the majority of Americans." Page 5 says "we call out to the American people: With God's help..." Page 7 begins first introduces the welfare "poverty trap" and blames the Democrats for this problem. This page also speaks of "compassion and charity." Page 12 reaffirms the party's previous commitment to the ERA and calls for its ratification. Interestingly, given knowledge of Schlafly's franking privileges from Senator Ervin, the platform states "at the discretion of the [Democratic] White House, federal departments launched pressure against states which refused to ratify ERA. Regardless

of one's position on ERA, we demand that this practice cease." Page 13 "We reaffirm our belief in the traditional role and values of the family in our society. The damage being done today to the family takes its greatest toll on women." Page 14 reasserts the party's position on school prayer. Page 19 offers a Family Protection plank, which calls for a White House Conference on families to "express our support for legislation protecting and defending the traditional American family against the ongoing erosion of its base in our family." Page 24 "We commend the religious leaders, community activists, parents, and local officials who are working with fervor and dedication to protect young Americans from the drug plague," which they previous blamed on the permissive Democrats. Page 38 describes the nation as "steeped in the Judeo-Christian ethic and Anglo-Saxon theories of law and right." Page 49 "We will work for the appointment of judges at all levels of the judiciary who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human lives."

1984

Page 2 speaks of mercy and pity. Page 7 introduces the "taxation of churches, religious schools, or any other religious institutions" for the first time. Page 20 describes religion as one of the "basic building blocks" that come from "self-reliant individuals, prepared to exercise both rights and responsibilities." The Republicans describe the Democrats as follows: "Worst of all, they tried to build their brave new world by assaulting our basic values... They ignored traditional morality. And they still do." Pages 22 and 23 blames welfare for shattering family cohesion, echoing the work of Charles Murray and other conservative researchers that will have an enormous impact on the welfare debate. They blame this on "permissive liberals." Pages 32 and 33 speak of morality and school prayer. "We have enacted legislation to guarantee equal access to school facilities by student religious groups. Mindful of our religious diversity, we reaffirm our commitment to the freedom of religion and speed guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and firmly support the rights of students to openly practice the same, including the right to engage in voluntary prayer in schools." Page 40 reasserts "pro-family" tax codes. Page 47 introduces the Family Protection plank. "During the 1970s, America's families were ravaged by worsening economic conditions and a Washington elite unconcerned with them... Preventing family dissolution... is vital." Page 48 continues with opposition to "gratuitous sex and violence in entertainment media [which] contribute to this sad development." Page 49 "We commend the President for appointing federal judges committed to the rights of law-abiding citizens and traditional family values." Page 51 claims that "the right to property safeguards for citizens all things of value... [including] their religious convictions... Republicans reaffirm this God-given and inalienable right. The unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed. We therefore reaffirm our support for human life amendment to the Constitution, and we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children... judicial appointments... who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life." For the first time on page 62, Republicans address international affairs and abortions. "Prominent among American ideals is the sanctity of the family. Decisions on family size should be made freely by each family.... As part of our commitment to the family and our opposition to abortion, we will eliminate all U.S. funding for organizations which in any way support abortion or research on abortion methods." Page 64 "To this end, we pledge our continued effort to secure for all people the inherent, God-given rights that Americans have been privileged to enjoy for two centuries."

1988

Page 2 "American is its people: free men and women, with faith in God... This is the continuing American revolution of continuity and change." Page 20 "As part of our commitment to the family as the building block of economic progress, we believe decisions on family size should be made freely by each family, and we remain opposed to U.S. funding for organizations involved in abortion." Page 21 "Strong families build strong communities... Republicans believe, as did the framers of the Constitution, that God-given rights of the family come before those of government. It separates us from liberal Democrats... pro-family... We appointed judges who respect family rights, family values..." Pages 21 and 22 "The family's most important function is to raise the next generation of Americans, handing on to them the Judeo-Christian values of Western civilization and our ideals of liberty." Page 27 addresses the AIDS crisis for the first time "AIDS education should emphasize that abstinence from drug abuse and sexual activity outside of the marriage is the safest way to avoid infection with the AIDS virus." It could be argued the Republicans unwillingness to address the issue in 1984 or to mention sympathy for those in the gay community who suffered could be tied to the conservative religious right. The Reagan administration knew of the disease, described as GRIDS (Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrome) at the time. Page 27 discusses the care of children by groups "including religious groups" and introduces the concept of "fetal protection" in the workplace. Page 28 "We will require parental consent for unemancipated minors to receive contraceptives from federally funded family planning clinics" Page 30 addresses homelessness and argues that "homelessness demonstrates the failure of liberalism... root causes of the problem.... [destruction of] families." Page 31 The Republican Party believes "that the Pledge of Allegiance should be recited daily in schools in all States. Students who learn we are 'one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all' will shun the politics of fear... In defending religious freedom. Mindful of our religious diversity, we support the right of students to engage in voluntary prayer in schools. We are for full enforcement of the Republican legislation that now guarantees access to school facilities by student religious groups." Pages 31 and 32 "That the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life that cannot be infringed. We therefore reaffirm our support for a humane amendment to the Constitution, and we endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children... We commend the efforts of those individuals and religious and private organizations that are providing positive alternatives to abortion... We applaud President Reagan's find record of judicial appointments, and we affirm our support for the appointment of judges at all levels of the judiciary who respect traditional family values and the sanctity of innocent human life. That churches, religious schools and any other religious institution should not be taxed..." Page 40 regarding education "our goal is to combine traditional values and enduring truths with the most modern techniques and technology for teaching and learning... Values are the core of good education. A free society needs a moral foundation for its learning. We oppose any program in public schools which provide birth control or abortion services or referrals. Our 'first line of defense' to protect our youth from contracting AIDS and other sexually communicable diseases, from teen pregnancy, and from illegal drug use must be abstinence education." Page 41 one introduces school vouchers. Page 48 states "The drug epidemic didn't just happen. It was fueled by the liberal attitudes of the 1960s and 1970s that tolerated drug use." Page 51 "Fathers of welfare dependent children must be held accountable... root causes of poverty. Divorce, desertion, and illegitimacy have been responsible for almost all the increase in child poverty..." This is Charles Murray's Losing Ground thesis. Page 86 "We commend the Reagan-Bush Administration for its courageous defense of human life in population programs around the world. We support the refusal to fund international organizations involved in abortion."

Chronology of Religion and Politics in America (Abridged Version)[79]

Colonial Times: Religious dissenters settle many of the original 13 Colonies, but most Colonial governments adopt religious tests for office and religious taxes. Some colonies, however, establish models for religious freedom.

1789-1900: The Constitution prohibits government establishment of religion, but churches play an important part in politics on issues ranging from slavery and social reform to prohibition and public morality.

1900-1960: Strains increase between traditionalist and modernist religions.

1908: The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America is formed and, as its first action, published a pro-labor report called "The Church and Modern Industry."

1910: The first of a series of conservative theological tracts published under the name "The Fundamentals" lays the groundwork for the formation of 20th century fundamentalism.

July 1925: John Scopes, a high school biology teacher in Dayton, Tenn., is convicting of violating state law against teaching the theory of evolution. The conviction is overturned two years later by the state Supreme Court.

1941-1942: Rival fundamentalist organizations are formed: the combative American Council of Christian Churches in 1941, now defunct, and the more moderate National Association of Evangelicals in 1942.

1954: Congress adds the phrase "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance.

1956: Congress makes "In God We Trust" the national motto.

1960s-1970s: Liberal religious groups are active in civil rights and peace movements, while religious conservatives are less active.

September 12, 1960: Democratic presidential nominee John F. Kennedy neutralizes the "Catholic issue" by telling a group of Southern Baptist ministers that his religious beliefs will not dictate his actions if elected.

June 25, 1962: U.S. Supreme Court bars state-written prayer in public school classrooms as an improper establishment of religion; the decision is extend a year later to cover Bible reading in class.

January 22, 1973: U.S. Supreme Court rule in Roe v. Wade that women have a right to abortion during most of a pregnancy. The ruling is supported by most Americans but prompt strong opposition from Catholics and evangelical Protestants.

November 2, 1976: Jimmy Carter, a self-described born-again Christian, is elected president with support from most evangelical voters. Later, evangelicals spurn Carter's politics.

1979: The Rev. Jerry Falwell is recruited to head a new advocacy group, the Moral Majority, to lobby on abortion, pornography and other moral issues.

1980s: The religious right solidly back Republicans Ronald Reagan and George Bush in presidential elections, but most of its agenda is not enacted.

1987-1988: Televangelist Pat Robertson campaigns unsuccessfully for Republican nomination for president.

1989: Robertson forms the Christian Coalition, hiring political activist Ralph E.

Reed as executive director.
1990s: Conservative religious groups mobilize in many states.
November 3, 1992: Democrat Bill Clinton, a churchgoing Southern Baptist with liberal views on social issues, is elected president.
July 1993: Christian Coalition says it will broaden its agenda to economic issues.
1994: Republicans win House majority on Contract With America agenda, taken in large part from the Christian Coalition's "The Contract With the American Family"

Endnotes

1 Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

2 http://pewforum.org/events/0815/ "What's God Got to Do With the American Experiment?" August 15, 2000, Los Angeles. Quote by Cal Thomas, p. 13.

3 http://www.thenation.com Willis, Ellen, "Freedom From Religion," p. 1.

4 http://perforum.org/press/releases/030101a.php3

5 http://www.pewtrusts.com/grants/programs/rel/public_square_glance.cfm

6 Robert Zwier, "Coalition Strategies of Religious Interest Groups." In Religion and Political Behavior in the United States, Ted G. Jelen, (ed.), p. 171. New York: Praeger, 1989.

7 Silk, Mark. (ed.) Religion and American Politics: The 2000 Election in Context. Hartford, Connecticut: The Pew Program on Religion and the News Media, Center for the Study for Religion in Public Life, 2000, p. 2.

8 Kazin, Michael, "Pietists and Pluralists: Religion and American Politicians," in Silk, Mark. (ed.) Religion and American Politics: The 2000 Election in Context. Hartford, Connecticut: The Pew Program on Religion and the News Media, Center for the Study for Religion in Public Life, 2000, p. 72.

9 http://pewforum.org/news/index.php3?NewsID=105. John C. Green, "Religion and the 2000 Election: Traditional Voting Patterns, Increased Polarization," February 6, 2001.

10 Pomper, Gerald. Professor Rutgers University, email interview by author, December 3, 2001. Galston, William. Professor University of Maryland, email interview by author, December 4, 2001.

11 http://www.newhousenews.com/archive/story1a080800.html, p. 1.

12 http://pewforum.org. Jay Heinrichs, "Religion in Public Life: Religion's Turbulent Public Life (Trust Magazine Article)," November 2001.

13 Masci, David. "Evangelical Christians." Washington, D.C.: CQ Researcher, September 14, 2001, p. 13. Masci notes that the phrase "under God" was not added until 1954 during a period of "civil religion."

14 The term "pro-family" was first coined by Phyllis Schlafly and the Eagle Forum.

15 Dworkin, Ronald. Life's Dominion: An Argument About Abortion, Euthanasia, and Individual Freedom. New York: Vintage Books, A Division of Random House, Inc., 1994.

16 1972 Platform: page 28 "We fully endorse the principle of equal rights, equal opportunities and equal responsibilities for women, and believe that progress in these areas is needed to achieve the full realization of the potentials of American women both in the home and outside the home." Page 29 "We oppose ill-considered proposals, incapable of being administered effectively, which would heavily engage the Federal Government in this area. To continue progress for women's rights, we will work toward: Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment." This is extremely critical to accept the notion that the conservative religious right was able to influence the Republican Party. In 1972, before Roe v. Wade and the formal organization of religious pressure groups, the Republican Party explicitly endorsed the ratification of the ERA. Their position would be tempered over time to accommodate the Phyllis Schlafly's ERA opposition group that eventually received congressional franking privileges from Republican Senator Ervin [see note 24] to send out anti-ERA literature.
1976 Platform: pages 10 and 11 continued the Republican support for "laws guaranteeing women equal rights. The Republican Party reaffirms its support for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Our Party was the first national party to endorse the ERA in 1940... The Equal Rights Amendment is the embodiment of this principle and therefore we support its swift ratification."

17 1972 Platform: pages 18 and 19 "The permissiveness of the 1960s left no legacy more insidious than drug abuse...The use of drugs became endowed with a sheen of false glamour identified with social protest. By the time our Nation awakened to this cancerous social ill, it found no major combat weapons available." This is interesting given that it was typically the liberals or Democratic youth protesting, and it was a Republican President Nixon that would have been at the helm during the awakening. Some could argue that this combat weapon would eventually be religion to fight this social ill. Page 27 continues "The anarchy which swept major campuses in the late 1960s penalized no one more severely than the young people themselves... " It continues to credit Nixon with ending the war and "winding down" the youth uprisings.

18 Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

19 http://pewforum.org/events/0815/ "What's God Got to Do With the American Experiment?" August 15, 2000, Los Angeles, p. 14.

20 Masci, p. 13. Masci notes that the phrase "under God" was not added until 1954 during a period of "civil religion."

21 Bennett, William J. (ed.). The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators: American Society at the End of the Twentieth Century. New York: Broadway Books, 1999, p. 174.

22 Bennett, p. 175.

23 http://www.pollingreport.com/religion.htm The Gallup Poll. November 8-11, 2001. N=1,005 adults nationwide. MoE± 3. "Did you, yourself, happen to attend church or synagogue in the last seven days, or not?"

24 Masci, p. 13.

25 Masci, p. 13.

26 Masci, p. 13.

27 Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

28 Masci, p. 5.

29 Diamond, Sara. Not By Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right. New York: The Guilford Press, 1998, p. 63.

30 Diamond, p. 63.

31 Diamond, p. 64.
"Schlafly's Stop ERA organization... created a national network to oppose ratification by the states. Schlafly enjoyed assistance from Senator Sam Ervin (R-NC), the leading opponent of the ERA in Congress. Ervin gave Schlafly his Congressional franking privilege for mailing anti-ERA literature packets to key state legislators."

32 Diamond, p. 64.

33 This group included Howard Phillips, Richard A. Viguerie and Paul Weyrich.

34 Shriver, George H. and Bill J. Leonard, (eds.) Encyclopedia of Religious Controversies in the United States. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1997, p. 303.

35 Masci, p. 14.

36 Shriver, p. 303.

37 Zwier, p. 173.

38 Lienesch, Michael, "Right-Wing Religion: Christian Conservatism as a Political Movement." In Political Science Quarterly, Volume 97 Number 3, Fall 1982, p. 407.

39 Diamond, p. 67.

40 http://www.people-press.org/relgrpt.htm. p. 1.

41 Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview

by author, December 6, 2001.

[42] Lienesch, p. 403.

[43] Diamond, p. 67.

[44] Weir, Margaret, (ed.) The Social Divide: Political Parties and the Future of Activist Government. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 1998, p. 13.

[45] Lienesch, p. 404.

[46] Diamond, p. 68.

[47] Diamond, p. 68-9.

[48] Guth, James L. and John C. Green, "God and the GOP: Religion Among Republican Activists." In Religion and Political Behavior in the United States, Ted G. Jelen, (ed.), p. 223. New York: Praeger, 1989.

[49] Diamond, p. 69.

[50] Shriver, p. 97.

[51] Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

[52] Jost, p. 20.

[53] http://www.people-press.org/relgrpt.htm, p. 3.

[54] Jost, p. 7.

[55] http://religionanddemocracy.lib.virginia.edu/survey-section3.html, p. 3.

[56] http://religionanddemocracy.lib.virginia.edu/survey-section3.html, p. 3.

[57] Mayer, William G., "The Presidential Nominations." In The Election of 2000, Gerald M. Pomper, (ed.), p. 37. New York: Chatham House Publishers, 2001.

[58] Ceaser, James W. and Andrew E. Busch. The Perfect Tie: The True Story of the 2000 Presidential Election. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2001, p. 92.

[59] Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

[60] Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

[61] http://pewforum.org/events/0815/ "What's God Got to Do With the American Experiment?" August 15, 2000, Los Angeles, p. 1.

[62] http://www.thenation.com Willis, Ellen, "Freedom From Religion," p. 2.

[63] Elaine Kamarck, Professor John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston, phone interview by author, December 6, 2001.

[64] Jost, p. 24.

[65] Jost, p. 1.

[66] Jost, p. 3

[67] Masci, p. 14.

[68] Perkins, Jerry, "The Moral Majority as a Political Reference in the 1980 and 1984 Elections." In Religion and Political Behavior in the United States, Ted G. Jelen, (ed.), p. 157. New York: Praeger, 1989.

[69] Perkins, p. 160.

[70] http://www.pollingreport.com/religion.htm. Gallup/CNN/USA Today Poll. March 17-19, 2000. N-1,024 adults nationwide. MoE± 3.

[71] http://religionanddemocracy/lib/virginia.edu/survey-section2.html, p. 3.

[72] http://pewforum.org/events/0920/. p. 3.

[73] Maser, David. "Evangelical Christians." Washington, D.C.: CQ Researcher, September 14, 2001, p. 1.

[74] http://pewforum.org. Jay Heinrichs, "Religion in Public Life: Religion's Turbulent Public Life (Trust Magazine Article)," November 2001.

[75] http://perforum.org/news/index.php3?NewsID=105. John C. Green, "Religion and the 2000 Election: Traditional Voting Patterns, Increased Polarization," February 6, 2001, p. 1-2.

[76] http://pewforum.org/events/0920/. p. 3. Andrew Kohut cites a 1999 Pew survey in which fewer American resisted the mix of religion and politics than did in a 1965 Gallup Poll. 53% in 1965. 45% in 1999.

[77] Jost, p. 24.

[78] Jost, p. 34.

[79] Jost, p. 16-7.

*Party Platforms provided by the Republican and Democratic National Party Committees, Washington, D.C.