DOCTRINE, DISCUSSION AND DISAGREEMENT:
EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT INTERACTION WITH CATHOLICS
IN AMERICAN POLITICS

A Dissertation
submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
of Georgetown University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in Government

By

Carin Robinson, M.A.

Washington, DC
July 25, 2008
DOCTRINE, DISCUSSION AND DISAGREEMENT: EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT INTERACTION WITH CATHOLICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS

Carin Robinson, M.A.

Thesis Advisor: Clyde Wilcox, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT:

In this dissertation, I examine the Christian Right as a cross-cutting network and assess the impact of Catholics’ participation in this social movement on evangelical Protestant political attitudes. After reviewing the historical animosity that previously defined this political partnership, I outline the areas of disagreement that remain even in the context of today’s religious conservative movement. These areas of disagreement are significant, according to deliberative democratic theorists, because exposure to rationales for opposing viewpoints might lead to opinion change and greater political tolerance. Therefore, I conduct a survey-experiment to investigate the effect of exposure to dissonant Catholic rationales on evangelicals’ policy preferences and their political tolerance.

In general, the results of the survey-experiment suggest that evangelical supporters of the Christian Right are unlikely to change their policy opinions in light of Catholic claims regarding capital punishment and immigration policy, but exposure to these cross-cutting messages does have the potential to increase tolerance. Moreover, I find that exposure to these same cross-cutting messages attributed to a political out-group (mainline Protestants) actually decreases tolerance. Finally, my empirical results make clear that evangelicals are not uniformly affected by Catholic arguments in the
information environment. Specifically, previous contact with Catholics appears to moderate how these messages are received, perhaps by altering the perceived credibility of the source of the message.

In this way, the study deepens our understanding of source credibility and cross-cutting exposure by demonstrating how the source of a dissonant message moderates its effect. The empirical results are supplemented with in-depth interviews with elites as well as a case study of one evangelical-Catholic network that I use to trace the causal mechanisms behind the increase in tolerance. In closing, I argue that the Christian Right has the potential to contribute to the goals of deliberative democracy by uniting citizens across lines of religious difference.
To Oozy
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

   Cross-cutting Dialogue in the Christian Right Movement 7

   Outline of this Dissertation 14

Chapter 2: The History of Cross Pressures: From Foes to Friends 18

   Anti-Catholicism and American Democracy 22

   From Foes to Friends 26

   Evangelical Attitudes towards Catholicism: Past and Present 44

   Conclusion 55

Chapter 3: Deliberative Democracy and Doctrinal Divides 57

   Deliberative Democracy Defined 59

   Testing Their Claims: Deliberative Democracy and Social Science 65

   Deliberation within the Christian Right 76

   Conclusion 80

Chapter 4: Crossing Lines of Difference: The Death Penalty,
   U.S. Immigration Policy and Attitude Change 82

   Cross-cutting Messages and the Death Penalty 85

   Cross-cutting Messages and U.S. Immigration Policy 91

   Research Design 98

   Results 106

   Conclusion 122

Chapter 5: Coalition Politics and Evangelicals’ Political Tolerance 125
LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Evangelical and Catholic Christian Right Members’ Political Attitudes 11

Figure 2.1: White Evangelical Protestant Affect Towards Catholics 1964-2004 45

Table 2.1: Predictors of Anti-Catholicism in 1960s and 2000s 47

Table 2.2: Predictors of Anti-Catholicism, White Evangelical Protestants 1960s and 2000s 50

Table 2.3: White Evangelical Protestants’ Attitudes towards Catholics and Catholic Beliefs 52

Table 4.1: Experimental Treatments 99

Figure 4.1: Predicted Effects of Experimental Treatments on Support for Lenient Immigration Policy 106

Table 4.2: Percent of White Evangelical Protestants Ranking Statement “1” (Most Persuasive) by Experimental Treatment 107

Figure 4.2: Support for the Death Penalty by Experimental Treatment 108

Figure 4.3: Evangelical Interaction with Catholics and mainline Protestants by Age 111

Table 4.3: Percent of White Evangelical Protestants Ranking Statement “1” (Most Persuasive) by Experimental Treatment 114

Figure 4.4: White Evangelical Protestants’ Support for Lenient Immigration Policy by Experimental Treatment 116

Figure 4.5: The Effect of Catholic Treatment on White Evangelical Protestants’ Support for Lenient Immigration Policy by Amount of Contact with Catholics 118

Table 4.4: The Impact of Catholic Treatment x Catholic Contact on Immigration Policy Attitudes 120
Figure 5.1: Predicted Effects of Experimental Treatments on Political Tolerance Judgments 136

Figure 5.2: Political Tolerance: A Comparison of GSS White Evangelicals with Evangelical PAC Donors 137

Figure 5.3: White Evangelicals’ Rating of Catholics by Experimental Treatment 139

Figure 5.4: White Evangelicals’ Rating of Mainline Protestants by Experimental Treatment 141

Figure 5.5: White Evangelicals’ Negative Affect towards Out-Groups by Experimental Treatment 143

Figure 5.6: White Evangelicals’ Tolerance for Groups’ Free Speech by Experimental Treatment 146

Figure 5.7: White Evangelicals’ Tolerance for Groups Teaching in Public Schools by Experimental Treatment 149

Table 5.1: Significant Differences between Experimental Treatments on Political Tolerance 152

Figure 5.8: Generalized Tolerance by Experimental Treatment 154

Figure 5.9: The Effect of Experimental Treatment on Generalized Tolerance by Amount of Contact with Catholics 157

Figure 5.10: The Effect of Experimental Treatment on Generalized Tolerance by Age 158

Table 5.2: Effects of Catholic Treatment on Generalized Political Tolerance 160
Chapter 1
Introduction

When it comes to faith and American politics, the presidency of George W. Bush was supposed to be a story about evangelical Protestantism in the White House. After all, Bush’s acceptance of Christ as an adult and his intimate conversations with evangelist Billy Graham were well known even before he took office. While president, he regularly spoke of his faith as a personal relationship with his heavenly Father, consistent with the interpretation of Christianity practiced in the evangelical tradition. Moreover, his ability to win the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections with the strong support of evangelicals seemed to solidify his evangelical credentials. Thus, historians, political scientists, and journalists have taken turns assessing how Bush’s evangelical faith may have shaped his policy positions, his cabinet appointments and his leadership style (e.g. Robinson and Wilcox 2007; Mansfield 2003; Aikman 2004).

However, looking back on his presidency now, it appears a different story could be written, this one having to do with an entirely different kind of religious influence. In fact, according to a former Bush speechwriter, the key to understanding Bush’s domestic policy is to consider the teachings of the Catholic Church (Burke 2008). Former U.S. Senator (PA-R) and Catholic Rick Santorum has gone so far to say that Bush was a “Catholic president,” more so than even President John F. Kennedy. Similarly, the
former director of the Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, Catholic John DiIulio, has figuratively called Bush a “closet Catholic” (DiIulio, 2007, 117).¹

It does not require inner-circle status to understand the basis of these labels. Bush’s respect for Catholicism is quite evident in his public life. His rationales for public policy are often framed in “Catholic” terms. For example, he joined other evangelicals in adopting Pope John Paul II’s “culture of life” rhetoric to defend his opposition to abortion and stem-cell research. His faith-based initiative is consistent with Catholic teaching having to do with subsidiarity – the idea that a society functions best when local people are responsible for local problems.²

In addition, President Bush surrounded himself with Catholic intellectuals during his time in office and sought their advice on public policy. Richard John Neuhaus, a Catholic priest and editor of the ecumenical journal First Things spent time educating President Bush on the church’s social teachings. He said in 2008, “There is an awareness in the White House that the rich Catholic intellectual tradition is a resource for making the links between Christian faith, religiously grounded moral judgments and public policy” (quoted in Burke 2008). Even other prominent evangelical Protestants in the Bush White House claimed to be influenced by Roman Catholic social thought, including speechwriter Michael Gerson (Gerson 2007).

¹ Of course, not all Catholics would agree with these labels. Other Catholics would point to Bush’s foreign policy, particular the Iraq War, as evidence that he does not heed Catholic teaching on all issues.
² The idea of subsidiarity is similar to “sphere sovereignty” a term made popular by Abraham Kuyper in Reformed Protestantism. Thus, Bush could have justified the faith-based initiative in terms of Protestant doctrine as well.
The Catholic trend sweeping through what was largely considered to be an evangelical White House did not stop on Pennsylvania Avenue. For my purposes here, the Bush White House serves only as one example of a larger phenomenon – that being the interaction between Catholics and evangelical Protestants in United States politics. Indeed, the influence of Catholicism on evangelical behavior is not unique to President Bush. After interviewing 360 evangelical elites, sociologist Michael Lindsay said, “[The] ongoing dialogue with Catholics has dramatically influenced modern evangelicalism” (Lindsay 2007, 97).

One venue in which evangelicals at the grassroots level are exposed to Catholics is the conservative social movement known as the Christian Right. Many pundits have noted that white evangelical Protestants in the Christian Right are more likely to view traditional Catholics as political allies than ever before. Today, it is not uncommon for evangelicals and Catholics to encounter one another at a pro-life rally, work with one another on behalf of a ballot initiative defending traditional marriage, or lobby elected officials together. As I will show, each of these activities carries with it the potential for evangelicals to be influenced by Catholic practices and teachings. Thus, the Christian Right provides us with a unique opportunity to study ecumenical cooperation and

---

3 In his in-depth study of evangelical leaders in America, Lindsay (2007) finds that evangelicals are drawn to Catholicism for its intellectual history, tradition and discipline. For evangelicals that find the Protestant tradition to be somewhat shallow and at times schizophrenic, Catholicism might appear to offer a richer heritage. Catholic social thought based on natural law may relieve some anxiety certain evangelicals feel over not being able to justify their social convictions in something other than biblical language. Lindsay (2007) finds that evangelicals, at the elite level at least, look to Catholics as an example of how Christians should act in society. As evangelicals have grown more active in the arts, the academy and in politics, they have turned to Catholics as an example of how to relate to their secular peers; unlike earlier generations of evangelical Protestants that took a separatist stance, Catholics never isolated themselves from American culture and are effectively integrated.
identify the ways in which exposure to different faith traditions in the context of political activism may shape attitudes and behavior.

In the case of evangelical Protestants and Catholics, their alliance is particularly interesting given their antagonistic past. It is important to appreciate that their cooperation is in fact a very new phenomenon. Earlier generations of Protestants were deeply suspicious of Rome and generally viewed Catholicism as a false form of Christianity. They believed that Catholic authoritarianism was incompatible with American democracy. It was assumed that Catholic immigrants’ first loyalty would be to Rome and not the United States.\(^4\) Not so long ago, anti-Catholicism along with fundamentalist affiliation and fundamentalist doctrine were significant predictors of support for the Moral Majority, a prominent Christian Right group in the 1980s (Wilcox 1989; Wilcox and Gomez 1990).

But today – whether the focus is opposition to abortion, same-sex marriage, or euthanasia – evangelicals and Catholics often occupy the same political trench in the so-called culture wars.\(^5\) Large majorities of these communities agree on prominent issues on the contemporary policy agenda, and many have chosen to partner together in their political activism (Risen and Thomas 1998; Goodstein 2005; Campbell and Robinson 2007; George 1994). While historians, theologians and others have paid due attention to

\(^4\) Middle-class Protestants made up a large portion of the nativist Know-Nothing party, the famous third party of the 1850s that opposed the influx of Irish Catholic immigrants. Protestant ministers were known to have been members of the Ku Klux Klan, a group motivated by anti-catholic bigotry among other forms of prejudice. See Shea (2004) for a historical overview of evangelical-Catholic relations, past and present.

\(^5\) See Appendix A “Religion and Politics: Defining the Terms” for a full-fledged discussion of how I conceptualize and operationalize religious identification in American politics as well as a brief overview of the Christian Right.
the phenomenon, political scientists have not fully explored how the evangelical-Catholic friendship might affect evangelicals’ political attitudes and policy views and thus American politics. While a few attempts have been made to quantify the presence of Catholics in Christian Right organizations (Wilcox, Rozell, and Gunn 1996; Bendyna et al. 2001a; Bendyna et al. 2001b), we do not know the quality of that presence and whether or not evangelicals, the majority group in this case, are responsive to Catholic teaching and reevaluate their opinions as a result. In short, we do not know if deliberative democratic goods are being realized in this religiously-diverse context.

In an effort to fill this gap, this dissertation examines how interaction with Catholics in American politics might shape evangelical political attitudes and behaviors. While to a significant extent these groups are like-minded, in this project I identify the remaining areas of political disagreement between the two groups and examine the attitudinal effects of exposure to these differences for evangelical Protestants. Building on the theoretical work on intergroup relations, deliberative democracy and religion and politics, this dissertation traces the effect of cross-cutting Catholics messages on white evangelical Protestants. Using a survey-experiment, I examine two ways in which exposure to Catholic rationales on political issues might influence evangelical thinking, namely their policy preferences and their political tolerance. Given my empirical results coupled with findings from in-depth interviews with evangelical and Catholic political elites, I argue that religiously-diverse political networks can be good for American

---

democracy because they provide a venue for deliberation and cross-cutting exposure to take place among individuals who might otherwise be less inclined to participate in a diverse network.

Essentially, the basis of my claim is this: the Christian Right provides evangelicals the opportunity to get to know a previous political enemy – Catholics – up close. After marching with Catholics at a pro-life rally or listening to a Catholic priest defend the sanctity of traditional marriage on the six o’clock news, evangelicals may begin to see some legitimacy in Catholic social teaching. Even though they may continue to disagree with Catholics on certain matters like immigration and capital punishment, they may nonetheless begin to think Catholics aren’t bad people and Catholicism is not as heretical as they had originally thought. As a result, I suggest that evangelicals may be motivated to reconsider their assumptions about out-groups and opposing viewpoints in general given the lesson they’ve learned from their relationship with Catholics. In a sense, Catholics may serve as a “gateway drug” for evangelicals. Because they have learned to “agree to disagree” with Catholics on certain issues, they may translate this tolerance to society at-large.

In this project I not only describe the nature of the relationship between evangelicals and Catholics, but I use this religious context to examine claims made by democratic theorists that are relevant to the political science discipline in general. As Wald, Silverman and Fridy (2005) write, “Apart from constituting an important and intriguing phenomenon on its own, we argue, religiously based political action is a venue that can enhance our understanding of some perennial political issues” (122). My goal
here is test democratic theory in the context of ecumenical political activism. While my results no doubt point to factors unique to evangelical and Catholic citizens, they also contribute to our understanding of coalition politics, cross-cutting networks and deliberative democracy. It is to those topics I now turn.

**Cross-Cutting Dialogue in the Christian Right Movement**

The Christian Right is the institutional umbrella over the evangelical-Catholic partnership; academics generally classify the Christian Right as a social movement. According to Tarrow (1998, 2), social movements are social networks dependent upon shared action frames designed to challenge a perceived injustice. In this case, evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics believe religious values have unjustly been relegated to the private sphere, and they seek to implement a policy agenda consistent with Christian principles in the public domain. Though they may have initially come together to protest the Supreme Court’s decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, they have continued to cooperate for an expansive purpose more readily defined in ideological terms than as a specific policy interest.

The Christian Right social movement is sustained just like any other social movement – by the alignment of means, motive and opportunity. Increasingly, social movement theory has been used to evaluate religious group activity in politics (Wald, Silverman and Fridy, 2005; Gutterman 2005; Smith 1996b; Nazworth 2005; Olson 2007). In these instances, religious conviction is the motive behind social movement formation. Religion is also a source of means as church membership provides citizens the opportunities to learn civic skills and have the material resources necessary to
effectively participate in politics. Religious leaders as well as political elites then frame political issues using religious language to mobilize these citizens.

In both the literature on coalition politics and social movement theory, the perception of similarity strengthens the bond between participating groups. This is often accomplished by movement leaders emphasizing a shared grievance or threat. Scholars have given a number of names to the process by which grievances are turned into a motive for political action including consciousness raising, system blaming, and framing (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald 1996; Javeline 2003; Mansbridge and Morris 2001; Klein 1984; Wald, Silverman and Fridy 2005; Miller et al. 1981). Moreover, the more salient the injustice or the political enemy, the more similar the groups will appear to be.

“Shared outsider status is a powerful force that stimulates a sense of mutual interest beyond common policy agenda, political ideologies, and the like” (Kaufmann 2004, 49). Absent the perception of similarity and an out-group threat, citizens are unlikely to cooperate.

To be sure, conservative evangelicals and traditional Catholics have much in common including a shared threat, thus the basis of their political alliance. Despite a history of hostility, they now see themselves as the lone defenders of orthodox Christianity as the progressive branches of their respective churches become increasingly liberal. Majorities of both groups prefer traditional church hierarchy. Believing life begins at conception, evangelicals and Catholics oppose abortion in most cases. Believing God meant marriage to be between a man and a woman, they oppose same-sex
unions. In short, their values are similar and their angst over changing societal mores comparable. Yet there are also important distinctions that remain.

Although both groups are indeed Christian in terms of categorization, as I explain in more detail in chapter 2, their differences are significant. Does Christian obedience mean following the Pope or listening to Dr. James Dobson? Does God’s law include teaching creationism in public schools or outlawing contraception? Centuries’ worth of animosity and disagreement has not entirely disappeared simply because abortion is on the policy agenda. On Sunday mornings (or Saturday evenings), evangelicals and Catholics meet separately, and thus hear different political messages from their religious elites on issues such as poverty or justice more generally.

For my purposes, it is important to establish that Christian Right organizations are places with the potential for cross-cutting exposure. One might expect the Christian Right to fail to offer exposure to political difference as a result of self-selection. Those citizens choosing to participate in the Christian Right likely resemble one another across a wide range of policy areas. Therefore, one would expect that the Catholics choosing to join the Christian Right would look very similar to evangelicals and less like the progressive wing of Catholicism in terms of their policy preferences.

But this is not necessarily the case. To illustrate the presence of cross-cutting points of view within the Christian Right, I use data from a survey of donors to Republican presidential candidates in 2000. The survey is unique in that it asks respondents whether or not they are a member of a pro-life, Christian conservative or pro-family group allowing me to look at a sample of individuals one could argue are
members of Christian Right organizations. Contributing to presidential candidates is uncommon, therefore we can assume these individuals are generally conservative and motivated by ideological interests. In short, they are elites within the social movement. They are likely familiar with the issues and knowledgeable about social movement organizations. Of any segment of a social movement, the elite level is where you would expect to find the greatest uniformity across the issues. Thus, this is a high threshold upon which to test my thesis.

---

7 The data come from a mail survey of donors to presidential nomination candidates in 2000. In this campaign, Gary Bauer, Patrick Buchanan, and Alan Keyes made explicit appeals to the Christian Right, and George W. Bush also sought their votes (Rozell, 2002; Wilcox, 2002). Between the summer of 2001 and spring of 2002, four waves of surveys were mailed to 300 donors to each major nomination candidate, with an overall response rate of 55 percent. I select from this sample those that claim to be a member of a pro-life, Christian conservative or pro-family group.
As Figure 1.1 illustrates, I find that Catholic and evangelical Protestant members of Christian Right organizations are politically different – despite allegiance to the same social movement. While the majorities of both traditions oppose abortion, and favor school vouchers, there is less agreement when it comes to laws that would protect homosexuals from job discrimination. For issues where you might expect to find disagreement - like the death penalty, affect towards labor unions and government spending on the poor – there are distinct differences. Both groups generally side with the predominant attitude of their religious tradition. The figure does not tell us anything new about the general orientation of these two traditions, however, it does illustrate that these
differences do not disappear when people come together to form a social movement. The majority of Catholic presidential donors who are members of pro-life, Christian conservative and pro-family groups disagree with the majority of evangelicals on certain issues. The question then becomes whether encountering these differences can ultimately influence evangelicals’ political attitudes.

Democratic theory suggests that discussion across lines of difference has great value both for citizens and democracy itself. According to John Stuart Mill (1848), “It is hardly possible to overrate the value… of placing human beings in contact with persons dissimilar to themselves, and with modes of thought and action unlike those with which they are familiar… Such communication has always been… one of the primary sources of progress” (594). Scholars believe deliberation across lines of political difference contributes to the common good by improving the rationality of public opinion, the representation of minority voices, and political tolerance. The empirical evidence largely supports these claims (Price, Nir and Capella 2002; Mutz 2002). In short, citizens are better individuals after having been exposed to political difference. Participation in a cross-cutting network is a good thing.

In a number of studies in American politics, religious traditionalists have been singled out for the absence of cross-cutting exposure in their social contexts. For example, while studies demonstrate that places of worship are instrumental in providing adherents the opportunity to discuss politics, Mutz and Mondak (2006) argue “the capacity of the church to sustain cross-cutting political discourse is more questionable because one effect of interaction within the church is increasing attitudinal homogeneity”
Research shows that messages from the pulpit and social interaction foster a uniform political outlook among congregants (Wald, Owen and Hill 1988). Thus, churches are generally politically homogeneous, and this tends to be reinforced by political homogeneity in the surrounding neighborhood (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995).

However, the above claims concerning religious traditionalists are largely a function of social scientists having only considered the church as a setting for cross-cutting exposure for these citizens; they have not yet considered religious social movements as a venue for deliberation to take place. This is a significant oversight given the fact that in recent years, the political landscape has placed traditionalists from different religions side by side in what scholars have called the "culture wars." The religious groups – namely, evangelical and Catholics – bring with them opposing viewpoints on certain issues as displayed in Figure 1.1. Therefore, I argue that theorists’ dismissal of religious networks as a place for deliberative ideals to be realized is premature. This study suggests that the Christian Right social movement – previously known for its intolerance and homogeneity – may in fact in some small way be bringing democratic ideals to fruition.

Moreover, by examining these dynamics strictly within a social movement, I am making a unique contribution to the public opinion literature concerned with cross-cutting exposure. In previous work, little attempt has been made to test for cue-giver effects in the context of cross-cutting dialogue. In other words, scholars have focused on
the informational component of deliberation in experimental work and have paid less
attention to the affective ties between participants.\footnote{For example, deliberative forums invite strangers with no preexisting ties to deliberate about an issue and then examine whether or not citizens’ change their attitudes (Fishkin 1991). The dissonant message used in most survey experiments is generic and not attributed to any source (e.g. Mutz 2002; Jackman and Sniderman 2006). We know, however, from public opinion scholars that source credibility moderates political persuasion (e.g. Hovland and Weiss 1951-52; Mondak 1990; Miller and Krosnick 2000; Druckman 2001). Thus, a dissonant message attributed to a credible source might have greater potential to bring about the democratic goods described above than the same message attributed to a less credible source. I explain my theory in more detail in chapter 3.}

Thus, cross-cutting exposure in the context of a social movement might produce
different effects than cross-cutting exposure coming from outside a social movement’s
membership base, a less friendly source. For my purposes here, a dissonant message
attributed to a Catholic – a political ally, a Christian partner – might be more likely to be
internalized by an evangelical than the same message attributed to a religious group
outside the social movement. In later chapters, I report the results of a survey-experiment
of Christian Right activists to test this very question: do effects of exposure to divergent
viewpoints from within your social movement differ from the effects of exposure to
divergent viewpoints from outside your social movement?

Outline of This Dissertation

In chapter 2, I provide greater historical context to the research questions at hand
by reviewing evangelical-Catholic political relations. It is difficult to fully appreciate the
friendship between evangelical Protestants and Catholics today without an
acknowledgment of their hostilities in the past. In addition to an historical review, I
outline the areas of difference that constitute the cross-cutting exposure within their
ranks. I speculate why and when these differences may come into play. The chapter
concludes with an analysis of public opinion data designed to assess the attitudes evangelicals hold towards Catholics today and where anti-Catholicism continues to linger – identifying those evangelicals for whom Catholic messages may fall on welcoming or deaf ears.

I begin chapter 3 by reviewing the literature concerned with cross-cutting social networks and deliberative democracy. This area of research is receiving significant attention by theorists and social scientists alike, and it is ripe for application in real world contexts. Religiously-motivated political activism would seem like an unlikely place for cross-cutting exposure to occur which make the results of my study all the more exciting for deliberative democrats. Drawing on the literature on cross-cutting networks and deliberative democracy, I outline my theoretical expectations for the survey-experiment discussed in subsequent chapters.

In chapters 4 and 5, I present the results of a survey-experiment I conducted in order to examine whether or not evangelicals are responsive to Catholic messages that may not immediately conform to their predispositions. I surveyed evangelical activists affiliated with the Christian Right social movement and exposed portions of the sample to liberal, albeit Catholic, messages on immigration and the death penalty. Chapter 4 examines the attitudinal effects of that exposure – i.e. are evangelicals less supportive of the death penalty and less opposed to lenient immigration policy as a result of this exposure? To test for cue-giver effects, I vary the source of the message. A portion of the sample receives liberal messages on immigration and the death penalty from a Catholic
leader; a portion receives the same message from a religious out-group (mainline
Protestants). In general, I find few effects at the aggregate level on policy opinion itself.

Chapter 5 reports the results of the survey-experiment as they pertain to political
tolerance. The findings allow us to revisit previous work that finds evangelicals to be
less tolerant than other citizens. I examine whether or not intergroup contact theory,
which posits that groups will be more tolerant after contact with one another, holds
implications for this population. I find that exposure to Catholic rationales for opposing
points of view might cause evangelicals to reevaluate their opinion towards out-groups
in general.

Throughout the quantitative chapters I examine two variables that might
moderate the impact of a Catholic message on evangelical political attitudes, namely age
and previous contact with Catholics. I ask whether or not younger evangelicals are more
likely to be persuaded by the dissonant message attributed to a Catholic, and secondly,
whether or not the amount of previous contact with Catholics has a moderating effect. I
find evidence that previous contact with Catholics does moderate the effect of the
Catholic message, particularly in the case of the effect on political tolerance.

The quantitative results raise numerous questions about the causal mechanism
behind the shifts in political tolerance. I turn to interviews with evangelicals and
Catholics to examine in greater detail how exactly exposure to Catholics and their

---

9 Compared with other religious traditions, evangelicals are less likely to say leftist groups should be
allowed to speak in the community, teach in colleges, or have their books available in public libraries
(Wilcox and Jelen 1990). Few members of Christian Right groups believe that we should be tolerant of
those who live by different moral standards (Wilcox and Larson 2006, 137).
dissonant viewpoints might make evangelicals more tolerant. Chapter 6 includes a case study of one cross-cutting network found within the walls of one Christian Right organization. The network primarily consists of young people; it is a fellowship program or “cultural leadership internship” for college students. Fortunately for the purposes of this project, the fellowship routinely includes evangelicals and Catholics. The qualitative data gathered through interviews with the fellows and participant observation serves as the basis for my analysis. I discover that evangelicals are heavily motivated by an affective mechanism – that is, they come to like Catholics over the course of interacting with them, and my observations suggest that having come to like these individuals on a personal level makes evangelicals more open persuasion on some issues.

The dissertation concludes in chapter 7 with a summary of how my study contributes to two bodies of literature, namely the empirical work on deliberative democracy and the research on religion and political behavior. I conclude the project by speculating about what the findings reported here mean for the Christian Right social movement specifically. As I explain in chapter 7, the dominance of the Christian Right as the vehicle for evangelical political activism is waning. What evangelical activism looks like in the future may be shaped by the influence of Catholics in the present.
When John F. Kennedy made his famous speech that the Vatican would not tell him what to do, evangelicals and Southern Baptists breathed a sigh of relief. But today, evangelicals and Southern Baptists are hoping that the Vatican will tell Catholic politicians what to do.¹

Gary Bauer, Evangelical Protestant, President of American Values, former president of the Family Research Council

While it appears to observers of contemporary politics as though evangelical Protestants are natural allies of orthodox Catholics, this was not always the case. In 1945, the Presbyterian fundamentalist Carl McIntyre called the Roman Catholic Church “the greatest enemy of freedom and liberty that the world has to face…. [One] would be much better off in a communistic society than in a Roman Catholic Fascist set-up… America has to face the Roman Catholic terror. The sooner the Christian people of America wake up to the danger the safer will be our land.”² No fan of the emerging ecumenical movement in the 1940s, McIntyre repeatedly criticized his evangelical peers that sought to establish a broader religious movement purged of intolerance and separatism which marked the earlier fundamentalist era (George 2006).

McIntyre was not alone in his opposition to ecumenical dialogue or in his assessment of the Catholic Church. Protestants Loraine Boettner (1901-1990) and Paul

---

² Quoted in Noll and Nystrom (2005) 38.
Blanshard (1862-1980) were perhaps two of the most prominent American critics of the Catholic Church in the 20th century, and their books were quite popular amongst the evangelical public. These authors took aim at the theological and political dangers they believed Catholicism posed for the American way of life.

The conservative Presbyterian Boettner described Catholicism as an inherently flawed system of faith – a perception shared by many evangelicals at the time. In 1962 he wrote, “[The Catholic Church’s] interpretation of the Scriptures is so erroneous and its principles are so persistently unchristian that over the long period of time its influence for good is outweighed by its influence for evil” (459). It is notable that his book Roman Catholicism was published soon after the election of President John F. Kennedy and during the time of Vatican II. Evangelicals viewed it as a definitive rebuttal to the Catholic Church and its recent forays into the public sphere which were celebrated by some Americans.

Blanshard's criticisms had less to do with the theological points of conflict and much more to do with the political implications of the Catholic system. A less orthodox Protestant who some deemed as mostly secular, Blanshard's writings featured a list of threats he believed the Catholic Church posed for democracy in the United States; the list included Catholic propaganda concerning public education, medicine and science, and Catholic beliefs about birth control in marriage and the impermissibility of divorce
In sum, the majority of Protestants throughout much of American history viewed Catholicism as suspect if not downright Satanic.

The origins of Catholic-Protestant hostilities are of course not found on American soil. The roots of enmity had a long history existing for centuries prior to these figures. Though the exact onset is hard to pin down, following the Reformation, Catholic-Protestant hostilities “rapidly became a fixed planet is the western religious sky” (Noll and Nystom 2005, 41). The two traditions naturally sought to solidify the distinctions between them.

The Protestant church, according to Catholicism at the time, was founded on rebellion and was a deviant form of individualized religion. Protestants neglected the sacraments and denied the requirement for holy living commanded in the Bible. At the Council of Trent in 1563, the Catholic Church reasserted the apostolic tradition from which it came and referred to Protestants as "heretics." Protestants, on the other hand, believed the Catholic Church gave works too big of role in salvation, diminishing the justifying work of Christ’s death on the cross. They also took issue with Catholics praying to saints and the Virgin Mary implying it was necessary for believers to have additional mediators between themselves and God.

The reformer Martin Luther called the papacy the "Anti-Christ," and the label showed up in numerous Protestant confessions only to be removed centuries later. The

---

3 In fact, Blanshard considered himself the “muckraker” of the “Catholic underworld” (Personal and Controversial 1973, 189) His articles were widely distributed, first appearing in The Nation.
4 For a succinct summary of complaints leveled against each tradition, see Noll and Nystrom (2005) p. 42.
dominant perception amongst Protestants was of the Catholic Church as the Whore of Babylon prophesied in the book of Revelations (and in some Protestant circles this perception lingers still today).\textsuperscript{7} In short, as I will detail below, the majority of Protestants viewed the Catholic Church as anti-Christian, anti-democratic and ultimately in the United States, as un-American well into the 1960s.\textsuperscript{8}

Between the election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 and the presidential election in 2004, a sea change took place in how many evangelical Protestants viewed the political implications at least of Roman Catholic doctrine. Today, evangelical Protestants regularly praise Catholic political figures that abide by the more orthodox teachings of the Catholic Church [e.g. Supreme Court justices John Roberts, Samuel Alito, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, Sen. Sam Brownback (R-KS) and former Sen. Rick Santorum (R-PA)]. And evangelical leaders are critical of those Catholics that do not comply with the Church’s position, at least as it relates to abortion [e.g. Sen. John Kerry (D-MA), former New York major Rudy Giuliani (R)]. Scholars from various academic disciplines have questioned both the source of the change and what the shift actually means. But no attempt has been made to study deliberation or intergroup relations in this context.

\textsuperscript{6} In its original form, the Westminster Confession of Faith included the following statement of faith: “There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.” Over time, most Protestant denominations adopting the confession have done so with the reference deleted.
\textsuperscript{7} Shea (2004) p. 159.
\textsuperscript{8} Of course anti-Catholicism in America had something to do with nativism while anti-Catholic sentiment in Luther’s time had much more to do with theology.
This chapter provides a review of the literature helpful to our understanding of contemporary evangelical attitudes towards Catholicism. To be sure, this is not an exhaustive overview or critique of the works assessing the Protestant Reformation and the Catholic Church, pre and post-Vatican II. Previous scholars have successfully paved that path already. Rather, the goal of this chapter is simply to provide the background and context necessary to allow the reader to fully appreciate the findings reported in the pages ahead.

To that end, I continue with a brief history of the antagonistic relationship between the traditions, as it exists in the context of American democracy. I then move to a discussion of the theories proposed by previous scholars that attempt to explain why evangelicals and Catholics generally hold favorable views of one another today. Finally, I use national survey data to assess present-day evangelicals’ attitudes towards Catholics and Catholicism. The chapter serves as background and justification for the research reported in chapters 4 thru 6 and explains why evangelicals today may be especially likely to consider the merits of political messages attributed to Catholic leaders.

**Anti-Catholicism and American Democracy**

The relationship between Protestants and Catholics in America has previously been marked by distrust, antagonism and even violence. The nation's second president,
John Adams described Catholic priests as “ignorant and wicked.”\textsuperscript{10} The American revolutionary Samuel Adams said in 1768 that “much more is to be dreaded from the growth of popery in America, than from the Stamp Act, or any other acts destructive of civil rights.”\textsuperscript{11} Even though the framers of the U.S. Constitution designed a system ostensibly meant to allow different religious traditions to co-exist peacefully, Protestants far out-numbered Catholics at the time, and the framers had no way of anticipating the religious and cultural diversity that was to come. Catholics made up less than 1 percent of the population when the thirteen colonies launched their revolution against Britain (Marlin 2002, xiv), and many were persecuted for their beliefs. In Maryland, Catholic clergy were fined and imprisoned if they said Mass, in public or in private. A New Yorker was hanged in 1741 for being a priest. Only one of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence was Catholic (Charles Carroll). Prohibitions on Catholics holding state office existed as late as the 1840s.

Democratic ideals in America were put to the test with the increase of Catholic immigrants beginning in the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century. Around that time, the potato famine in Ireland launched a significant wave of Irish-Catholic immigrants to America, and substantial numbers came from Germany, Italy, Poland and Eastern Europe as well. Protestant reaction to in the influx of Catholic immigrants was cool, to say the least. Protestants at the time believed Catholics’ allegiance to the Pope was a threat to American democracy. Historian John Higham later described anti-Catholic bigotry as

\textsuperscript{10} Metzger, Charles H. S.J. Catholics and the American Revolution p.22. 1962 Loyola University Press
“the most luxuriant, tenacious tradition of paranoiac agitation in American history” (quoted in Jenkins 2003, 23).

Middle-class Protestants made up a large portion of the nativist Know-Nothing party, the famous third party of the 1850s that was organized around opposition to the immigrant population. The party was the out-growth of anti-Catholic riots taking place in cities across the country. The party's platform included the following resolution, equating Roman Catholicism with slavery:

*Roman Catholicism and slavery being alike founded and supported on the basis of ignorance and tyranny, and being, therefore, natural allies in every warfare against liberty and enlightenment, therefore be it resolved that there can exist no real hostility to Roman Catholicism which does not embrace slavery, its natural co-worker in opposition to freedom and republican institutions.* American (Know-Nothing) Party resolution, 1856

Catholicism was regularly depicted as a danger to the American way of life. For example, a series of public lectures delivered in Cincinnati in 1857 was entitled, “Romanism Not Christianity: A Series of Lectures in Which Popery and Protestantism Are Contrasted, Showing the Incompatibility of the Former with Freedom and Free Institutions.” William Jennings Bryan populist presidential campaigns drew heavily on anti-Catholic sentiment, as did the prohibitionists in the temperance movement at the turn of the century. Liquor symbolized the divide between Protestant morality and Catholic licentiousness.

---

12 Outspoken Protestant critics of the Catholic Church during the 19th and early 20th centuries include Samuel Morse, Lyman Beecher, Josiah Strong and Paul Blanshard. See William Shea (2004) chapter 4 for an in-depth analysis of these figures.
Anti-catholic attitudes lingered well into the 20th century. In 1921, a Methodist minister murdered a Catholic priest after the priest had officiated the secret wedding ceremony between the minister’s daughter and a Catholic Puerto Rican immigrant. Before the wedding, the daughter had converted to Catholicism. The minister was a member of the Ku Klux Klan, a group also motivated by anti-catholic bigotry among other forms of prejudice. The Klan paid for the minister’s defense; he was acquitted.

Though violence was increasingly rare as Catholics began assimilating into American life in the mid-20th century, Protestants continued to harbor deep suspicions about Catholics in politics. During this time period, Protestants were out-spoken defenders of the separation of church and state, viewing it as a means to restrict Catholic influence on American politics. When President Harry Truman, a Baptist, appointed a formal representative to the Vatican in 1951 to help coordinate anti-Communist efforts, Protestants reacted with cries of protest. Dr. J. M. Dawson, executive secretary of the Baptist Public Affairs Committee said “It is perhaps a frantic bid for holding machine-ridden big cities in the approaching hot Presidential race….It is a deplorable resort to expediency, which utterly disregards our historical constitutional American system of separation of church and state” (quoted in Time magazine, 1951).

A few years later, the election of the first Catholic president, John F. Kennedy, not surprisingly elicited fear from Protestants. Evangelical Protestant leaders such as Harold John Ockenga of Boston’s Park Street Church, L. Nelson Bell of Christianity Today, and Protestant preacher Norman Vincent Peale publicly opposed his candidacy
for fear that his affiliation with the Catholic Church in Rome would damage the sovereignty of the United States.

But in many ways, the election of John F. Kennedy to the presidency ended up being a turning point of sorts in the Protestant-Catholic relationship. Kennedy’s speech to Protestant ministers in Houston during the presidential campaign reassured some Protestants that his faith would not interfere with his presidency. Soon after his election, nativists’ fears subsided somewhat (Shea 2004). Historians speculate that Kennedy’s presidency in fact taught people that Catholicism and American democracy were not incompatible. “Even later revelations about Kennedy's misdeeds helped defuse inter-religious antagonisms, for his womanizing and power-grabbing were ‘ecumenical’ in that they resembled similar misdeeds of other politicians who happened to be Protestant.” (Noll and Nystrom 2005, 68)

Historians do credit the 1961 election for contributing to a shift in how evangelical Protestants thought about Catholics, but it was obviously not the only event nor was Kennedy the only Catholic figure on the public stage at the time. The Catholic Church’s efforts to combat communism in Europe coupled with the Second Vatican Council which opened the Church up to ecumenical dialogue also helped relieve much of the civil anxiety that Americans had directed towards Catholics in the U.S.

From Foes to Friends

Multiple theories are put forth to explain the “thawing of the ice age” between evangelical Protestants and Catholics and the subsequent political cooperation witnessed since the late 1970s. Explanations generally revolve one of two things – political issues
mobilizing traditionalists across different religions and *institutional change* within the different traditions. Both religious traditions responded similarly to the rise of secularism that emerged at the turn of the 20th century. Societal forces were such that Protestants and Catholics both saw a need to cooperate with the other to best to respond to what they saw as moral decay. As a result, both traditions expressed an interest in ecumenical dialogue. This was institutionalized in the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and also within Protestantism through such organizations as the National Association of Evangelicals. Thus, the religions themselves decided that the relationship with one another needed to change.

*Modernity and the Naked Public Square*

Undergirding the thawing of hostilities between Protestants and Catholics was a concern over modernity and what they perceived to be the increasing tendency of society to celebrate scientific advancement at the expense of matters of faith. The early 20th century was marked by the industrial revolution, debate over teaching evolution in the schools and an increasingly secular population. According to Catholic scholar William Shea, evangelical Protestants and Catholics were the “most dedicated [enemies] of modernity” (2004, 40).

Though their responses to modernism differed in form, both sets of rationales resided in religious dogma (Shea 2004, chapter 2). Evangelicals emphasized the Bible’s inerrancy while Catholics emphasized Church teaching. Evangelicals tended to view America as a Christian nation; Catholics viewed matters more broadly and simply hoped the state would align with a moral code. But at the end of the day, as society became
more diverse and seemingly more secular, the Christian traditions saw similarities in one another. Protestants in particular, known for their retreat from society years earlier, began to see a need to engage culture. “The evangelical commitment to a transformation of American culture … resulted in evangelical conversation about alliances to combat what Pope John Paul II later name ‘the culture of death,’ and a widening recognition of the need to reinsert Christian moral values in what had become a ‘naked public square’” (Shea 2004, 10).

The shift noted here between Catholics and Protestants began a few years before a dramatic partisan realignment around cultural issues in United States during the second half of the century. Social conservatives across traditions, in response to modernity, banded together, erasing lines that had previously divided political group identity between tradition (see Will Herberg in 1955: Protestant - Catholic - Jew). For example, it was previously the case that Jews and Catholics were more likely to vote Democrat, and Protestants voted Republican. By the end of the century, there was little doubt that the religious cleavage in American politics was no longer between religious traditions but within them. It has been well noted that traditionalists across religious communities have more in common with one another than their progressive counterparts in the same denomination (Hunter, 1991; Wuthnow 1990). Even as early as 1923, evangelical Protestant theologian J. Gresham Machen in his classic defense of orthodox Christianity

13 The “naked public square” refers to a thesis espoused by Richard John Neuhaus – a Lutheran minister turned Catholic priest. Neuhaus (1984) argues that the public spaces in American society are empty or “naked” because religion has been systematically excluded from the public sphere.
Far more serious still is the division between the Church of Rome and evangelical Protestantism in all its forms. Yet how great is the common heritage which united the Roman Catholic Church, with its maintenance of the authority of Holy Scripture and with its acceptance of the great early creeds, to devout Protestants today! We would not indeed obscure the difference which divides us from Rome. The gulf is indeed profound. But profound as it is, it seems almost trifling compared to the abyss which stands between us and many ministers of our own Church. The Church of Rome may represent a perversion of the Christian religion; but naturalistic liberalism is not Christianity at all (1923, 52).

Anti-Catholicism being moderated by political necessity was nothing new. Noll and Nystrom (2005) note how during the Revolutionary War the Patriots’ alliance with Catholic French-Canadians helped achieve their final victory at Yorktown in 1781. “Political alliances were trumping Catholic-Protestant suspicion. When Boston’s first Roman Catholic parish was established in 1788 it had a much easier course in its earlier years than would have been the case without the political-religious history of the Revolution” (Noll and Nystrom 2005, 54). Likewise, during World War II religious tensions subsided and “foxhole fellowship” emerged (Jenkins 2003, 36). The Church’s opposition to Communism helped to solidify the burgeoning affinity between Protestant and Catholic leaders.

However, nothing was as long lasting as what appears to have taken place since the 1960s. During the later half of 20th century, the “foe” that most profoundly united Catholics and Protestants in the public sphere was abortion. “The spark of the new relationship is the culture war of the last decades of the millennium, centered on the
judicially recognized constitutional right to abortion. Evangelicals and Catholics found each other in the same trench, fighting the deadly fruit of a secularizing culture” (Shea 2004, 181). Peter Kraft, an evangelical supporter of the movement, calls the efforts an “ecumenical jihad” (1997).

Contrary to popular perception which often credits evangelicals with discovering the abortion issue, Catholics were the original founders of the contemporary pro-life movement which began following the 1973 Supreme Court’s decision in Roe v. Wade deeming abortion a freedom protected by the U.S. Constitution. According to Risen and Thomas (1998), “[Catholics] were creating something new in modern America: a politically active Christian Evangelical movement. Nearly a decade before Protestant fundamentalists emerged from their spiritual isolation to burst onto the political stage, a handful of Catholic fundamentalists were being drawn to the streets, taking with them their belief in the power of the Holy Spirit and of contemplative prayer to show them the way” (50).

Evangelical Protestants were initially hesitant about joining the pro-life movement. This was in part because abortion was initially perceived to be a Catholic issue and though barriers had fallen, an overt political partnership had yet to take shape, and anti-Catholicism lingered. Moreover, those evangelicals that embraced premillennialism (a doctrine about the end times and the second coming of Christ) believed that the world must first worsen before Christ’s return. Abortion was thus
perceived to be an indication that the end times were near and therefore evangelical political participation would be futile.\footnote{For a discussion of eschatology and fundamentalist Protestants’ political participation see Wilcox and Larson (2006) pp. 30-31.}

Gradually however orthodox Protestants put aside their hesitation about working with Catholics for the pro-life cause. Risen and Thomas (1998) say Protestants were particularly motivated to join forces after hearing the story of a Catholic woman convicted of burglary for entering an abortion clinic in Pensacola, Florida in 1986 and damaging equipment. “It was one of the great ironies of the anti-abortion cause that fundamentalist Protestants, who until then had steered clear of anti-abortion activism in part because of their antipathy toward all things Catholic, were finally mobilized by the plight of a woman who was feverishly catholic: a woman who gripped her rosary beads at each moment of crisis…. To fundamentalists, her Catholicism became a human flaw that could be overcome or overlooked, because Joan Andrews was their new poster girl, a woman doing battle with the secular culture from which Evangelicals felt alienated” (1998, 188)

Protestants were also building their own political network to advance their agenda at the time. Beginning in the late 1970s, evangelical leaders decided it was necessary to politically mobilize their members in order to defend their values in the public sphere. The social movement today known as the Christian Right sought to educate, mobilize, and inform the evangelical voter while lobbying for “family values.” Chief among their concerns were the recent laws legalizing abortion, gay rights
legislation and the feminist movement. Groups such as the Moral Majority, the Religious Roundtable, Pat Robertson’s Christian Broadcasting Network and the Christian Voice mobilized fundamentalist and evangelical Christians. Though the names of groups and leaders have changed, the movement is nevertheless institutionalized and an effective electoral coalition that Republican Party candidates can not easily ignore (Wilcox and Larson 2006).

Though predominantly evangelical Protestant, the Christian Right represents numerous religious traditions. The exact percentage of members that are Catholic is difficult to nail down. Earlier studies of the Moral Majority in the 1980s pegged the number of Catholics closer to zero (Wilcox 1992). One more recent study finds Catholics made up 11 percent of Christian Right members attending the Virginia Republican Party conventions in 1993 and 1994 (Wilcox, Rozell, and Gunn 1996). In 1996, an estimated 16 percent of members of the Christian Coalition were believed to be Catholic (no author, New York Times, 1995). More recently, according to Christian Right leaders interviewed for this project, Catholics make up anywhere from 20 to 30 percent of the overall membership base of the social movement.

In a few instances, a concerted effort has been made to forge an overt evangelical-Catholic partnership within the Christian Right movement as opposed to the more organic form the coalition takes today. At the onset of the 1996 presidential campaign, the Christian Coalition announced the formation of the Catholic Alliance – a fully owned subsidiary of the Christian Coalition meant to mobilize Catholics on behalf of abortion and family-related issues. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian
Coalition at the time called the alliance “the most significant flowering of ecumenical cooperation” since the Protestant Reformation (quoted in New York Times 1995). The Christian Coalition sent letters to about one million Catholics that invited recipients to join in “a fight with the radical Left for the soul of our great nation” (quoted in Small 1996). The Catholic Alliance was rather dormant following the 1996 election but received some attention when Democrat Ray Flynn, former mayor of Boston and U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican during the Clinton administration became its president in 1999. However, it appears to have died out shortly thereafter.

Though the Alliance downplayed theological distinctions, the political unity it sought to establish appeared forced to many observers. A number of Catholic leaders distanced themselves from the Christian Coalition’s effort. For example, Bishop Walter Sullivan of the Diocese of Richmond, Virginia warned his parishes to not allow the goals of the Catholic Church to be swallowed up by an outside group, noting specifically the Christian Coalition (Small 1996).

To be sure, there were (and continue to be) numerous points of disagreement between the agenda of the Christian Right and that of the Catholic Church. (Points of disagreement that I suggest make for an uneasy coalition, but also one that might produce democratic fruits.) Thus, an explicit effort to unite Catholics and evangelicals in a formal manner has yet to take hold. Nonetheless, the cooperation evident today is sustained by the fact that there is no alternative venue apart from the Christian Right that conservative members of other traditions consider when seeking to make a collective political impact. Unlike places of worship which provide easy exits for those not in
agreement with the political tenor of the congregation (Warren 2001; Hirschman 1970), members of Christian Right groups are unlikely to leave the movement even when they have dissonant opinions on certain policies because they might believe the movement is the only hope religious traditionalists have for making an impact on policy – specifically abortion policy. In other words, because the Christian Right is an institutionalized social movement it makes more sense for a Catholic wishing to lobby her state government officials on behalf of abortion legislation to join an effort already organized by the Christian Right then to wait for a Catholic organization to organize a similar initiative. (This is in part due to the partisan affiliation of the Christian Right which allows them more immediate access to the politicians, namely Republicans; these politicians appreciate the support of the Christian Right come election time.) And in some cases, a Catholic organization partners with the largely Protestant Christian Right organization – again, avoiding religious sectarianism.

Thus, the political environment has done much to provide opportunity for ecumenical dialogue. Even for those evangelicals that may be unaware of the nuances surrounding the relationship; they nonetheless are no longer segregated from one another when it comes to political activism. As Timothy George explains,

The practicalities of local political action have also done more to open doorways. Over the last several decades, contemporary political affairs have become so passionately tangled that Christian faiths and public stances on moral issues now collide in nearly every conceivable combination. The crucible effect wrought by this situation explains why many Catholic-evangelical barriers have fallen: Committed toilers in the public vineyard have glanced up in surprise to find previously despised Catholics or evangelicals laboring right alongside them (1994, 69).
Inter-religious Dialogue

While political events no doubt played a role in the formation of this religious coalition, many historians argue that the “cease-fire” between the faiths would not have been possible without the governing bodies within each tradition agreeing to participate in greater ecumenical dialogue. Moreover, as Robert Wuthnow (1990) finds, since World War II religious traditions’ response to societal trends fundamentally changed the relationships between denominations. In this section, I review how the institutions, para-church organizations, and finally individual leaders contributed to the warming of relations between evangelicals and Catholics.

On the Catholic side, nothing is more significant in this respect than Vatican II. The Second Vatican Council, which opened under Pope John XXIII in 1962 and closed under Pope Paul VI in 1965, placed ecumenism on the agenda for the Catholic Church. The Decree of Ecumenism accepted by the Council referred to Protestants as “separated brethren” – a significantly softer label than “heretics” which was given to Protestants at the Council of Trent in 1563. In his book on What Happened at Vatican II, John W. O’Malley S.J. (2008) explains how at the meeting the Catholic Church extended its hands to other Christian churches with no strings attached and was remarkable for its positive, unconditional approach to ecumenism. Representatives from the Protestant and Orthodox traditions were invited to observe the council meeting as well. The council’s “change of mind in matters as…fundamental as revelation, the relation of the natural and

the supernatural, salvation and doctrines of the Church and papal authority … rendered the vast majority of Protestant analysis of Catholic doctrine obsolete. It… placed on Protestants an obligation to revise their thinking about Rome” (Wells 1972, 117).

In the United States, the conference of American bishops set up its own ecumenical commission in 1964 and sponsored sub commissions that were quickly in discussion with orthodox churches in the U.S. “Reforms instituted at Vatican II changed image of the church as a whole, and they made Catholics far less distinctive in American society” (Marlin 2002, xviii). The timing of the council’s meetings coincided with Catholics increasingly becoming assimilated into American culture. Socially and economically speaking, Catholics resembled the general population to a greater extent than ever before (Greeley 1985). In addition, fewer Catholics were becoming priests and nuns, and many Catholics families were choosing to use birth control despite the Church’s opposition, making their families look more similar to other American families with two to three children on average. Thus, Vatican II simultaneously began a liberal trend within the Church (initiating a divide between liberal and more orthodox congregants) while also opening the Church up to other traditions and denominations.

What Vatican II did for the Catholic Church’s commitment to ecumenical dialogue at least, National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) eventually accomplished for evangelical Protestants in the U.S according to one historian (Shea 2004). The ecumenical spirit had already been brewing within Protestantism ever since the early 20th century when Protestant denominations decided to cooperate with one another for
evangelistic outreach. But the same spirit did not extend to cooperation with Catholics until years later.

The NAE was founded in 1942 by orthodox Protestants who believed a national organization was needed to represent conservative evangelical Christianity. The Federal Council of Churches, representing mainline denominations, already existed but evangelicals did not believe their concerns were represented by the group. The NAE included a spectrum of conservative denominations, and thus some of the most orthodox and most conservative denominations did not support it and considered it too tolerant. Though the NAE and its leaders initially opposed cooperation with Catholics and directly denounced them, the group nevertheless laid the groundwork for a less polemic form of orthodox Christianity (Shea 2004, 175). The out-group soon changed. It was no longer non-Protestant traditions; it was instead groups that did not share the same moral agenda.

The time period was indeed a time of change for religion and religious coalitions in America. As Robert Wuthnow (1990) explains in *The Restructuring of American Religion*, social and political changes following World War II altered the religious landscape. Geographic mobility – particularly the regional redistribution of Catholics – made it less likely that traditions would be isolated from one another. For example, in 1952 only one Catholic Church existed in Atlanta, Georgia. The number of Catholic churches in Atlanta increased to 44 by 1980 (Wuthnow 1990, 85). The ratio of Catholics to Protestants in North Carolina doubled during the same time period (ibid.). Moreover, the disparity in education levels between Protestants and Catholics soon dissipated
Making workplaces more religious diverse. Finally, in light of political issues of the day – the sexual revolution in the 1960s and abortion in the 1970s – religious groups reexamined how they might have the most influence in the public sphere. Inter-religious dialogue seemed a natural next step given the political context and intermingling of religious tradition in everyday living.

Perhaps the most explicit step towards Catholic and evangelical Protestant ecumenism in this respect came in 1993 with a series of meetings entitled Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) which resulted in a signed statement outlining the points of agreement between the two traditions. Participants – less than 50 in total, both Protestants and Catholics – were not formal representatives of any one community and were not committing to any form of action. The meetings were simply designed to bring together leaders from the respective traditions to discuss the areas of commonality. A particular goal however was to address a united response to culture at-large. “...The signers wanted to side-step inherited enmity and doctrinal polemics to promote the reentry of ‘orthodox’ as distinct from ‘liberal’ Christians into the public sphere (Shea 2004, 182).

Some thought ECT was primarily a political move by conservative activists to unite their bases. The two leaders of the meetings – Chuck Colson (evangelical) and Richard Neuhaus (Catholic) - did have significant roots in political conservatism. The list of political issues addressed at ECT included religious freedom, abortion, intrusive government, euthanasia, education, pornography, violence, media, and militant Islam. Though critics have charged ECT with being overtly political and bowing to Republican
party politics, evangelical historian and signer of the document Mark Noll argues that
document is less partisan and more generic than critics charge (with Nystrom 2005,
chapter 6).

Certain evangelicals and Catholics also disapproved of the document because
they believed it minimized the differences between the two traditions and glossed over
key doctrinal distinctions. Later ECT meetings in 1997, 2002 and 2003 sought to address
some of these differences – namely justification by faith, sola scriptura and communion
of saints and the sacraments.

Though ECT’s impact on evangelical-Catholic relations is hard to measure and is
likely restricted to the elite level, two contemporary religious figures did much to usher
in ecumenism in their respective traditions at the mass level. Billy Graham, was perhaps
the first contemporary evangelical leader to move from what Richard V. Pierard
describes as “evangelical exclusivism to ecumenical openness” (1983). Graham’s career,
say Noll and Nystrom (2005), “spotlights as well as anything the rapidly shifting terrain
in relations between evangelicals and Catholics” (17). Graham grew up in a
fundamentalist tradition in the rural south. In the early years of his ministry he was
associated with staunch conservatism and supported Richard Nixon’s presidential
campaign in 1960, and was quite hesitant about Catholic leaders in power (Martin 1991).
However, there quickly emerged some flexibility to Graham’s style of evangelicalism
that had not been seen in previous figures.

This was in part facilitated by Catholics themselves who were the first to bridge
the divide between the two traditions in this case, welcoming Graham to their venues and
praying that the Lord would bless his ministry (Martin 1991, 309-310). Years later, Catholic leaders held positions on crusade planning committees and participated in counselor training sessions. According to Pierard, “by insisting upon local-level ecumenical support for his various crusades, [Graham] broke out of a fundamentalist constriction and gradually developed connections with a wide variety of expressions of Christianity” (Pierard 1983, 427). Pierard credits Graham’s encounters with Catholics amongst others for Graham’s openness to such issues as race relations, communism and nuclear war. Additionally, his ecumenical convictions had direct implications for his approach to evangelism; In 1977 he said “We are concerned with Christian faith; not Catholic or Protestant faith….Whether you’re Roman Catholic or Protestant, Jesus said to Nicodemus, ‘You need to be born again’” (Quoted in Pierard 1983, 428).

And if any confirmation was needed to assert Graham’s ecumenical spirit, one need look no further than comments Graham made in the days following the death of Pope John Paul II. Graham said, “He was an inspiration to millions – including me” (quoted in “Remembering the Lion” Newsweek, no author, 2005, 53). The popularity of the Pope amongst evangelicals in general was apparent in anecdotal evidence as well as survey data. In 2004, evangelical Protestants gave Pope John Paul II a higher favorability rating than two early spokespeople for the evangelical political movement, Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson.16

---

One evangelical political operative interviewed for this project called Pope John Paul II a “hero” for providing an intellectual structure through which issue positions can be presented.\(^{17}\) In 2005, the *Boston Globe* ran a column by a religious scholar that questioned whether or not the late Pope John Paul II was indeed an “evangelical pope,” crediting him for marking a turning point in the religious and political relationship between the two traditions (Noll 2005).

While it was Pope John Paul’s stance on abortion that really earned him favor of the eyes of evangelicals, the pope was able to maintain autonomy when it came to American politics. “That he was on the side of both the condemned and the unborn never ceased to puzzle those intent on placing him somewhere – but where? – on the usual left-right continuum. Some saw his influence in the erosion of public support for the death penalty here. Others assumed he was the Bush-Cheney team’s man in Rome.” (Henneberger 2005, 51)

Regardless, evangelical Protestants’ opinion of Pope John Paul II and later Pope Benedict is perhaps the most vivid illustration of the transformation that has taken place in evangelicals’ response to Catholicism. A figure once thought to be the “anti-Christ” by the Protestant is community is now a political hero to many. Pope Benedict was elected in 2005 and as an orthodox Catholic in the vein of his predecessor Pope John Paul II, was favorably received by most religious conservatives. In a 2007 survey by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 72 percent of white evangelicals had a favorable opinion of Pope Benedict, similar to the national sample at 73 percent. What is

\(^{17}\) Personal interview, Washington, D.C. September 18, 2006.
particularly interesting about evangelical favorability however is the fact that just one month prior to the survey, Pope Benedict had reasserted the divide between Catholicism and Protestantism saying non-Catholic churches were not full churches of Jesus Christ. He said regarding Protestantism, “it is nevertheless difficult to see how the title of ‘Church’ could possibly be attributed to them” (quoted in Stewart 2007). If this announcement did dampen favorability, it did not do so dramatically or it at least didn’t stick. (Unfortunately I have no previous points of comparison for these numbers from Pew.) Moreover, evangelical Protestants were more likely than any other religious tradition outside of Catholicism to say that the Pope was doing a good or excellent job of promoting relations with other faiths (analysis not shown).18

A Cooler Relationship for Others

Not all evangelicals embrace their tradition’s increasingly close relations with the Catholic Church. To various extents, certain evangelical elites continue to express sentiments condemning of the Catholic Church. For example, televangelist John Hagee has made repeated references to the Catholic Church as being anti-Semite and “the great whore.” After Hagee endorsed Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) in the 2008 presidential race and his statements were publicized, public pressure forced him to publicly apologize to Catholics. Some evangelicals – ex-Catholics among them – have formed ministries in an

18 Significant to note however, Republican evangelicals are more inclined to hold favorable opinions of Pope Benedict than moderate or Democratic evangelicals. However, unlike findings reported earlier, evangelicals that attend church weekly or more are less likely to hold favorable opinions of the Pope than their less often-attending counterparts. Again, the difference does not necessarily indicate negative affect towards Catholics; it might simply be an indication that these evangelicals are more orthodox, thus they view the Pope as an illegitimate mediator between individuals and God. Moreover, the survey does not ask the strength of the favorable or unfavorable opinions or the reason behind the opinions, so nuance is obviously lacking. Source: 2007 survey, Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life.
effort to convert Catholics to Protestantism. Web sites such as “Good News for Christ” or “Mission to Catholics International” provide resources for evangelicals that believe Catholics are in need of conversion.

While some “anti-Catholic” sentiment might simply be a symptom of intolerance, perhaps related to low education levels and social isolation, other hesitation about evangelical-Catholic dialogue stems from doctrinal conviction associated with higher education levels. This is often expressed by evangelical theologians in the reformed tradition. For example, Michael Horton, professor of theology and apologetics at Westminster Seminary in California out-spoken about his disagreement with ECT. He is not opposed to evangelical-Catholic cooperation per se, but he is quick to assert that evangelical theology is contrary to the Catholic Church citing solas of the reformation (see Horton 1999; Modern Reformation, September/October 2005 issue).

Catholic theologian William Shea (2004) says evangelicals tend to respond in one of two ways to Catholicism and can be classified as “hard” evangelicals or “soft” evangelicals. Hard evangelicals believe that the Catholic Church is in need of conversion. They do not believe Christian unity between the two traditions is possible unless they fully agree on all tenets of the gospel – which at this point, both sides agree that they do not. “Hardness” comes in multiple – informed and less informed ways….In comparison, soft evangelicals are those evangelicals that see the Catholic Church as

19 According to Shea, modern-day hard evangelicals include Loraine Boettner (1901-90) and Cornelius Van Till (1895-1987). Soft evangelicals include Charles Hodge (1797-1878) and G.C. Berkouwer (1903-1996) and more recently, the participants of the Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) dialogues which includes Chuck Colson of Prison Fellowship and those that endorsed the document, including Pat Robertson, formerly of the Christian Coalition.
being Christian in some sense but not entirely. Soft evangelicals remain critical of Catholic doctrine, but they are much more inclined to view Catholics as fellow Christians and express less opposition to their religious practices. Simply put, soft evangelicals express greater tolerance for Catholic beliefs and practices than do hard evangelicals.

These categories inform my data analysis in the following section. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that the number of soft evangelicals is on the rise, that evangelicals and Catholics are more likely to be friends than foes. It is easy to see that anti-Catholicism looks nothing like it did 300 years ago, but it is even more interesting to study how different it looks from 30 years ago. Indeed, the ice age for evangelical Protestants at least has thawed.

Evangelical Attitudes towards Catholicism: Past and Present

While scholars have speculated that anti-Catholicism has declined, no empirical evidence has yet to confirm this is the case for the general public or for evangelical Protestants. Survey data yield few avenues for research in this respect due to a limited number of questions having to do with Catholicism asked of a national sample over time. What is available, however, is a question asking respondents to rate Catholics on a feeling thermometer occasionally included in the American National Election Studies survey since 1964. The measure allows me to trace, to a certain extent, the transformation in affect towards Catholics over the last 40 years (see Figure 2.1).
In Figure 2.1, I report the average feeling thermometer rating given to Catholics over the time period. The square points represent the average rating given by the entire sample in the years the question was asked. The diamond points represent the average rating given by evangelical Protestants, identified by denominational affiliation. Due to changes within Protestantism during this time period, the denominations coded as evangelical in 2000 and 2004 do not identically mirror the denominations coded as evangelical in the 1960s. To rule out the possibility that the change in feeling thermometer ratings was simply an effect of coding, I restrict the evangelical population to those claiming membership in a Baptist denomination and rerun the analysis. I assume Baptist affiliation provides greater constraint than the original measure. I find no difference whatsoever in the averages reported in Figure 2.1. The same was found to be true when examining average ratings given by Southern Baptists over time, a group that religious scholars agree have consistently remained evangelical Protestant. If I define evangelicals by Protestant affiliation and belief in the Bible, the trend is similar though the intercept is higher – in 1964 Catholics are rated on average 65 degrees and in 2004 the average rating is 74 degrees.

The 1964 mean for white evangelical Protestants is significantly different from 2004 mean (t-test, p<.05).
average. Meanwhile, affect towards Catholics from the general public has not changed all that much.\textsuperscript{21}

Utilizing OLS regression, I further examine the relationship between evangelical affiliation and anti-Catholicism in the 1960s and 2000s, holding constant demographic characteristics as well as ideology and partisanship (see Table 2.1). In order to increase the sample size for each time period, I combine samples from the two outermost years for which data are available, and include a year variable to control for differences across years. The dependent variable is a modified version of the feeling thermometer ratings reported in the years.\textsuperscript{22} In order to account for individual variation in feeling thermometer ratings, I first subtract an individual’s Catholic rating from their mean rating given to other groups, and then rescale the score to have it range from -10 to 10 (dependent variable). Higher scores indicate greater anti-Catholicism. (Alternate forms of measurement using the feeling thermometer yielded similar results.) The independent variables have all been rescaled 0 to 1 to allow for comparison.

\textsuperscript{21} For both groups, prior to the 2000s, sympathy for Catholics initially peaked in 1972. It is possible that this was in reaction to “Bloody Sunday” - the name given to the shooting and killing of 14 Roman Catholic civil rights supporters by British paratroopers in Northern Ireland in January 1972.

\textsuperscript{22} Because there are individual differences in the use of feeling thermometers, scholars argue that some type of adjustment is necessary when comparing thermometer measures across individuals (Wilcox, Sigelman and Cook, 1989). The adjusted feeling rating towards Catholics is based on an individual’s feeling towards Catholics minus their mean feeling towards the following groups: big business, congress, poor, environmentalists, labor (2004) and big business, labor, military, blacks, Jews (1964) The mean feeling was uncorrelated with a liberal-conservative measure for both years.
The data reported in Table 2.1 help illustrate the significant relationship between evangelical Protestant identity and anti-Catholicism in the 1960s. Even after controlling for education, southern residency and other characteristics, church-attending evangelicals are still more likely than others to be anti-Catholic in 1964 and 1968, as
measured here with an interaction term.\footnote{Church-attending non-evangelicals are less anti-Catholic than non-attending ones. This is largely explained by church-attending Catholics included in this sample.} (Note: Evangelical denominational membership by itself is not significantly related to anti-Catholicism.) In 2000 and 2004, church-going evangelicals are no more likely to be anti-Catholic, and again evangelical identity by itself has little effect. Thus, while an active (i.e. church attending) evangelical is more likely to be anti-Catholic than other citizens in the 1960s, this relationship no longer exists in the 2000s. Other independent variables act as one might expect; education decreases anti-Catholicism, and those from the South are more anti-Catholic than those from other regions. Older Americans were more likely to be anti-Catholic in 1964/1968, but the reverse appears to be true in the later cohort. It is unclear exactly why this is the case for 2000/2004, and it is an unexpected finding.

Perhaps a reversal even more interesting is that of partisanship. In the 1960s, the more Republican you were, the more likely you were to be anti-Catholic (though this is not statistically significant), but in recent times strong Republicans are significantly less likely to be anti-Catholic. This makes sense given the political scene in each time period. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy, a Catholic and a Democrat, was in office. Vatican II had not yet opened the doors of the Catholic Church to ecumenical dialogue. In contrast, by 2000 the Republican Party had become more attractive to traditional Catholics, and Catholics had become spokespersons for conservative causes aligned with the party’s agenda. Thus, it makes sense that Republicans in 2000 and 2004 are less hostile to Catholics than in years past, relative to non-Republicans. Likewise, liberal
Democrats, particular those that are secular, may be more hostile to Catholics in light of
the Catholic Church’s authoritarianism which is often opposed to liberal causes (e.g.
feminism, expansion of civil rights for gays and lesbians, etc.).

Given the political concerns of this dissertation, I am particularly interested in the
relationship between evangelicals’ political affiliation and their attitudes towards
Catholics. Are Republican evangelicals warmer towards Catholics than moderate or
Democratic evangelicals? Contact theory, discussed in the next chapter, suggests that as
evangelicals cooperate with Catholic, animosity between the groups will decrease. In this
case, cooperation has largely taken place under the umbrella of social conservative
politics and the Republican Party. Apart from direct contact, there is also the perception
popularized by religious leaders and media that Catholics are potential Republican allies.
In addition, the Catholic Church remains a beacon of authority in what some have
considered an anti-authoritarian age, the latter a state evangelicals (and conservatives to
a certain extent) do not favor.

Table 2.2 reports similar OLS regression models this time restricting the analysis
to white evangelical Protestants (still identified by denominational affiliation).
Table 2.2: Predictors of Anti-Catholicism, White Evangelical Protestants 1960s and 2000s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1960s Unstandardized Regression Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
<th>2000s Unstandardized Regression Coefficient (Standard Error)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-.502 (.950)</td>
<td>1.684^ (.888)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church attendance</td>
<td>.846** (.337)</td>
<td>.131 (.521)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bible is Word of God</td>
<td>1.260^ (.761)</td>
<td>-.042 (.694)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Participation</td>
<td>.578 (.588)</td>
<td>-.785 (.764)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>.107 (.369)</td>
<td>-1.502** (.567)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>-.977 (.803)</td>
<td>-.543 (.833)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
<td>.490* (.245)</td>
<td>.236 (.312)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-1.132** (.440)</td>
<td>-1.450* (.684)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-.144 (.241)</td>
<td>.144 (.309)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>.850 (.712)</td>
<td>-.701 (.862)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year dummy 1964 (2000)</td>
<td>.296 (.242)</td>
<td>-.616^ (.322)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>.062 (.242)</td>
<td>.104 (.322)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: National Election Studies Cumulative File
^p<.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

As expected, Republican affiliation significantly decreases anti-Catholicism in the 2000s and in this table has no effect in the 1960s. Also, it appears that while church attending, Bible believing evangelicals were more likely to be anti-Catholic in the 1960s, there is no relationship between religiosity and anti-Catholic attitudes in the 2000s. Thus,
it does not appear to be the case that “soft” evangelicals, as defined by William Shea (2004) are those that are necessarily less orthodox. Evangelicals that believe the Bible is the literal word of God and attend church every Sunday are no more likely to express anti-Catholic attitudes than their less religious counterparts. Based on this analysis, anti-Catholicism (as defined here) is no longer a significant feature of the evangelical Protestant church.

However, having a snapshot of attitudes towards Catholics at-large does not necessarily provide great insight into attitudes towards the Catholic Church specifically, Catholic leaders or Catholic doctrine. Fortunately, recent national surveys are available to help illuminate our understanding of these attitudes. For example, the 2002 General Social Survey included a few questions concerning features of the Catholic Church; these were asked again by author in 2007 using an elite sample of evangelicals.24 Responses from white evangelical Protestants are reported in Table 2.3. I report the percentage of all respondents that agreed with three separate statements and the mean feeling thermometer rating for Catholics for all respondents. I then break down the data reported by age groups.

---

24 For later parts of the dissertation, a survey-experiment was administered using a sample of donors to political action committees associated with the Christian Right. The survey-experiment and sample are more fully introduced in chapter 4. Here, I present some data from this sample. These questions were asked before respondents were exposed to a stimulus.
Table 2.3: White Evangelical Protestants’ Attitudes towards Catholics and Catholic Beliefs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The statues and images in Catholic churches are idols.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40 and younger</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 41-60</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 61 and older</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic rosaries and holy medals are superstitious.</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40 and younger</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 41-60</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 61 and older</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics really are not permitted to think for themselves. *</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40 and younger</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 41-60</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 61 and older</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Feeling Thermometer Mean</td>
<td>59 degrees</td>
<td>62 degrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 40 and younger</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 41-60</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 61 and older</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number is percentage of respondents that agree or strongly agree with statement.
*p<.01 Difference in proportions test.
The data indicate that a sizable minority (over one third) of white evangelicals continue to find fault with the Catholic Church saying they agree or strongly agree that statues and images in Catholic churches are idols and that rosaries and holy medals are superstitious. Yet significant majorities in both samples disagreed with the statement that Catholics are not permitted to think for themselves. Just under a quarter of evangelicals in the mass sample agreed that this was the case, and only 14 percent of elite evangelicals agreed. Both groups rated Catholics on average a 62, which comports with the NES data featured in Figure 2.1.  

Two points of reflection are worth some discussion. First, it appears that some distinction must be made between attitudes towards Catholics and attitudes towards the Church and its teachings. A number of evangelicals in Table 2.3 believed Catholics could think for themselves, rated them warmly, but nonetheless agreed that statues in the Catholic Church were idols. Despite the warming trend between the two traditions, it is likely that opposing viewpoints remain, at the very least when it comes to religious practices.

Secondly, the data show that *elite* evangelicals are significantly more likely to believe that Catholics can think for themselves, indicating perhaps a greater tolerance for

---

25 Regression analysis was done to examine what variables predict responses to the questions displayed in Table 2.3. No significant results were found which may be evidence of the complicated structure of attitudes towards Catholicism which likely involves feelings and thoughts about a group of people, a doctrine, and an institution.
Catholics in general by this group. These elites are more educated than the general sample and they are more politically involved. Both likely help explain why elites might be more inclined to see room for individuality in the Catholic Church as they are likely more tolerant. But at the very least, I can conclude that elite evangelicals are no more likely to harbor anti-Catholic attitudes than evangelicals at the mass level and if anything, they are more likely to see Catholics as being independent-minded.

Moving now to the data reported by age, I find that in general the younger cohorts of evangelicals are less likely to agree with the statements critical of Catholic beliefs and are perhaps slightly less likely to believe Catholics are not permitted to think for themselves. There is little difference between the cohorts when it comes to average feeling thermometer rating of Catholics, though the oldest cohort is still the coolest of the three cohorts in each sample. Still, these numbers should be interpreted with some caution as the sample size is small for each age group. Consistent with my explanation for the trend evidence in Figure 2.1, it appears that later generations of evangelicals are indeed less anti-Catholic than their predecessors.

In closing, the survey data analyzed in this section generally confirm that anti-Catholicism is no longer a dominant feature of evangelical Protestantism and the shift is likely related to generational replacement. Catholic assimilation, along with changes in the religious traditions themselves and the political landscape, have likely all contributed to younger evangelicals holding less anti-Catholic attitudes. The data are unable to tease out all the nuances of these attitudes, but they nonetheless advance what has been known about evangelicals’ attitudes towards Catholic to date.
Conclusion

This chapter provides the historical lens through which we can better understand contemporary evangelical-Catholic relations and in particular, evangelical attitudes towards Catholicism in the context of American politics. I hope the reader is left with a greater appreciate for the transformation that has taken place between these two traditions over time, but also a sensitivity to the divisions that still exist.

Survey data and anecdotal accounts clearly suggest that Republican politics have drawn evangelical Protestants into closer relations with the Catholic Church. White evangelical Protestants joined with Catholics in pro-life protests in the 1970s, asked for their help in the Christian Right movement beginning in the 1980s and throughout the 90s, and have continued the partnership most recently in the movement against same-sex marriage.

But lingering disagreements remain. Are the statues in the Catholic Church idols? Forty percent of evangelicals in one national survey said yes. Nonetheless, perhaps evangelicals interpret this differently today than they once did; Dr. Geisler, a prominent conservative evangelical Protestant stated that “Roman Catholicism is not a false religion with significant truths. Rather, it is a true expression of Christianity with some significant errors.”

As part of the same institutionalized social movement, Catholics and evangelicals have a unique opportunity to encounter the lingering areas of difference in the context of political cooperation. Previous literature suggests that cross-cutting exposure can shape policy preferences and produce more tolerant attitudes. In the next chapter I provide a
review of deliberative democratic theory and outline the potential effects of cross-cutting exposure for evangelicals in the Christian Right.
Chapter 3
Deliberative Democracy and Doctrinal Divides

Despite an antagonistic past, the religious and political distinctions between evangelicals and Catholics do not appear to be as grave as distinctions found elsewhere in the contemporary religious universe. For example, “How do you bond with people who believe when they destroy you, they will go to heaven?” was a question asked by a Jewish man at a recent interfaith gathering at a coffee shop/bookstore in Washington, D.C.¹ A few dozen people – including Christians, Jews and Muslims – had just completed a time for small group discussion after listening to an imam interview a rabbi. It was now time for Q&A.

Such frank expressions of religious difference are not unique to lecture halls or more intimate gatherings such as this one. They are not restricted to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict or the clash between Sunni and Shiite Muslims in Iraq. U.S. citizens are regularly exposed to dogmatic belief systems that pass judgment on other belief systems and behaviors. While not involving the same threat of violence seen elsewhere around the world, religious traditions in America, including Protestants and Catholics, are routinely unyielding in what they consider right and who they consider being in the wrong.² Moreover, the emphasis placed on proselytizing within evangelical Protestantism specifically exacerbates the notion that other belief systems are wrong.

² It is not my objective to compare the evangelical-Catholic divide in America today with that of Jews and Muslims in the Middle East. I simply use the example to help illustrate the volatility of religious pluralism in a society.
However misguided and inaccurate the perception of another’s religious faith is, it is the assumption that one religious tradition poses a threat to political tolerance and liberty that serves to create very real division amongst the citizenry. The Jewish man is right; it would be difficult to tolerate, let alone bond with or vote for a member of a group that you perceive advocating for your destruction.

It is not surprising then that democratic theorists view religiously-based political appeals as a potential danger to deliberative democracy (Gutmann and Thompson 1996, 56-57). A religion, by definition, is an exclusive set of claims about the meaning of the universe and the existence of a supreme being (Finke and Stark 2000, 91-92). Orthodox religious adherents tend to believe their religion is absolute truth, a belief usually not shared by all in a pluralistic society. As Hannah Arendt writes, “The trouble is that factual truth, like all other truth, peremptorily claims to be acknowledged and precludes debate, and debate constitutes the very essence of political life. The modes of thought and communication that deal with truth, if seen from the political perspective, are necessarily domineering; they don't take into account other people's opinions, and taking these into account is the hallmark of all strictly political thinking” (1968, 241).

Yet religious belief is not necessarily the antithesis of the common good or of deliberation. Alexis de Tocqueville observed in the United States that religion “imposes on each man some obligations toward mankind, to be performed in common with the rest of mankind, and so draws him away from time to time, from thinking about himself” (1840/1969, 444-445). Indeed, religiously-diverse networks in the U.S. have in fact been venues for deliberative democracy. As I argue here, religious pluralism has provided a
means for deliberative democrats to implement their grand visions of tolerance, equality and justice.

A Hartford Institute for Religion Research study found that 38 percent of American congregations in 2005 had been involved in the previous year in interfaith community service, more than four times the percentage reported in 2000. In his study of an interfaith and multiracial community activism in Texas, Mark R. Warren (2001) finds the activist networks in this case provide social connectedness across lines of difference. As others have found, Warren notes that places of worship provided the civic skills and resources necessary to participate in community activism.

Therefore, religious groups should not immediately be viewed as threats to deliberative democracy but perhaps more often as practitioners of it. While the effects of deliberation may be muted by religious dogmatism for some citizens, we should not assume that effects are wiped away entirely. The purpose of this chapter is to outline the theoretical framework used to interpret evangelical-Catholic deliberation across lines of religious and political difference. I review the theoretical literature on deliberative democracy and then narrow my scope to the attitudinal effects of cross-cutting exposure.

**Deliberative Democracy Defined**

Cross-cutting discussions between religious citizens fall under the rubric of scholarship on deliberative democracy – the idea that democracy functions best when

---

citizens reason together and reconcile their differences through public discussion. The study at hand takes a minimalist approach to the study of democratic deliberation, that being a focus on the extent to which individuals are exposed to political viewpoints contrary to their own (see Mutz 2002, 111). While exposure to dissimilar views is no doubt a component of deliberation, scholars have yet to agree on one single definition or fully tease out what deliberation requires (Macedo 1999). Like a chili recipe, there may be an unlimited number of variants, but in the end, one bowl of chili is more or less comparable to the next. Social psychologists, political psychologists, public opinion scholars and students of small group communication have all taken a turn in the kitchen, so to speak.

Theorists generally agree that deliberation requires equality, publicity and reasonableness. Equality so that all perspectives are represented, publicity so that parties are held accountable, and reasonableness in order that deliberation is civil and an effective tool for decision-making. Beyond the essential ingredients, there is some variation. For example, certain theorists contend deliberation must take place face-to-face and place a premium on consensus-building. Some suggest that deliberation requires calm reasonable discussion while others suggest protest and impassioned rhetoric could constitute deliberation. But overall, deliberative democrats view communicative interaction as the bedrock of a strong democracy.

---

4 For example, Gutmann and Thompson (1996) claim deliberative democracy consists of three principles that “regulate the process of politics” – reciprocity, publicity, and accountability and three principles that “govern the content of politics” – basic liberty, basic opportunity, and fair opportunity. Iris Young (2001) provides four ideals for deliberative democracy: inclusion, equality, reasonableness, and publicity. In his review of the literature to date, Ryfe (2005) takes a slightly different take and says deliberative democracy works best in the presence of rules, stories, leadership, stakes and apprenticeship.
In her helpful review of deliberative theory, Tali Mendelberg concludes, “The promise of deliberation is its ability to foster the egalitarian, reciprocal, reasonable and open-minded exchange of language…. Deliberation is expected to lead to empathy with the other and a broadened sense of people’s own interests” (2002, 158). Theoretical expectations such as these have in fact been around for centuries. John Stuart Mill believed conversation was the means for discovering the political good. “Since the general or prevailing opinion on any subject is rarely or never the whole truth, it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied” (1859, 53). More recently, Jurgen Habermas (1989) argued that human rationality comes from social interaction; conversations with others will naturally lead to internal deliberation. The “ideal speech situation,” according to Habermas is one in which individuals effectively communicate their differences and reflect on those distinctions.

Theorists have repeatedly speculated about the *transformative* influence of deliberation. Through deliberation, individuals have their ideas tested and reshaped as a result of collective reasoning. “Because this interaction requires participants to be open and attentive to one another, to justify their claims and proposals in terms acceptable to all, the orientation of participants moves from self-regard to an orientation towards what is publicly assertable. Interests and preferences continue to have a place in the processes of deliberative democracy, but not as given and exogenous to the process” (Young, 2001, 26).
In his defense of a participatory democracy, Benjamin Barber (1984) says that it is only through a deliberative public that an individual “confronts the Other and adjusts his own life plans to the dictates of a shared world” (224). Hannah Arendt (1968) says deliberation results in an “enlarged mentality.” “The more people’s standpoints I have present in my mind while I am pondering a given issue, and the better I can imagine how I would feel and think if I were in their place, the stronger will be my capacity for representative thinking and the more valid my final conclusions, my opinion” (Arendt 1968, 241).

As I demonstrate in this dissertation, exposure to Catholics in the context of social conservative activism brings with it exposure to more viewpoints. Deliberative democratic theory predicts that evangelicals will be better able to engage in “representative thinking” as a result. Cross-cutting interaction such as this is vital to democracy so say these theorists.

However, deliberative democracy is not without its critics. Many theorists have questioned whether or not deliberation should hold a distinct place within the list of activities which democracy necessarily requires. According to this view, deliberation should not be prioritized over such non-deliberative activities like voting, bargaining, or demonstrating (Walzer 1999). Deliberation may very well be worthwhile, but the stability and perhaps even the strength of a democracy do not require a deliberative public.

Others take their criticism a step further and say deliberation is an honorable, albeit naïve approach to what ails democratic politics. William Simon (1999) argues that
greater attention should be paid to mobilization as opposed to deliberation as a means of bringing about greater equality and representation. Simon [responding specifically to Gutmann and Thompson (1996)] claims deliberative democrats ignore the role of identity politics and the fact that minority groups often reject deliberation because they do not believe themselves to be good at it. He suggests mobilization and deliberation will forever be at odds because identity politics contributes to the former and discourages the latter (see also Mutz 2006). Similarly, Ian Shapiro (1999) says the real problem of democracy is not so much the quality and amount of political discussion, as it is the fact that political outcomes are primarily a result of interests and power. He points out examples of “unsuccessful” policy debates and says the primary problem with the debate was not the absence of reasonable discourse; it was how money shaped the debate.

Finally, a number of theorists identify dangers that could possibly ensue as a result of deliberation. Cass Sunstein (2002) in his summary of the literature suggests deliberation across lines of political difference has the potential to exclude “low-status” voices from the debate because deliberation requires civic skills or positions of influence that those favoring the minority opinion regularly lack. Deliberation might contribute to inequality as a result. Moreover, “enclave deliberation” – deliberation taking place within like-minded networks – is dangerous because it will lead to more polarized opinion amongst the members. Individuals in a homogeneous group will only be exposed to arguments tilted in one direction, and thus they will be persuaded and socially

---

5 Sunstein (2002) does make the point that enclave deliberation is sometimes beneficial because it provides for the expression of positions that might otherwise be silenced in a debate within a heterogeneous network.
pressed to shift their opinion in the direction of the more extreme members of the group.

In addition, research on small group communication finds that there is an incentive for group members to conform, and the group’s opinion post-discussion is more extreme than the pre-discussion mean (Petty, Wegener, and Fabrigar 1997; Spears, Lea and Lee 1990). This is especially pronounced when the group members have been primed to consider their social identity (Lea and Spears 1991; Spear et al. 2002). It may also be the case that a social identity emerged prior to the group’s formation (see Warren 2001). These scholars would expect evangelical-Catholic interaction in the Christian Right to only produce more extreme opinion, particularly for issues like abortion and same-sex marriage.

In the opinion of some theorists, these shifts of opinion are reason for concern, not just in terms of polarization and greater animosity between groups, but also because the new positions taken are not always in the best interest of the individual. According to these theorists, deliberation might lead to “incorrect” attitudes. Citing evidence gathered by public opinion scholars, Susan Stokes (1998) makes the claim that deliberation “induces preferences that appear to be more inline with the interests of the communicator than with those of recipients of the messages communicated” (124). Stokes goes so far to say that deliberation might even manufacture a pseudo political identity. “Consider

---

6 Numerous public opinion studies find evidence to suggest that citizens do not take positions in their best interest as a result of the information environment (e.g. Kuklinski and Hurley 1994). Jackman and Sniderman (2006) find that even well-informed citizens will sometimes take a position inconsistent with their political ideology as a result of exposure to a counter-argument. However, the authors assume ideological consistency on the part of the respondents is the ideal, which of course is not always a fair assumption given the complexity of American politics.
instances in which abstract narratives concerning a category or people, narratives
tailored for political ends, are believed by people whom the narrative is about, even
though their own experience would lead them to believe a different narrative” (134).
Similarly, Adam Przeworski (1998) suggests deliberation might lead to “false beliefs,”
opinions inconsistent with their true concerns. At the very least, he argues, deliberation
is not always a means to legitimate decision-making.7

Testing Their Claims: Deliberative Democracy and Social Science

In this dissertation, I examine whether or not there is the potential for
deliberation to take place within the context of evangelical-Catholic political cooperation
and to what effect. Recently, political scientists have moved beyond the theoretical and
have empirically tested the claims made by deliberative democrats and their critics. In
many cases, not surprisingly, social scientists have found it necessary to restrict the
scope of analysis. Thus, a number of scholars began their empirical work by examining
diversity within citizens’ social networks, based on an appropriate assumption that in
order for deliberation to take place, a network must be heterogeneous. In other words, an
individual must encounter people that hold different opinions to reconsider or deliberate
over her own opinion. Therefore, the following question drives this area of work: when
and where does cross-cutting exposure occur?

7 There is also the argument that deliberation and functional political disagreement is doomed to fail when
the citizenry does not readily embrace it. In their extensive study based on survey and focus group data,
Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002) find the general trend in public opinion favors “stealth democracy” –
one in which public participation is not encouraged and decision-making is restricted to elites. The authors
conclude that because the public is averse to conflict, it is a threat to democracy to have it remain in the
open.
A number of studies do find evidence for heterogeneous networks, providing hope for deliberative democrats. For example, Conover, Sears and Crewe (2002) find there is some deliberative potential to everyday political discussion amongst U.S. citizens. They find that a majority of survey respondents reported having a moderate to high amount of contested discussion about political matters within their networks, though the majority of these conversations took place in private settings. Moreover, contested discussion was more likely to be reported by citizens of the U.S. than Great Britain.

In their study of disagreement in the context of U.S. presidential elections, Huckfeldt, Johnson and Sprague (2004) find that disagreement is sustained in multiple environments. The authors claim that “disagreement is the modal condition among citizens” (19) and base their argument on self-reports of discussant partners and their support for a presidential candidate. However, this finding is contested by Diana Mutz (2006) who finds quite the opposite.\(^8\)

In probably the most extensive empirical work on this topic, Mutz (2006) finds that political conversations across lines of political difference are rare (chapter 2). According to her analysis of National Election Studies data, less than 25 percent of the U.S. population report having any discussion partner with whom they disagree politically. Few contexts, Mutz concludes, offer citizens exposure to dissonant

---

\(^8\) See Mutz (2006) chapter 2 for a critique of the methods used by Huckfeldt and colleagues. Amongst other complaints, she notes that their 2004 work defined disagreement in terms of the absence of full agreement. That is, if a discussion partner did not support any candidate, he or she was considered an opposing viewpoint within the network. This conceptual flaw (in addition to others), according to Mutz, explains why the study may have inflated the likelihood of citizens’ participation in a cross-cutting network.
viewpoints. Using data from a different national survey in the U.S., she finds that the dominance of agreement over disagreement persists in all settings and is particularly pronounced in places of worship followed by voluntary associations. These contexts are voluntarily self-selected, and therefore easily entered and easily exited if dissonant views are encountered. It is unlikely a person will stay in a church or in a volunteer group when they are in the political minority because it is easy enough to find a different church or volunteering opportunity where his or her opinions are more readily agreed to.

In contrast, Mutz and Mondak (2006) find the workplace to be one of the few contexts positioned to facilitate cross-cutting discourse. With weak social ties, multiple discussion partners available and high exit costs, Mutz and Mondak argue that the workplace offers citizens a heterogeneous network and one that is more accepting of disagreement than a family or friendship network. But this good news is muted by the fact that the majority of political conversation takes place in private settings (Conover, Sears and Crewe 2002; Wyatt, Katz, and Kim 2000) which are unlikely to include the expression of disagreement due to social conformity pressures, especially amongst close friend and family (MacKuen 1990).

Apart from immediate discussion partners, Mutz and Martin (2001) find mass media actually provide people the greatest exposure to dissenting views. Given the trend toward residential balkanization coupled with the tendency to associate one’s self with only like-minded individuals, mainstream media are uniquely positioned to transcend geographical barriers and expose people to diverse views. However, selective exposure
possibly limits the degree to which exposure to dissonant views takes place (Cotton 1985).

The literature summarized above discusses when and where exposure to dissonant views occurs. My project is unique in that it suggests social movements may be a place for cross-cutting exposure to take place. Before turning my attention to social movements and cross-cutting exposure specifically, I first review the attitudinal effects of cross-cutting exposure in general. When exposure to dissonant opinions occurs, social scientists have demonstrated three changes in public opinion: opinion quality, opinion direction, and political tolerance.

**Opinion Quality**

Theorists have long speculated that opinion will be improved through deliberation. People will have a better understanding of the issue, and better decisions will be reached as a result of exposure to different points of view. Political disagreement is said to produce what Arendt calls an “enlarged mentality.” A first step in confirming these expectations is to assert whether or not exposure to dissonant viewpoints is a source of political learning, that is, are citizens in heterogeneous networks more informed than those in homogeneous networks? A number of published studies now confirm that exposure to disagreement is related to more informed political attitudes, though a causal relationship has not yet been established (Price, Cappella and Nir 2002; Mutz 2002; but see Muhlberger 2005 and Jackson and Sniderman 2006).

Price, Cappella and Nir (2002), for example, set out to examine whether or not exposure to disagreement was associated with “argument repertoire” - the ability of
respondents to list rationales in support of their own views as well as rationales behind opposing points of view. The authors asked survey respondents to list reasons for the unfavorable or favorable opinions they had of the Democratic and Republican parties. Respondents were also asked to list reasons why other people might have the opposing view. They found that argument repertoire was indeed positively correlated with the level of disagreement reported even after controlling for the frequency of discussion, education, political knowledge and interest.

Mutz (2002) too finds evidence supporting this notion that participation in cross-cutting networks leads to more deliberative opinion. She finds that citizens with high levels of political disagreement amongst their discussion partners are better able to provide rationales for their own views and opposing views on issues such as affirmative action, welfare, and choice of presidential candidate. While it is difficult to know for sure whether or not these opinions are indeed “better,” at the very least these studies suggest that cross-cutting exposure is a means to citizens becoming more informed.

Opinion Change

The next logical step in this empirical tradition is to examine under what conditions deliberation – or at a minimum, exposure to dissonant viewpoints – might lead to opinion change. Scholars have established artificial deliberative settings to test whether or not attitude change takes place. For example, James Fishkin conducts “deliberative polling” in which citizens are randomly selected to participate in small-group discussion on a particular issue (1991; see also Ackerman and Fishkin 2004;
Farrar, et al. 2003). Fishkin finds that after the discussion, participants are more informed and in many cases change their opinion as a result.

Likewise, Barabas (2004) develops a theory of opinion updating where citizens adjust their opinions regarding Social Security after they encounter the opinions of others in a deliberative forum. Not only were participants more likely to correctly answer Social Security knowledge questions following the deliberation stimulus, many changed their opinion about the topic as a result. Opinion strength, however, moderated the effects; that is, those with a weakly held original opinion regarding Social Security were more likely to change their minds.

It would be easy to interpret this evidence as positively contributing to deliberative democrats’ claims. Cross-cutting exposure does appear to be related to political learning and contributes to greater awareness both of one’s own rationales behind for political opinion as well as others’ rationales for opposing opinions. However, other scholars suggest this might not necessarily be good news. A few studies have found deliberation to harm the decision-making process, psychological frustrate citizens, and potentially decrease the quality of opinion.

For example, studies in psychology find that individuals are actually more motivated to reach a decision and more satisfied with their decision when fewer options are available to them (e.g. Iyengar and Lepper 2000). Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that citizens are more likely to be frustrated by an issue after deliberation than before (Button and Mattson 1999). Finally, Jackman and Sniderman (2006) find that exposure to counter-arguments reduces ideological consistency, even for political
sophisticates. Though, one could argue that ideological inconsistency is not antithetical to informed opinion, the authors nonetheless argue that, “In the aggregate, we find that deliberation leads at least as many people to ideologically inconsistent positions as it helps people find their way to ideologically consistent positions. In this sense, we find that deliberation is for naught” (2006, 272).

Political Tolerance

Indeed, the end result of exposure need not be opinion change, inappropriate change or otherwise. Deliberative democrats value diversity because they suspect it leads to greater political tolerance. Political tolerance – the willingness on the part of citizens to grant liberties and rights to groups they disagree with – has long been viewed as bedrock of a democratic polity.

Political disagreement is said to lead to greater tolerance in a number of ways. This area of research has its roots in intergroup contact theory. In perhaps the most influential work on the topic, Gordon Allport (1954) argues in *The Nature of Prejudice* that contact between groups can reduce prejudice. Allport believed this would be most pronounced when four conditions were met: the groups had equal status, the have a common goal in place, the goal requires intergroup cooperation, and there is institutional support to sustain their interaction. Scholars have generally found that while these conditions facilitate reduced tolerance, they are not essential (Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). While initial work on this topic was restricted to relations between racial and ethnic groups, the theory has now been applied to multiple group identities. And despite pockets of evidence to the contrary (see Amir 1976), recent summaries of
the literature to date confirm that intergroup contact reduces prejudice between groups
(Pettigrew and Tropp 2006). \(^9\)

Within the social psychology literature, there also exists some evidence for the
idea of “generalized intergroup contact;” that is, interaction with one out-group can
reduce intolerance towards other out-groups in general (Reich and Purbhoo 1975, Cook
1984, Pettigrew 1997). In other words, members of group A may interact with group B
and come to understand and respect their positions, though not agreeing with those
positions. As a result of this exposure, members of group A may also tolerate groups C
and D because they have come to realize that reasonable people can disagree. Therefore,
as I suggested in the introduction, Catholics may serve as a “gateway drug” for
evangelicals. After encountering Catholics in the Christian Right, evangelicals may
realize their assumptions about the out-group (Catholics) were in fact incorrect. This
may make them doubt their assumptions about other out-groups as well. Evangelicals
might realize that groups are not entirely wrong or entirely “bad.” In short, evangelicals
may become more tolerant in general as a result of exposure to Catholics.

Empirical work within political science has expanded on the intergroup contact
hypothesis and has examined the mechanisms behind why exposure to opposing groups
(and/or their viewpoints) reduces prejudice. There appears to be both an informational
component at work as well as an affective response.

\(^9\) But see Putnam (2007) for evidence that living in a racially diverse neighborhood is related to “hunkering
down.” Putnam finds higher rates of intergroup contact to be related to decreased trust in both in-group
and out-group members.
The cognitive basis to political tolerance is relatively clear. For example, Mutz (2002) confirms that exposure to cross-cutting views is positively correlated with political tolerance. This is not entirely surprising given that Stouffer (1955) believed that exposure to conflicting views was the primary reason why education and tolerance were so tightly correlated. In an experimental confirmation, Mutz is able to conclude that exposure to rationales behind dissonant viewpoints does in fact cause citizens to express more tolerant preferences.

But Mutz’s positive findings are restricted to only those citizens with high levels of perspective-taking ability. These individuals learn another’s viewpoints and recognize that there are legitimate opposing rationales. This is the informational effect of cross-cutting exposure. A person hears the other side and realizes that multiple views on an issue could be valid. Individuals with low perspective-taking ability, on the other hand, are actually less tolerant as a result of cross-cutting information.

In addition to the cognitive bases of political tolerance judgments, scholars have identified an affective mechanism also at work. Exposure to opposing groups not only involves exposure to the ideas behind their positions, it also involves – at least in the real world – exposure to names and faces which citizens likely have a visceral reaction to. That is, opposing groups or individuals may simply be more or less likeable. Previous work has shown that citizens often rely on likeability to evaluate policy – if a group espousing a policy is liked, than the policy is accepted (Brady and Snideman 1985). If Protestant Tom meets Catholic Jack, and the two like one another, when policy preferences are revealed and in fact differ, than the gulf separating them will not be as
wide because they have already established an affective bond. On a significant scale then, affective responses can lessen political intolerance that might more readily ensue if no bond was in place. Mutz (2002) finds the degree of intimacy with a dissonant discussion partner is positively related to political tolerance. Also relevant is a study by Kuklinski et al (1991) that finds that subjects asked to deliberate about the consequences of a disliked group carrying on a political behavior expressed less tolerance than those asked to viscerally respond to the group, in part because so many considerations came into play – tolerance, but also safety, equality, stability. In this case then, the affective basis of tolerance judgments is more helpful (in a democratic sense) than actually deliberating about civil liberties.

Summary of Empirical Research on Deliberative Democracy

The picture this paints is a mixed one. The deliberative society envisioned by theorists is unlikely, but the democratic fruits may exist nonetheless in the instances where cross-cutting exposure is taking place. The empirical work reviewed here confirms that deliberation can at times lead to more informed opinion and greater tolerance. Other work, however, suggests deliberation can contribute to inconsistent attitudes, greater conflict, and depress participation.¹⁰

¹⁰ Mutz finds that individuals embedded in a cross-cutting network are more likely to hold ambivalent political attitudes and thus make up their minds about a candidate or issue much later than other individuals (2001). This in turn discourages political involvement. Moreover, in heterogeneous contexts there is pressure to not disrupt social harmony which discourages participation as well. These two factors – ambivalence and social accountability pressure – lead Mutz to conclude that an extremely activist political culture cannot co-exist with a heavily deliberative one. “Deliberation and participation, in other words, do not go hand in hand. Homogeneous and heterogeneous social contexts serve two different, yet important, purposes in this regard” (2006, 133).
The literature leaves us with a number of unanswered questions, most notably how the source of a dissonant message might mediate its effect. Previous work on cross-cutting exposure typically used a nonspecific template to test deliberative theories. The dissonant messages used in most experiments are generic and not attributed to any source (e.g. Mutz 2002; Jackman and Sniderman 2006). In other experimental work, the dissonant message is expressed by strangers in a deliberative forum (e.g. Barabas 2004; Fishkin 1991). Yet we know this does not resemble the real world. It is more likely that messages are attributed to a particular elite associated with a particular group associated with a particular party. Or, messages come from an acquaintance with whom you are familiar with. Thus, it is uncommon for a message to be void of any affective or partisan implications.

Moreover, we know that source credibility is relevant to our understanding of persuasion (Pornpitakpan 2004). Scholars have long been interested in determining when an elite message can and cannot affect public opinion. They have found that how credible a messenger is perceived to be determines how likely the message is to persuade (e.g. Hovland and Weiss 1951-52; Mondak 1990). Similarly, how trustworthy a media source is perceived to be determines the success of media priming (Miller and Krosnick 2000). Druckman (2001) demonstrates how source credibility moderates framing effects. In his experiment, subjects were more likely to support government assistance to the poor when they were exposed to a humanitarian frame attributed to a credible source.
(Colin Powell) than a noncredible source (television host Jerry Springer). Particularly relevant to the project at hand is a study by Clark and Maass (1988) which finds that in-group minorities (attending the same university) were perceived as more credible and were thus more persuasive than were out-group minorities (attending a different university).

I build on this literature while at the same time advance the work on deliberative democracy by examining how cross-cutting views attributed to a political in-group differ in their effect from views attributed to a political out-group. I suspect citizens may turn to an elite message from a political in-group to help them make sense of an unfamiliar political issue or candidate but the same message attributed to a political out-group would be rejected. Restricting my sample to a designated group within a social movement allows me to test this claim.

**Deliberation within the Christian Right**

The deliberation expected to take place within a social movement does not immediately resemble the deliberative ideal envisioned above. By definition, social movements involve like-minded people. If members of a social movement did not perceive great similarity between themselves and the broader movement, they would likely exit the association. Therefore, differences – if they exist at all – likely have to do with peripheral matters and are unlikely to be popular topics of discussion amongst the

---

11 In fact, individuals exposed to the humanitarian frame attributed to Jerry Springer thought that the impact of an increase in assistance to the poor would have a significantly more negative effect on the government’s budget than those exposed to an expenditures frame (also attributed to Jerry Springer); this is the opposite framing effect than what you would expect, suggesting that individuals may sometimes believe the opposite of what is suggested by a noncredible source (1051-1052).
participants. In fact, too much heterogeneity in a social movement predicts its demise (Zald and Ash 1966, 337)

Furthermore, as evangelical Protestants and Catholics have come together in this movement, it is likely that they have come to share a social identity based on religious orthodoxy created in response to secular or liberal groups. They view themselves as the last defenders of orthodoxy and Christian tradition in the public sphere. Social identity theory explains how individuals come to define themselves in relation to the groups they belong (Conover 1988; Tajfel 1978; Tajfel and Turner 1986). In order to differentiate themselves from others, they will tend to exaggerate the differences between in-groups and out-groups, and the areas of similarities within the group will become more salient, perhaps enhancing intolerance for out-groups. Thus, from a psychological perspective, evangelicals are likely to minimize their differences with Catholics in the Christian Right. Moreover, because social identity predicts that group membership helps individuals define their worth, it is unlikely that members of this particular group will be anxious to tease outside difference within their movement – threatening their overall efficacy and resoluteness as well as disrupting any ease they’ve established in their interactions with one another.

Deliberation within such a group likely resembles what Cass Sunstein (2002) refers to as enclave deliberation – isolated discussion within like-minded networks that further accentuates differences between groups, resulting in greater polarization. Basing his argument on previous studies in social psychology, Sunstein proposes two mechanisms behind the move towards polarization. First, group members will want to be
perceived positively by other group members thus they will likely adjust their opinions and move in the direction of the dominant position. And second, the available arguments in the information environment will likely be skewed in one direction and members will be persuaded to move further in that direction. Sunstein uses the example of religious groups: “religious groups amplify that religious impulse, especially if group members are insulated from other groups, and on occasion, the result can be to lead people in quite bizarre direction” (88).

It is not my contention here that enclave deliberation is not taking place within the Christian Right social movement. I think it is very likely that a group of pro-life activists will become more opposed to legalized abortion after a discussion on the topic, regardless of religious distinctions among the group. I would expect there to be a social pressure to stake out a more conservative position on rights for homosexuals in this movement as a result of exposure to fellow supporters. The information environment within the movement would help to legitimize more “extreme” opinions and perhaps even lead to greater intolerance.

However, I make the argument here that enclave deliberation can in fact facilitate a form of cross-cutting exposure or intergroup contact. It is rather ironic that all the conditions Allport outlines above as necessary for contact to reduce prejudice – equal status, cooperation, common goal and institutional support – are in many ways met in a social movement. So even the slightest group distinction may easily translate into some of the ideals outlined above. And a significant distinction very much exists within the Christian Right between Catholics and evangelical Protestants, both in terms of religious
beliefs and political values. In addition, some social psychologists have found that as a
group becomes more and more inclusive, a need for distinctiveness is activated (Brewer
and Brown 1998; Brewer 1991). Thus it is possible that we might see Protestants and
Catholics asserting their separate identities at certain times. As a result, I expect that
while these groups might grow increasingly conservative on some issues (abortion,
same-sex marriage), these groups at the same time might be expanding their opinion on
other issues, learning and increasing in tolerance. If I find these results in my exploration
of a Christian conservative movement, it may be reasonable to think they will extend to
other social movements or coalitions in the political arena that bring together distinct
groups for a common cause.

In short, exposure to differences or dissonant viewpoints or identities has a
greater likelihood of “working” when the group behind the opposing viewpoints holds
some legitimacy for the citizen. This is especially true in coalitional politics. When an
individual from a group that is generally not part of your social movement gives her
rationales for her opposing viewpoints, a citizen can easily dismiss those rationales
because as illegitimate because the source is not credible. It could even accentuate her
dislike for that group. But when an individual from a group that tends to be part of a
citizen’s social movement expresses rationales for the opposing view, the effects may be
different. For example, if a group in a movement surrounding issue X gives her
rationales for her opposing viewpoints on issue Y, a citizen is reminded that she can
agree to disagree with people, after all, she cooperates with the group for issue X. Say
environmentalists, some of whom happen to be gay, and hunters are working together to
combat deforestation in Colorado.\textsuperscript{12} Through the course of some dialogue, hunters may encounter rationales for civil rights concerns of the homosexuals. The homosexuals may come to realize that hunting helps control the deer population and see some worth in the National Rifle Association (NRA).\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{Conclusion}

This chapter began by explaining why some democratic theorists view religiously-based activism as a potential danger to deliberative democracy. As I introduced in chapter 1 and discuss at length in chapter 5, the Christian Right in particular is viewed by some to be an intolerant movement harmful to American way of life. Here, I suggest that in fact the diversity within the Christian Right might produce some deliberative good.

In the final section of the chapter, I outlined why deliberation might be constrained within a social movement but might nevertheless exist within its walls and suggested how past research might help us think about what kinds of effects that may result. I argue that the Catholic-evangelical alliance within the Christian Right presents a unique venue to study the effects of cross-cutting exposure. Moreover, given the nature of the Christian Right, this should be a hard test of some of the expectations noted above, such as the claim that cross-cutting exposure can lead to improved opinion quality, a change of opinion, and greater political tolerance. I focus here on the latter two.

\textsuperscript{12} According to David Truman (1951) shared interests form the basis of interest groups, thus even when a group is not fully organized to address a common concern the shared interest provides the potential for cooperation and thus interaction to take place.

\textsuperscript{13} There is in fact an organized gay guns-right group, the Pink Pistols, which supports gun ownership for the purpose of self-defense. Members of the Northern Virginia chapter of the Pink Pistols reportedly visit the shooting range at NRA headquarters on a regular basis.
To test these effects, I replicate a survey-experiment design reported by Diana Mutz in a 2002 *American Political Science Review* article. The instrument does not produce a deliberative context per se; rather it seeks to test the effects of cross-cutting exposure only. The results presented in chapters 4 and 5 examine how exposure to Catholic rationales for opposing points of view affect evangelicals’ political attitudes. In chapter 4, I take up the question of whether such exposure influences opinion on public policy. I find that Catholic arguments in favor of lenient immigration policy and opposed to the death penalty generally do not persuade evangelicals to reconsider their attitude on these issues (though certain segments of the evangelical population may be persuaded on immigration in some cases). In chapter 5, I examine the question of how exposure influences political tolerance. Here, these same cross-cutting arguments on the death penalty and immigration appear to significantly affect tolerance levels. That is, evangelicals are more tolerant of disliked groups after encountering the Catholic arguments though this is moderated by the amount of previous contact with Catholics. The results suggest religiously-diverse networks might produce more tolerant citizens in some cases.
Chapter 4
Crossing Lines of Difference:
The Death Penalty, U.S. Immigration Policy and Attitude Change

As outlined in the previous chapters, evangelicals and Catholics are aware of their differences, both in terms of religious and political beliefs. In some cases, political operatives have chosen to disregard these distinctions and avoid cross-cutting conversations for the sake of unity. “Discussions like that would be counter-productive,” said one evangelical Protestant working at a conservative think tank with Protestant and Catholic colleagues. Indeed, many activists I spoke to view debate about such matters as a threat to collective action for it has the potential to reassert boundary lines between the religious traditions rather than maintain the line that currently makes them members of the same group, separating them from their less orthodox peers.

But there are instances when political cooperation has provided a venue in which participants organically encounter dissenting points of views. This can happen face-to-face in the context of political activism, or it can happen indirectly through media coverage of a “co-belligerent’s” stance on a separate issue. The issues of disagreement may not be at the forefront of the collective enterprise, nor are they necessarily issues of great salience to individual participants. Nevertheless, this leaves a wide range of significant policy matters on which Catholics and evangelicals could differ all the while maintaining their shared identity in the “culture wars.” These areas of difference are of interest because they hold the potential to enhance democratic values like tolerance and opinion quality as discussed in the previous chapter.
In this chapter, I explore the possibility that exposure to opposing viewpoints may result in attitude change. I empirically examine the effect of cross-cutting messages on policy preferences for evangelical Protestants. It is not my contention here to assert that a change in evangelicals’ policy preferences is necessarily a democratic “good,” much less give prominence to Catholic social teaching over the evangelical tradition. I do not equate persuasion with enlightenment.

Rather, it is my purpose here to investigate how diversity within a social movement, as small as it may be, might temper strongly held views expressed by the majority, in this case evangelicals. In this sense, I am most curious whether or not dissonant viewpoints have a moderating effect for this population. After encountering the rationales behind opposing viewpoints held by Catholics, are evangelicals less or more committed to their original viewpoint?

Over the course of interviews with activists and in light of the political orientation of each tradition, two issues emerge as well-suited for testing the persuasiveness of Catholic rationales for influencing evangelical Protestants’ attitudes: the death penalty and U.S. immigration policy. As discussed below, both issues feature the distinct ideological orientations of each religious tradition that highlight the conflict that may exist even within their political coalition. In order to understand the informational effects of cross-cutting exposure within a social movement, I conduct an experiment in which I expose politically-engaged evangelical Protestants to dissonant messages on these topics. Additionally, I vary the source of the dissonant message to address whether or not evangelicals find the messages persuasive independent of the
source. That is, do the same messages have a different effect if coming from a religious
group outside the political coalition? Or are Catholics uniquely suited to be the bearers
of cross-cutting messages that produce informational effects for evangelical Protestants?

Work on deliberative democracy suggests two possible informational effects of
cross-cutting messages. First, the areas of disagreement between evangelicals and
Catholics on the death penalty and U.S. immigration policy may produce updated policy
preferences; in other words, evangelicals may encounter Catholic rationales and be
persuaded to move their opinion in the corresponding direction. Alternatively, the cross-
cutting messages may produce a “boomerang” effect in which greater polarization
between the groups ensues. Feeling defensive in light of contradicting claims,
evergicals may be even more extreme in their opinion. The deliberation literature
overwhelming supports the first hypothesis (predicting persuasion); however, Barabas
(2004) finds that when a consensus in a group has not been reached strong-willed
citizens move in the opposite direction from the dominant message.¹ This chapter
explores these possibilities as they relate to our overall concern with religious
cooperation and opinion change.

¹ The literature on persuasion and framing effects supports Barabas’ findings. Counterattitudinal
arguments are often resisted by informed citizens and can produce what has been called a “boomerang”

effect (e.g. Johnson et al. 2004). This effect is more likely when the argument has to do with visceral
issues like the death penalty, an issue for which people are likely to hold strong beliefs. For example,
Peffley and Hurwitz (2006) find that white subjects are more supportive of the death penalty after
exposure to a racial message framing the death penalty as being unfair because most of the people who are
executed are African Americans. Moreover, studies find that failed persuasion attempts by elites can
strengthen predispositions. For example, if a person resists persuasion from a credible source and is able to
produce counterarguments, attitude certainty increases (Tormala and Petty 2004; Tormala, Clarkson, and
Petty 2006). If they resist persuasion but are unable to counterargue, attitude certainty decreases even
though the expressed attitude stays the same (Tormala, Clarkson, and Petty 2006).
Before turning to my empirical results, however, I provide a brief outline of evangelical and Catholic beliefs on the two policy areas that are the focus of my study. I do this to show how the groups differ on these issues as well as how the issues themselves differ in terms of elite attention. The chapter begins with an overview of how evangelicals and Catholics view the death penalty and where their attitudes conflict. I then do the same for immigration policy. The research design is introduced next, followed by the results section. In general, I find little evidence for attitude change at the aggregate level. Attitudes towards the death penalty appear relatively fixed, consistent with previous research on the issue. However, there is evidence to suggest that previous interaction with Catholics moderates the effect of the Catholic cue in the case of immigration policy. I conclude the chapter by discussing the implications of social interaction for source credibility.

Cross-cutting Messages and the Death Penalty

*Simple justice demanded Saddam Hussein be found guilty by his countrymen and executed in the manner that befits such a war criminal, by hanging rather than a firing squad.*

Richard Land  
President, Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission  
January 2, 2007\(^2\)

*For me, punishing a crime with another crime, which is what killing for vindication is, would mean that we are still at the point of demanding an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.*

Cardinal Renato Martino  
President, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace  
November 5, 2006\(^3\)

---


As these quotes from religious leaders illustrate, the death penalty is an issue on which Catholics and evangelicals clearly diverge. In fact, it may be the issue for which persuasion seems most unlikely. Evangelical leaders have routinely supported the use of capital punishment in the United States viewing it as a responsibility given to the state which God uses to administer justice here on earth.

When asked by Larry King about his thoughts on the death penalty in 2005, James Dobson of the evangelical organization Focus on the Family said, “I believe in the death penalty. I believe especially in those cases where egregious crimes have been committed, children have been raped and killed, I don’t know how you can allow those people to live.” Chuck Colson of Prison Fellowship Ministries is another evangelical who has forcefully spoken in favor of its use. A spiritual advisor to numerous death row inmates after serving prison time himself, Colson formerly opposed capital punishment but said in 2002 that he believes “the full range of biblical data weighs in its favor…..The Christian community is called upon to articulate standards of biblical justice, even when this may be unpopular.”

In contrast, Catholic teaching opposes capital punishment in nearly all cases (the exception being when the state has no other means to protect itself). The Catechism of

---

4 Transcript CNN 2005
5 Colson statement.
6 As is the case for many policy positions taken by the Catholic Church, not all Catholics in the United States agree with the Church’s opposition to the death penalty. Even Catholic Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia has said the 1995 papal encyclical is not binding on Catholics, and he does not find the death penalty immoral (Dart 2002). Cardinal Avery Dulles, a Jesuit theologian, has said it is necessary to end life in some cases. He supported the execution of Timothy McVeigh (Dart 2002). Thus it is possible
the Catholic Church states, “If … non-lethal means are sufficient to defend and protect
people's safety from the aggressor, authority will limit itself to such means, as these are
more in keeping with the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in
conformity to the dignity of the human person.”

Prior to the papacy of Pope John Paul II, the Catholic Church was more lenient on the matter, accepting the use of capital punishment as a deterrent. However, since 1995 when Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical Evangelium Vitae which placed the Church’s opposition to the death penalty as one component of a consistent “ethic of life,” opposition by Catholic leaders at least has become quite pronounced at least at the elite level and routinely featured in media accounts.

On numerous occasions Pope John Paul II pleaded with governors in the U.S. to grant clemency to death row inmates, including Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh who was nevertheless executed in June 2001. U.S. bishops, after having paid much attention to abortion and same-sex marriage in the 2004 election, launched a campaign to end the use of the death penalty in 2005. The campaign features a web site offering educational materials, papal statements, and testimonials of death row inmates later found to be innocent, all meant to encourage Catholics to advocate against capital punishment and support “life” in all its forms (Cooperman 2005).

that not all conversations between evangelicals and Catholics on this matters are cross-cutting given that not all Catholics agree with the Catechism on this point, just as not all evangelicals agree with certain evangelical elites and support the death penalty.

7 Catechism of the Catholic Church http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p3s2c2a5.htm
What is today generally regarded as the Catholic “pro-life” position (also known as the “seamless garment of life” ethic) opposition to the death penalty is viewed as necessarily consistent with opposition to abortion (see Bernardin 1983). The language itself resonates with pro-life activists across traditions that have come to view recent scientific advancements such as embryonic stem cell research and cloning not to mention euthanasia as threats to God’s design. However, evangelicals are slow to lump the death penalty into the same category. Evangelicals see a distinction between the life of an innocent baby and the life of a convicted felon, a point elaborated upon shortly.

Nevertheless, some observers believe evangelicals have been influenced by the rhetoric of the Catholic Church and are beginning to see opposition to the death penalty as consistent with opposition to abortion. According to Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of pro-life activities at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “There are many Protestants who’ve been great admirers of Pope John Paul II and his witness and have well-thumbed copies of his encyclical on the gospel of life, and have read it more carefully than Catholics have. And as a result, they have done more thinking on the death penalty, as well” (quoted in Goodstein 2005).

Others point to actions taken by Pat Robertson and the late Jerry Falwell as evidence that evangelicals are willing to reconsider their attitudes on this issue, at least when the guilty party expresses remorse. Both men sought clemency in 1998 for Karla Faye Tucker, a woman who converted to Christianity while on death row in Texas. Following Tucker’s execution, Christianity Today ran an editorial saying the legality of
capital punishment had “outlived its usefulness.” Nonetheless, research suggests views on the death penalty do not change easily, even for citizens that claim to be “pro-life.”

Public Opinion and Conflicting Religious Rationales

In many ways then the issue of capital punishment represents a “most difficult case.” Not only are views of capital punishment said to be relatively fixed, but evangelical Christians are significantly more supportive of capital punishment than the general population and thus this attitude goes unchallenged in their evangelical networks (Ruby 2007; Grasmick et al. 1992a; Grasmick et al. 1993). Since 1966, public support for the death penalty has remained above 50 percent and evangelical support neared 80 percent in 2006 (Ruby 2007). Supreme Court decisions questioning the legality of capital punishment and placing restrictions on its use have done little to decrease public opinion it its favor. [However, Baumgartner, DeBoef and Boydstun (2008) find that public support has declined since the late 1990s with the rise of DNA evidence proving inmates’ innocence, however the decline in support is not evident for the evangelical population. (See Appendix C for figure depicting trend in public support compared with evangelical Protestant support for the death penalty from 1974-2006.)]

---

8 http://www.christianityonline.com/ct/8t4/8t4015.html
http://www.deathpenaltyreligious.org/education/overview/christtoday.html

9 In Kimberly Cook’s (1998) study of what she calls “divided passions,” she finds that pro-life death penalty supporters are highly punitive and are unlikely to be persuaded by contradictory messages regarding the death penalty. Though Cook’s analysis is not restricted to evangelical Christians, her findings suggest that there is a high hurdle to overcome if conflicting arguments are going to persuade evangelicals to reconsider their opinions on this topic.

10 In fact, the court’s decision in Furman v. Georgia (1972) temporarily outlawing the death penalty ignited an upward trend in public opinion. In this case, the majority on the Supreme Court found that capital punishment was so “wantonly and freakishly imposed” that it violated the Constitution’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment. Just four years later, however, the court decided in Gregg v. Georgia (1976) that the state’s new laws regulating death penalty sentencing met Constitutional criteria, and capital
According to Grasmick and colleagues, the reason why fundamentalist Protestants are punitive has something to do with their attribution style – they are more inclined to blame the individual than society for any wrongdoing. In other words, orthodox Protestants are more inclined to believe that crime is a result of character rather than unfortunate or unjust circumstances (Grasmick and McGill 1994). According to these authors, this attribution style is consistent with the typical understanding of salvation within fundamentalist Protestantism – an individual’s salvation is determined by their choices and their behavior. Moreover, orthodox evangelicals tend to believe that the death penalty respects *Imago Dei*, that is, as a society we affirm the sacredness of life by administering the most extreme form of punishment to those who take it. In addition, it is not an individual that administers the death penalty, rather it is a governmental authority instituted by God.

Catholic arguments against the use of the death penalty by society are known to feature forgiveness. Rationales against the death penalty can easily find roots in the

---

11 In earlier work, Lupfer and Wald (1985) do not find evidence to suggest that religious orientation affects attribution style.

12 Many evangelical theologians would argue that it is not necessary to interpret the Bible literally to find a justification for capital punishment in Scripture. Scholars point to evidence in the New Testament that suggests Jesus Christ endorsed the use of the death penalty by society. They say that Jesus never questioned Pilate’s authority to sentence him to death; He only said that his authority had been given to him by God (House 1997). Theologians also point to the fact that even though the Mosaic law (which affirms retributive justice) is no longer binding, the Noahic law which advocates the same principle is still in force (Yoder 1991).
Bible as well and might explain why Catholics, mainline Protestants and even a sizable minority of evangelical Protestants oppose the practice. The basis of these claims tend to revolve around the sixth commandment, “Thou shall not kill” (Exodus 20:13).

Theologians that oppose the death penalty argue that God is the giver and taker of life. Also, they point to the rising number of exonerations that have taken place as a result of DNA evidence as justification for outlawing capital punishment.

This chapter is a study of persuasion and attempts to assess how evangelical attitudes may change as a result of exposure to rationales for these dissonant viewpoints on the death penalty – from a group within their social movement and a group from outside of their movement.

**Cross-cutting Messages and U.S. Immigration Policy**

The issue of immigration differs from the dynamics surrounding evangelical opinion and capital punishment. On immigration, evangelical groups have been “conspicuously mum,” providing few cues for evangelical citizens (MacDonald 2006). Unlike the death penalty – for which evangelical reasoning was clearly conveyed by evangelical leaders and generally coherent – immigration policy was not often discussed by evangelical leaders before, during or after its reign on the political agenda in the summer of 2007. This likely had something to do with the absence of much writing on the topic by evangelical theologians. At the very least, two principles with religious underpinnings seemed to compete with one another for evangelical attention – respect for law and order and compassion for the stranger.
The silence from evangelicals was also in large part due to a lack of consensus among leaders. Media coverage featured a split within the evangelical community along ethnic lines (Burke 2007; Gorski 2006; Cooperman 2006; Lochhead 2006). Hispanic leaders criticized prominent evangelical political groups, including Focus on the Family, for ignoring what they saw as a “family” issue. Many white evangelical groups explained their silence by saying illegal immigration was simply not a priority and cited same-sex marriage and abortion as graver concerns.

Additionally, Republicans in the U.S. Congress pressed their evangelical allies to oppose legislation that would offer illegal immigrants a pathway to citizenship. Some Christian conservative groups, such as the Eagle Forum and the Christian Coalition, tentatively sided with the law-and-order majority in the Republican Party and spoke in favor of increased border security, viewing national boundaries as a biblical principle (Cooperman 2006; Kiely 2007). In the meantime, a few evangelical denominations created programs that would help aid illegal immigrants by meeting their physical needs while the denominations refrained from direct participation in the national debate over specific legislation.\(^\text{13}\) Generally speaking, the evangelical response to illegal immigration reform was marked by relative silence with underlying discord.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^{13}\) The Baptist General Convention and Southern Baptist Convention are two evangelical denominations that instituted these programs. Richard Land, a leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, was the notable exception to the absence of evangelical leaders participating in the national debate. He stood next to U.S. senators when a comprehensive immigration reform bill was announced in March 2007. Though supportive of the more lenient immigration bill, Land was careful to not dismiss the rule of law and repeatedly called for more secure borders. He also admitted that he was “a little bit ahead” of his denomination’s rank and file members (Kiely 2007).

\(^{14}\) A small number of evangelical and conservative Catholic leaders, including Manuel Miranda, Paul Weyrich, Don Wildmon, Gary Bauer, and Lou Sheldon, claimed to have reached a compromise position.
The information environment at least suggests that evangelical opinions regarding immigration are not as strongly held, or perhaps aren’t as strictly tied, to religious beliefs and evangelical identification as are attitudes towards the death penalty. Their opposition to more lenient immigration reform may have been a function of their partisanship more than religious conviction. If evangelical citizens were looking for explanation from their evangelical leaders as to how to think about the immigration issue in religious terms, they didn’t find it.

Previous research suggests that in the absence of an immediate group cue, religious citizens in their search for information will consider adopting positions espoused by another religious group – one that is similar in political orientation on some matters but not necessarily all (Welch and Leege 1991). For evangelical Protestants, as this project argues, the Catholic Church – as a pro-life, pro-traditional marriage on immigration in the spring of 2007, but the coalition (“Families First for Immigration”) went largely unnoticed by national and religious media outlets. The group had no web site, no email address or full-time staff. The compromise consisted of granting citizenship to those already in the country illegally who were related to U.S. citizens while also amending the birthright citizenship provision in the 14th amendment (see Sinderbrand 2007).

Survey responses from the sample of evangelical Protestants used in the following analysis confirms this hypothesis. Sixty-seven percent of respondents said their religious beliefs mattered “a great deal” to their attitudes toward the death penalty but only 45 percent of respondents said their religious beliefs mattered “a great deal” to their attitudes on immigration policy. The disparity suggests that attitudes towards immigration may indeed be more malleable than those towards capital punishment. Moreover, the sample of evangelical Protestants used for this analysis was even more supportive of the death penalty than evangelicals sampled in national surveys. Ninety-one percent of evangelical Protestants in the control group favored the death penalty for murder compared with 80 percent of evangelical Protestants sampled in the 2006 General Social Survey of the American public.

Welch and Leege (1991) find that the Christian Right social movement serves as a reference group for certain Catholics when the Catholic Church’s position on an issue is unclear and the evangelical message is clear. The authors find that Catholics that exhibit evangelical-style devotional life are more likely to hold the “evangelical” position on such issues like secular humanism, the use of boycotts against companies, support for prayer in school, support for teaching creationism in public schools, and the importance of allowing religious beliefs to shape voting behavior. On all of these issues the Christian Right took clear stances on while the Catholic Church refrained from the public debate or at the very least, sent contradictory messages.
institution – has perhaps become one such group. Therefore, immigration emerges as an easier test case for cross-cutting messages to be persuasive. We know that weak opinions are more likely to be affected by cross-cutting messages than strongly-held opinions (Barabas 2004).

Moreover, there is some anecdotal evidence to suggest that immigration was a matter of some debate amongst Christian Right members. One evangelical woman recounted to me that when she began working at her organization in 2004, she assumed that she would agree with most everyone that worked there. Soon thereafter she met some Catholics that held different views on immigration policy, and she was surprised by the discussion that ensued from a difference of opinion on border security. She said she didn’t change her mind as a result of their comments questioning the importance of border security, but was surprised to encounter different points of view in this context.

But even if evangelicals didn’t encounter these messages in face-to-face contact with Catholics, they likely came across these views in the media. Due to the amount of media coverage featuring Catholic perspectives on illegal immigration and the clarity of that message, evangelicals’ consideration of the pro-immigrant, religious rationale is even more likely. The Catholic Church in America generally favored easing the restrictions on citizenship for illegal immigrants in the name of social justice. Many

---

18 An analysis of news coverage confirms that Catholic perspectives on immigration policy were more likely to be featured in news articles on immigrants or immigration policy than were evangelical perspectives. Articles on immigration in the Washington Post and the New York Times between July 2006 and July 2007 included some derivation of the word “Catholic” 485 times and “Evangelical” 136 times. Though this initial analysis offers no assessment of the quality and quantity of coverage beyond a single mention of the term, it at the very least it confirms the predominance of the Catholic cue.
Catholic elites defended the position by citing a passage in the gospel of Matthew in which Jesus tells his disciples to “welcome the stranger…for what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.” Support for pro-immigrant policy came from Catholic organizations at the national, state and local levels.

In light of the dominance of Catholic rationales on immigration reform and the relative obscurity of an evangelical frame, it seems likely that dissonant viewpoints would generally have to compete with partisanship (Republican) more immediately than an evangelical legacy in an effort to change policy preferences on this issue. In this case, it is possible that immigration provided the ideal case for Catholic rationales to take hold considering the absence of evangelical consonant viewpoints being readily available.

Public Opinion and Conflicting Religious Rationales

Studies have repeatedly shown that many native-born Americans are hostile towards immigrants (Reimers 1998; Zolberg 2006). Generally speaking, we know that Americans that oppose more lenient immigration policy do so because they think illegal immigrants pose a threat to the economy and cultural unity (Hanson 2005; Huntington

---

19 Matthew 25: 40-45.
20 The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) issued many press releases stating their position on legislation before Congress; they opposed the Secure Fence Act of 2006 which would authorize construction of a fence between the U.S. and Mexico and favored legislation that would provide illegal immigrants the opportunity to become U.S. citizens. Numerous state conferences also spoke out on behalf of immigration reform. The Michigan Catholic Conference released a statement urging the U.S. government to embrace immigrants saying the status quo was immoral (“Michigan Catholic Bishops Release Statement Calling for Prompt Federal Immigration Reform.” April 29, 2007). Individual Catholic figures also contributed to the public dialogue. Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles was particularly outspoken on the issue of immigration throughout the time period and asked his parishioners to fast and pray for the plight of illegal immigrants. Finally, a significant number of Catholic groups providing social services, such as Catholic Charities USA, cooperated with the USCCB to form the Justice for Immigrants Campaign which took similar positions as those noted above.
Unfortunately, to date, scholars have rarely controlled for religious affiliation of the respondents in their analysis of immigration attitudes much less investigate the effect of religious messages on attitude formation. However, we have some indication of religious group distinctions by looking at polling data. According to a 2006 survey conducted by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, the three largest religious traditions in the nation – Catholics, Mainline Protestants and evangelical Protestants – are internally split when it comes to immigrants and immigration policy. A little over a majority in each tradition view immigrants as a burden to society because they take jobs, housing and healthcare.

Of the three traditions, white evangelicals are the most likely to view immigrants as a burden and as a threat to cultural unity. Sixty-three percent of white evangelical Protestants say immigrants “threaten traditional American customs and values” compared with 48 percent of the population as a whole. White evangelicals are also the most conservative when it comes to immigration policy relative to other groups, however

21 Studies find the more educated, liberal, politically interested, young and trusting are found to be the most supportive of immigrants and liberal immigration policy (Burns and Gimpel 2000; Citrin et al. 1997; Putnam 2000; Scheve and Slaughter 2001; Ha and Oliver 2006). Also, economic concerns, commitment to the rule of law and out-group bias directed towards particular ethnic groups make one less supportive of policy that is favorable to illegal immigrants (Lee and Ottati 2002; Lee, Ottati and Hussain 2001; Citrin et al. 1997). Moreover, proximity to foreign-born residents influences attitudes towards immigration policy, albeit in different ways. Citizens living near Asians tend to be less prejudice towards immigrants than those living near Latinos (Ha and Oliver 2006).

22 Ha and Oliver (2006) include a dummy variable to compare subjects with a Christian affiliation with all other respondents. The authors identify Christians as those claiming a Protestant, Catholic or “Other Christian” affiliation. Despite failing to make any attempt to separate Christians by orientation or denomination, they nonetheless find that Christians favor a more restrictive border policy than do non-Christians.

the majority of evangelicals as well as the majority of Catholics and Mainline Protestants favor allowing undocumented immigrants to gain legal status and the possibility of citizenship in the future.

Significant to note, the analysis finds church attendance to be an intervening variable. That is, across traditions those that attend church most frequently are less negative toward immigrants and more supportive of certain policies favorable towards illegal immigrants. The author, Gregory Smith, speculates that the most religious, regardless of tradition, may in fact be responding to religious rationales in the public sphere, most of which favor liberal immigration policy. The assumption being that these individuals are the most religiously engaged and for whom religious messages, albeit cross-cutting, would be the most salient.

Experimental work has attempted to ascertain the degree to which immigration attitudes are dependent upon the information environment, and has found elite messages to be relevant to attitude formation. For example, the degree to which racial stereotypes influence attitudes towards immigration policy is dependent upon the framing of the issue, whether it is discussed in economic or ethical terms (Domke et al. 1999). Moreover, messages from elites may trigger emotional responses like anxiety that also affect how an individual interprets immigration policy (Gadarian and Albertson 2007). At the very least, public opinion regarding immigration appears susceptible to changes in the information context.

The study at hand attempts to empirically examine the effect of Catholic pro-immigrant arguments on evangelical Protestant attitudes. Do evangelicals respond
positively to religious, albeit liberal, messages on immigration? The predisposition challenged by these messages does not appear to be as staunchly held as pro-death penalty attitudes. In other words, there may be something closer to a “blank slate” when it comes to immigration opinion. Furthermore, political psychology research suggests that ambivalence makes attitudes less stable (Basinger and Lavine 2005). For the most part, evangelical teaching does not address immigration directly and few evangelical leaders have spoken on its behalf. In fact, for some evangelicals without a predisposed attitude, these messages may not immediately be cross-cutting and more readily be persuasive. Therefore, I expect the effect of exposure to Catholic rationales on immigration attitudes to be greater than the effect on death penalty attitudes.

Research Design

The Experiment

To empirically examine the effect of cross-cutting messages on evangelicals’ attitudes towards immigration and the death penalty, I conducted an experiment using a mail survey (See Appendix D for full instrument). Subjects were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions in which I manipulated their exposure to views expressed by religious leaders. That is, I controlled whether or not a subject received a consonant or a cross-cutting message, and in the case of a cross-cutting message, I varied the source (see Table 4.1).
Table 4.1: Experimental Treatments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experimental Condition</th>
<th>Stimulus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catholic treatment</td>
<td>Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by a Catholic leader opposing the death penalty. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ The death penalty is unnecessary and painfully reminds us that our model of society bears the stamp of the culture of death, and is therefore in opposition to the Gospel message.

_____ Our society has the means of protecting itself, without denying criminals the chance to reform.

_____ Punishment and imprisonment have meaning only if they serve the rehabilitation of the individual by offering those who have made a mistake an opportunity to reflect and to change their lives in order to be fully reintegrated into society and receive forgiveness.

Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by a Catholic leader on immigration policy. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.”

_____ We should welcome immigrants from Latin America to North America because they often bring with them a cultural and religious heritage which is rich in Christian elements.

_____ In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus calls upon us to “welcome the stranger,” for “what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.” (Mt. 25:40-45).

_____ Studies show that immigrant workers are employed in jobs in industries that do not attract sufficient U.S. workers. Without an “earned legalization” program, the United States will have a worker shortage.

| Mainline Protestan treatment | Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by a Mainline Protestant leader opposing the death penalty. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.” |

99
### Same Rationales as Above

Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by a Mainline Protestant leader on immigration policy. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.”

### Evangelical Treatment

Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by an Evangelical leader in favor of the death penalty. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Persuasiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Justice in God's eyes requires that the response to an offense—whether against God or against humanity—be proportionate.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital punishment is an essential element of justice. On the whole, the full range of biblical data weighs in its favor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy extended to offenders whose guilt is certain yet simply ignored creates a moral travesty which helps pave the way for collapse of the entire social order.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please read the following excerpts of a speech given by an Evangelical leader on immigration policy. Even if you don’t agree with the position taken by the speaker, number the statements 1 to 3 in order of persuasiveness. Give the statement you find most persuasive a “1” and give the statement you find the least persuasive a “3.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Persuasiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National borders should be respected. That's a biblical principle. Guest-worker programs would reward lawbreakers.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mass entry of 10 million illegal aliens during the last 5 years is grievously unfair to our millions of high-school dropouts who desperately need a job to get started building a life.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We have a right to expect the government to fulfill its divinely ordained mandate to punish those who break the laws and reward those who do not (Romans 13).</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Control

No stimulus
I was particularly interested in evangelicals’ responsiveness to pro-immigrant and anti-death penalty arguments expressed by a Catholic as opposed to a mainline Protestant. Given the fact that in today’s political climate, evangelicals are more likely to agree with Catholics on issues most important to them than with mainline Protestants, I expected a Catholic leader (member of the in-group) to have greater credibility than a mainline Protestant leader (member of the out-group). Therefore, two conditions feature the same content but the content is attributed to different leaders (Catholic or mainline Protestant) depending on the condition. The content itself is taken from quotes from Catholic leaders, but resembled arguments made by mainline Protestants. My expectation is that evangelicals will perceive mainline Protestants as a political out-group and not be persuaded by the argument in that instance.24 In the third condition, subjects were exposed to consonant rationales expressed by evangelical leaders. Finally, the fourth condition served as a control group and included no stimulus.

For the three experimental conditions, the stimulus was embedded in a survey and came after a series of general questions on political matters and social networks and was followed by another set of general questions which included my dependent variables. All of the content used in the stimuli came from quotes from actual religious leaders featured in media reports at the time (see Appendix E for list of sources). This was done to

---

24 Not much is known regarding how evangelicals interpret the term “mainline Protestant.” A small number of evangelicals consider themselves to be members of congregations in the mainline tradition, therefore they might be favorably disposed to a mainline Protestant leader. Also, I do not know whether evangelicals perceive mainline Protestants as part of their group (“Protestant”) or are aware of the theological and political distinctions between evangelicals and mainline Protestants. Although this might limit my ability to determine the effect of the Catholic cue separate from the cross-cutting message, I suspect the characteristics of my sample to minimize this concern. The sample used here is highly engaged and politically knowledgeable and thus I expect they likely know the difference between evangelical and mainline Protestants (see Smidt 2007).
replicate the actual information environment as much as possible thereby increasing the validity of the findings.

The experimental design used here replicates a design employed by Diana Mutz to examine cross-cutting social networks (see Mutz 2002). The goal of the experiment was to encourage subjects to fully engage the arguments made by religious leaders regardless of their interest in the speaker or their affinity for the position. Therefore, like Mutz, I asked subjects to rank statements in order of persuasiveness to increase the likelihood that the rationales for what may be a consonant or dissonant message relative to their preexisting views are more likely to be systematically processed.25 Following the stimulus, subjects were asked to respond to a number of questions regarding their political views, including views concerning illegal immigrants and immigration policy and the death penalty.

*The Sample*

I conducted the experiment by mail using a sample of donors to federal political action committees associated with the Christian Right social movement. This is a purposive sample in that I want to test the effect of messages on a politically-engaged evangelical audience that might be the most receptive to the idea of Catholics as political partners; therefore, it is not necessary to argue that this sample is representative of the entire evangelical Christian Right community. Nevertheless, a similar sample has been used elsewhere as a proxy for Christian Right activists and was found to not differ

---

25 Mutz exposed subjects to 15 rationales for opposing viewpoints on three issues (five rationales each). I expose my subjects to six rationales for opposing viewpoints on two issues (three rationales each). Mutz’s experiment was designed to test the effect of cross-cutting messages on political tolerance. Here, I examine attitude change as well as tolerance.
significantly from actual members of movement organizations (Green, Conger and Guth 2007).

The sample was randomly selected from lists of donors to the following political action committees: Campaign for Working Families, Concerned Women for America, Eagle Forum, Government is Not God, Madison Project, National Right to Life, Susan B. Anthony List and various state-level right to life organizations. These groups differ in their size and the scope of their agendas, but they are all generally committed to traditional family values and pro-life policy initiatives. Religious conservatives are their primary donor base.

The sample was surveyed by mail loosely following the Tailored Design Method (Dillman 2007). A pre-notice postcard alerting them to their selection for study was sent five days before subjects were sent a 15-page questionnaire with a cover letter identifying the researcher and asking them to share their views on political issues as “pro-family” citizens. Subjects were provided an email address and toll-free phone number to call if they had questions. No financial incentive was offered. One mailing in April 2007 produced 720 useable returns – a response rate of 50 percent (excluding undeliverable mail). An additional mailing eight weeks later to 300 randomly selected non-respondents increased the response rate to 55 percent. This yielded 426 evangelical respondents.26 Fifty-five percent of respondents were male, 71 percent were college-educated, 35 were percent from the south, 48 percent were retired, and 50 percent of the respondents were older than 65 (see Appendix F for complete summary of sample characteristics).

---

26 Consistent with previous research, evangelicals were identified based on religious tradition (denominational affiliation). For those denominations that include both evangelicals and Mainline Protestants, evangelicals were identified based on self-identification, belief in the Bible and church attendance (see Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Smidt, Kellstedt and Guth 2008).
Randomization across the experimental conditions was successful. That is, I found no significant differences between subjects assigned to any one condition in terms of political ideology, participation, religious affiliation and behavior, amount of interaction with Catholics, or any other relevant characteristic. In particular, I found no significant differences between subjects across conditions in terms of perspective-taking ability, a trait that has been shown to moderate the effect of cross-cutting messages (Mutz 2002). Therefore, I can be reasonably confident that any differences between groups are a result of exposure to the stimulus.

Because the key research questions relate to differences across experimental groups, it is not necessary to make claims regarding the representativeness of my sample. But at the very least, because my sample is particularly engaged and educated, one should be careful when attempting to generalize the results found here to the larger evangelical population. It is difficult to know how the demographics of my sample might mediate the effects found here. Yet one could argue that if experimental effects are found with such an engaged and educated sample, then greater effects might be found elsewhere. On the other hand, these evangelicals may be the ones most likely to view Catholics as credible sources of political information given their alliance in American politics and therefore smaller effects would be found amongst those less politically aware.

Hypotheses

Given the warm relations between evangelicals and Catholics, I do expect the rationales attributed to a Catholic leader (in-group member) will hold some weight for this evangelical sample. I expect evangelicals support for the death penalty and opposition to lenient immigration policy will decrease as a result of exposure to anti-
capital punishment and pro-immigrant view points from a Catholic leader (in short, attitudes will move in the liberal direction). Given the increasing distance between evangelicals and mainline Protestants both in terms of theology and politics, I expect evangelicals to interpret the same rationales differently when attributed to a mainline Protestant leader (out-group member). I expect this treatment to have a polarizing or “boomerang” effect and trigger evangelicals to “dig in their heels” so to speak and reassert the legitimacy of their predisposition (attitudes will move in the conservative direction). This hypothesis is based on findings by Barabas (2004) which suggest that strong-opinionated citizens are likely to push back from counter-arguments as well as evidence reported by Druckman (2001) that suggest citizens reject arguments from less credible sources. For those evangelical Protestants in the evangelical treatment, I do not expect great change. I expect them to already be familiar with these rationales, and I see little reason why they might grow more attached to their predispositions in light of already known information. Rather, this serves as an alternative baseline to the control condition from which to assess the effect of the cross-cutting messages.

Finally, I expect more pronounced change for views towards immigration policy for the reasons outlined above. I do not expect evangelicals to have as well-established opinions on this issue given the absence of discussion within the tradition as well as recent entrance of the issue on the political agenda. Figure 4.1 is a visual depiction of the expected effects of the experimental conditions relative to the control. The size of the arrows is meant to illustrate the size of effect.
Figure 4.1: Predicted Effects of Experimental Treatments on Support for Lenient Immigration Policy

White Evangelical Support for Lenient Immigration Policy

- Effect of in-group (Catholic) dissonant message
- Effect of out-group (Mainline Protestant) dissonant message

White Evangelical Support for Death Penalty

- Effect of out-group (mainline Protestant) dissonant message
- Effect of in-group (Catholic) dissonant message

Results

Results for the Death Penalty

First, it is worth comparing how evangelical Protestants responded to the anti-death penalty rationales when they were attributed to a Catholic leader versus a mainline Protestant leader. These two treatments included the exact same rationales and only differed in terms of the source. The experiment asked subjects to rank the rationales in order of persuasiveness. If evangelicals consider one group more credible than the other, then they might find certain statements more persuasive coming from a Catholic than a
mainline Protestant. Table 4.2 reports the percentage of respondents ranking each statement a “1” (most persuasive) by source.

Table 4.2: Percent of White Evangelical Protestants Ranking Statement “1” (Most Persuasive) by Experimental Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Catholic Treatment</th>
<th>Mainline Protestant Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The death penalty is unnecessary and painfully reminds us that our model of society bears the stamp of the culture of death, and is therefore in opposition to the Gospel message.</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our society has the means of protecting itself, without denying criminals the chance to reform.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punishment and imprisonment have meaning only if they serve the rehabilitation of the individual by offering those who have made a mistake an opportunity to reflect and to change their lives in order to be fully reintegrated into society and receive forgiveness.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Totals do not equal 100 for either treatment group due to a number of subjects selecting to rank each statement “3,” apparently not finding any one statement to be more persuasive than the others.

In this first test of the Catholic cue, I find little effect. Respondents were no more likely to find any one particular statement more persuasive when attributed to a Catholic (member of the in-group) than a mainline Protestant (member of the out-group). In both cases, the majority of respondents found the final statement which featured rehabilitation and forgiveness the most persuasive. It is also important to note that a number of evangelicals in each treatment group apparently found no rationale more persuasive than
the others and indicate this fact by ranking each statement a “3;” 11 percent of subjects in the Catholic condition and 12 percent of respondents in the mainline Protestant condition did this. The sizable group of dissenters in both groups may suggest evangelicals maybe did not find these arguments all that convincing which obviously has implications for how persuasive they may be (Chong and Druckman 2007).

Table 4.2 tells us little about whether or not respondents actually adjusted their attitude in light of exposure to these cross-cutting messages. Because I am interested in evangelicals’ exposure to Catholic rationales and then subsequent attitude change, the survey-experiment included five questions meant to assess the respondent’s support for capital punishment in a variety of circumstances. Figure 4.2 reports the mean response to each question by experimental conditions (1=strongly favor death penalty).

**Figure 4.2: Support for the Death Penalty by Experimental Treatment**

![Figure 4.2: Support for the Death Penalty by Experimental Treatment](chart)

(a) Catholic treatment and Evangelical treatment differ at p<.1 (one-tailed test)
(b) Mainline Protestant treatment and Control differ at p<.1 (two-tailed)
(c) Evangelical treatment differ from Control and Mainline Protestant treatments at p<.1 (two-tailed)

---

27 Removing these individuals from my study would not change the experimental results in anyway.
Overall, the results lend minimal support to my hypotheses. In only one case does the Catholic treatment appear to decrease support for the death penalty (juveniles) relative to another treatment (evangelical condition). But it is significant to note that the mainline Protestant treatment – with the exact same rationales – did not produce the same effect. Moreover, the mainline Protestant treatment actually increases philosophical support for the death penalty relative to the control in one instance. Thus there is at least some evidence that the effect of cross-cutting messages is mediated by the source of the message. The evangelical treatment – a consonant message – increased support for the death penalty for only one question. I find no experimental effects overall if I collapse these questions into one single scale (analysis not shown). In sum, at the aggregate level, the experimental effects are few.

Interaction Effects: Does Age or Previous Contact with Catholics Matter?

Given the generational shift that has occurred in evangelical-Catholic relations (investigated in chapter 2), it is worthwhile to examine how the age of a respondent might moderate the effect of the experimental treatments. Younger evangelicals are more likely to have contact with Catholics and perhaps they are more likely to consider the merits of a Catholic argument as well. As discussed in chapter 2, Catholic mobility and

---

28 I use a one-tailed test of significance because I have set expectations for the direction of the effects. Given the small sample size, I report significant differences at the p<.1 level.

29 Running the same analysis with control variables produced no discernable difference. Moreover, excluding the evangelical condition and running an ANOVA to test differences across the remaining three conditions found no significant results.

30 In fact, many individual-level factors have been shown to moderate the effect of elite messages on citizens’ attitudes. In analyses not shown, I test numerous variables of interest, including religiosity and political involvement. Given the nature of my sample, too little variation exists in many of these variables which likely prevent me from accurately testing their effect here.
assimilation has increased the likelihood that evangelicals and Catholics will have contact with one another.

Before examining how age and contact with Catholics might mediate responsiveness to the Catholic cue, I use a battery of questions concerning contact with members of other faiths included in the survey of evangelical elites to examine whether or not younger evangelicals are in fact more likely to report interacting with Catholics than older evangelicals. Six questions asked respondents how regularly they discussed religion, politics or important matters with a member of a designated religious tradition and how many members of that faith they had as close friends, neighbors or co-workers. Combining the responses to these six questions, Figure 4.3 displays an “amount of interaction” with Catholics score and an “amount of interaction” with mainline Protestants score for purposes of comparison by age.

---

31 The six items were highly correlated (Cronbach’s alpha = .840). The items loaded onto one factor component (Eigenvalue 3.429, variance explained 57 percent).
Figure 4.3: Evangelical Interaction with Catholics and mainline Protestants by Age

Source: PAC donor survey, 2007
Amount of interaction scale based on six questions concerning how many Catholic or mainline Protestant friends/neighbors/coworkers respondent has and how often respondent discusses religion/politics/important matters with Catholics or mainline Protestants: 4= “many/often”; 3= “some/sometimes”; 2= “a few/rarely”; 1= “none/never”

Though the data points are raw and consequently quite scattered, the trend lines clearly demonstrate that while older evangelicals do not differ dramatically in terms of their contact with mainline Protestants relative to younger evangelicals, they are much less likely to report having contact with Catholics than are younger evangelicals. Thus it is not just a matter of older evangelicals being socially isolated; their isolation is specific to Catholics.

Theoretically we would expect that the nature of the relationship one has with the source of a dissonant message, moderates the effect of cross-cutting exposure on political
attitudes (Mutz 2002). This finding comports with reference group theory which suggests that the degree to which a group serves as a reference group for an individual is contingent upon the degree of similarity the individual perceives between themselves and the group, the degree to which the group’s values and beliefs are clear and the degree to which an individual comes in contact with group members (Bock et. al 1983; Merton and Rossi 1968). The literature on source credibility discussed in chapter 3 also suggests that elites deemed as likeable and credible are more likely to be persuasive.

Thus, one might expect that previous contact with Catholic might make respondents more likely to find the Catholic leader credible or at least increase likeability. And younger evangelicals are more likely to have such contact. On the other hand, those evangelicals that encounter Catholics very often and have a high amount of contact with Catholics may perceive themselves to be in a minority; they may feel threatened by the number of Catholics in their social context and thus be more resilient to persuasion. There is the possibility that the relationship between contact with Catholics and affinity for Catholics is non-linear.

However an analysis comparing experimental effects across age groups and an analysis comparing effects across the amount of contact with Catholic reveal no significant experimental effects (analysis not shown). No matter the age or amount of previous interaction with Catholics, evangelicals in my sample were not persuaded by the Catholic arguments on the death penalty.\textsuperscript{32} But it is also significant to note that the stimulus did not produce a boomerang effect either.

\textsuperscript{32} Younger respondents did differ from older respondents in terms of their support for the death penalty for juveniles. For this question only, the Catholic treatment did appear to slightly decrease support for the death penalty from younger respondents relative to the control.
In sum, evangelicals support the death penalty and are unlikely to be talked out of it even by Catholic religious rationales in favor of the opposite view. My findings support the notion that attitudes towards the death penalty are visceral and difficult to move.

*Results for U.S. Immigration Policy*

I expect the experimental effects on immigration attitudes to be more significant than the results for the death penalty given the absence of an evangelical cue at the elite level. Again, I expect that the in-group dissonant message (Catholic treatment) will make evangelicals more supportive of lenient policy while the out-group dissonant message (mainline Protestant) treatment will have the opposite effect.

To begin, it is once more worth comparing how evangelical Protestants responded to the pro-immigrant rationales when they were attributed to a Catholic leader versus a mainline Protestant leader. I report the percentage of evangelicals ranking each statement most persuasive – “1” – in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3: Percent of White Evangelical Protestants Ranking Statement “1” (Most Persuasive) by Experimental Treatment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Catholic Treatment</th>
<th>Mainline Protestant Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We should welcome immigrants from Latin America to North America because they often bring with them a cultural and religious heritage which is rich in Christian elements.</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus calls upon us to “welcome the stranger,” for “what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.” (Mt. 25:40-45).</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Studies show that immigrant workers are employed in jobs in industries that do not attract sufficient U.S. workers. Without an “earned legalization” program, the United States will have a worker shortage.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Totals do not equal 100 for either treatment group due to a number of subjects selecting to rank each statement “3,” apparently not finding any one statement to be more persuasive than the others.
* Significant difference between treatment groups, p<.1, one-tailed test.

While the differences across treatment groups are not for the most part statistically significant, the substantive differences are suggestive. It is interesting that the plurality of evangelicals in the Catholic condition found the passage from the Gospel of Matthew to be the most persuasive argument in favor of pro-immigrant policy, while the plurality of evangelicals in the mainline Protestant found the most secular rationale – worker shortage – to be the most persuasive. As I explained earlier, evangelical Protestants are more likely to view Catholics as fellow traditionalists, and thus religious cross-cutting messages appear at least in this case to be more persuasive coming from a Catholic – a political in-
group – then a mainline Protestant. Again, a number of evangelicals in each treatment group apparently found no rationale more persuasive than the others and, disregarding instructions, ranked each statement a “3;” 9 percent of subjects in the Catholic condition and 11 percent of respondents in the mainline Protestant condition did this.

Attitudes towards Immigration Policy

Next, I investigate how the effect of religious messages and messengers matter for views on immigration policy. At first glance, the stimuli had no effect on matters of public policy. The dependent variable is a measure combining three immigration policy questions (Cronbach’s alpha = .645). Figure 4.4 reports the mean level of support for lenient policy by experimental condition.

---

33 Immigration index based on agree/disagree responses to three statements: “The federal government should spend more money on border security to prevent illegal immigration;” “Illegal immigrants already here should be granted temporary worker status;” “The United States should make it easier for illegal immigrants to become citizens of the United States.”
Even after being exposed to cross-cutting messages, these white evangelical Protestants were no more likely to disagree that more federal funds should be spent on border security and were no more likely to agree that worker-status or citizenship should be granted to illegal immigrants. The consonant message attributed to an evangelical Protestant had no effect as well. Thus, at the aggregate level, I find no evidence of issue attitude change and no evidence that the influence of a message depends on its source.\textsuperscript{34}

\textit{Interaction Effects: Does Age or Previous Contact with Catholics Matter for Immigration Attitudes?}

As I did for the death penalty, I examine whether or not age and contact with Catholics mediate the effect of the treatments. I first examine age and find that

\textsuperscript{34} Running the same analysis with control variables produced no discernable difference. Moreover, excluding the evangelical condition and running an ANOVA to test differences across the remaining three conditions found no significant results.
evangelicals in my sample – regardless of age – opposed lenient policy and the treatments had little effect for any age group.

Though contact with Catholics did not mediate the experimental effects on death penalty attitudes, I reexamine that variable here. Contact may have a more direct effect on immigration attitudes given the fact that immigration was on the public agenda during the time immediately preceding the survey in 2007. Perhaps the topic came up in conversation with Catholics or perhaps evangelicals encountered Catholic messages which led them to associate their Catholic peers with a more liberal position such as the one advocated by the USCCB and other Catholic elites.

Again, the assumption is that realizing that someone you like and with whom you regularly associate with views something differently than you do, you might reconsider your own attitude toward an issue. Using the same six separate survey items that measure how often respondents discuss “important matters,” “government, elections and politics” and “matters of religion” with Catholics and how many Catholics they have as close friends, neighbors and co-workers, I create a 3-point scale based these items. I examine how the Catholic stimulus may affect evangelicals’ evaluation of illegal immigration policy differently depending on the amount of discussion and contact they report having with Catholics. The data in Figure 4.5 indicate that the degree to which evangelicals interact with Catholics affects how likely they are to heed a political argument made by a Catholic leader. For comparison sake, I include the mainline Protestant condition in the analysis but for simplicity, I remove the evangelical treatment from the analysis since it looks the control.

35 Low contact N=111; Medium contact N=123; High contact N=107. Using the questions separately, the items all appeared to have a similar effect. Alternative indexes yielded the same results. I divided the sample into thirds as evenly as was possible.
Figure 4.5: The Effect of Catholic Treatment on White Evangelical Protestants’ Support for Lenient Immigration Policy by Amount of Contact with Catholics

(a) p<.05, $t$ test two-tailed, Catholic treatment significantly effects immigration attitudes relative to the control and mainline Protestant treatment. (b) Catholic treatment significantly effects immigration attitudes relative to the control. Support is additive scale based on three policy questions.

Those evangelicals that report having moderate levels of interaction with Catholics are most affected by the Catholic stimulus. They are more likely to support lenient policy after reading the rationales attributed to the Catholic relative to the control condition (p<.05) and the mainline Protestant condition (n.s.), based on $t$ tests within the medium interaction group. Meanwhile, the cross-cutting message has a polarizing effect for those with low amounts of contact with Catholics. These evangelicals become less supportive of lenient immigration in the face of pro-immigrant arguments.

The results should be interpreted with some caution in light of a significant change in support for lenient immigration policy in the control group. It is unclear why those with medium amounts of contact with Catholics are less supportive (p<.1) than
those in the low contact group. Evangelicals in the mainline Protestant group are also less supportive in the medium contact category than they are in the other two categories; this perhaps gives us some reason to believe the Catholic treatment’s effect is real, albeit unclear in matter of degree.

Assuming the interaction effect is real and evangelicals with medium amounts of contact are more likely to be persuaded, it may be that they have just enough contact to allow them to view Catholics as authoritative or credible, or at the very least less suspect. But they have not had enough contact to make them familiar with these arguments and to adjust their opinions in light of such claims. For those that interact with Catholics more often, the stimulus has little effect. Perhaps this is because they have already “been there, done that” so to speak. This group is already more supportive of immigrants, so it may be that the Catholic rationales in the information environment have already made an impact. In other words, perhaps these individuals have already been exposed to these rationales from their Catholic discussion partners and thus have little room to move in response to this stimulus. Or, it is also possible that variables that predict contact with Catholics (e.g. tolerance, education) also predict less conservative attitudes towards immigration.

Utilizing OLS regression, I examine how interaction with Catholics moderates the effect of the Catholic treatment while holding other variables constant. Table 4.4 displays the results. (Again, subjects that received the evangelical treatment are restricted from this analysis.)

---

36 It may in large part be due to a small sample in each category (25 and 34 respectively). The low contact control group and medium contact control group do not differ in their feeling thermometer rating for illegal immigrants or in terms of partisanship or ideology. The medium contact group is slightly younger and more educated than the low contact group which makes the result in the control groups even more mysterious.
## Table 4.4: The Impact of Catholic Treatment x Catholic Contact on Immigration Policy Attitudes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Support for Lenient Immigration Policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constant (Control)</strong></td>
<td>4.196 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.488)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic treatment</td>
<td>-.234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.208)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Catholic Contact</strong></td>
<td>.508 ^</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic treatment</td>
<td>(.274)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Catholic Contact</strong></td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic treatment</td>
<td>(.291)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Contact</td>
<td>-1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Contact</td>
<td>.284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant treatment</td>
<td>-.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.204)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium Catholic Contact</strong></td>
<td>.131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant treatment</td>
<td>(.263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Catholic Contact</strong></td>
<td>-.130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant treatment</td>
<td>(.269)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with Mainline Protestants</td>
<td>-.061</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.069)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative ideology</td>
<td>-1.711 ***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.306)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border state</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.114)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View God as Judge</td>
<td>-.403 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.178)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.139)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.096)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.340)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N=243
R²=.207
^p<.1 *p<.05, ***p<.001
Independent variables have all been rescaled 0 to 1. Support for lenient immigration policy is a 5-point index created by combining answers to three policy questions (Cronbach’s alpha: .645).
After accounting for other variables, \textit{Catholic treatment x Medium interaction} continues to predict (p<.1) support for lenient immigration policy. That is, those exposed to the Catholic treatment that report moderate amounts of interaction with Catholics were more supportive than those respondents that reported low levels of interaction.

The curvilinear relationship discovered here resembles that first featured by John Zaller (1992) depicting the relationship between political awareness and issue positions. Zaller finds that those individuals with moderate levels of political awareness are most likely to be persuaded by elite messages. “Political awareness is associated with increased exposure to current communication that might changes one’s opinion but it is also associated with heightened capacity to react critically to new information” (Zaller 1992, 21). In my case, because I control exposure to an elite message, I suggest the curve instead represents the effect of awareness of Catholics’ status as evangelical partners with perhaps some familiarity with their policy rationales as well. In other words, those evangelicals in the middle of the curve are likely to consider Catholics as credible sources of information but they are not yet so familiar with Catholic claims that they have already been persuaded. Like Zaller, I find that those with the most amount of previous exposure to Catholics are unlikely to be persuaded, but in my case, this may be a result of already having been slightly persuaded over the course of previous contact.

Unlike Zaller, I find that at the lower end of the curve, the Catholic treatment has a polarizing effect and actually can make evangelical Protestants more opposed to lenient policy. The fact that these evangelicals report having little to no interaction with Catholics may indicate they continue to harbor anti-Catholic sentiment and have
intentionally selected to not interact with Catholics and are unlikely to view Catholics as credible sources of political information.

At the very least, these results suggest that the composition of a citizen’s social network may have implications for which leaders might serve as opinion referents particularly in the context of cross-cutting communication. The make-up of one’s social network may provide a type of political awareness concerned with source credibility that moderates the effects of elite messages.

Conclusion

Overall, I find little evidence that exposure to cross-cutting arguments move opinion at the aggregate level, though of course this is only based on one single exposure to the message. Moreover, my findings do not readily suggest that source credibility moderates the effect of cross-cutting messages. However, I cannot prove that Catholics have not altered evangelical conservative leanings when it comes to the death penalty and immigration; I do find that those evangelicals with the most amount of previous contact with Catholics are those that are the least conservative on this issues. It is difficult to know if in fact those evangelicals that already report significant amounts of contact with Catholic have already changed their mind over time and thus no change is evident here The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops official that suggested evangelicals have reconsidered their views on the death penalty in light of their admiration of Pope John Paul II may still have a point. At the very least, however, attitude change on the part of evangelicals is not rampant within evangelical-Catholic dialogue, at least on these issues tested in this manner. My design may limit my ability to detect these effects.
The empirical results seem to comport with one piece of anecdotal evidence I gathered in particular. One Catholic man employed by a national Christian Right organization told me that he circulated a letter written by a Catholic bishop to his fellow evangelical Christian Right leaders that received a mixed review due to the presence of a cross-cutting message. In the letter, the bishop called Christians’ attention to a number of political issues, including judicial appointments and poverty. According to this man, one prominent evangelical leader called him upon receiving the letter and complained that poverty was being given attention and felt that all resources should be committed to securing the judicial nominations at that time. He did not agree with the Catholic bishop’s emphasis on poverty. This particular evangelical response seems to mirror somewhat the reluctance on the part of evangelicals to change their minds or their agenda in light of Catholic rationales. However, the anecdote also serves as a reminder that exposure to these rationales are nonetheless taking place.

Nonetheless, a few suggestive findings emerge from my empirical analysis, which help propel the study forward. First, one segment of the evangelical population appears somewhat susceptible to Catholic cross-cutting message while another segment appears resistant to such arguments. Evangelicals with moderate amounts of contact with Catholics are more supportive of lenient immigration policy after exposure to Catholic arguments, and in contrast, those evangelicals with low amounts of contact reject the Catholic message.

Second, the analysis hints at the fact that Catholic or in-group cross-cutting messages can work differently from mainline Protestant or out-group cross-cutting messages. For example, the rationale for lenient immigration policy respondents found

37 Personal interview, Washington, D.C., September 6, 2006.
most persuasive varied depending on whether the rationale was attributed to a Catholic leader or a mainline Protestant leader. Also, the Catholic treatment differed from the control group when I accounted for previous contact with Catholics while the mainline Protestant treatment had no significant impact. Given the limited number of statistically significant results, however, it is difficult to be conclusive on the matter of source credibility and cross-cutting messages at this stage. Thus, I turn to the question of whether the source matters more when we look to other types of effects.

In the next chapter I utilize the same survey-experiment to examine the effect of exposure to Catholic cross-cutting message on political tolerance. While the present chapter finds little evidence that Catholics are changing evangelicals’ attitudes on policy views, expanding my analysis to look at the effect of these treatments on evangelicals’ general feelings and attitudes towards people and groups does suggest additional effects. The results expand on the initial findings reported here.
Chapter 5:  
Coalition Politics and Evangelicals’ Political Tolerance

Another expectation born out of previous research on social networks is that cross-cutting-exposure will produce political tolerance. A religious conservative social movement is a unique venue to test this hypothesis. At first glance, political cooperation between evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics poses the possibility for what some would call “intolerant collaboration” (Jelen and Wilcox 1990, 71).

Indeed, on numerous policy measures designed to expand civil rights and liberties, white evangelicals and Catholics have aligned in their opposition. For example, traditionalists in both camps generally agree that the government should not allow same-sex marriage and civil unions between homosexual couples (Campbell and Robinson 2007). Moreover, leaders from the two traditions have jointly called for boycotts of entities that are critical of religious orthodoxy, in an attempt to muzzle what they view as anti-Christian speech. For nearly a decade, the Catholic League along with the Southern Baptist Convention, the American Family Association and Focus on the Family asked their supporters to boycott the Walt Disney Co. after it helped produce an allegedly gay-themed, anti-Catholic film “Priest” (Johnson 2005). Similarly, in response to Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* – a mystery novel based on a controversial interpretation of Christian history – many Catholics and evangelicals called for boycotts of the subsequent film and claimed the popular piece of fiction was evidence that religious values were not respected in the public sphere (Buss 2006).
Moreover, in a number of instances rhetoric used by participants in the coalition sounds anything but tolerant of those with opposing viewpoints. Randall Terry, former leader of Operation Rescue and a later evangelical convert to Catholicism told his pro-life supporters in 1993, “I want you to just let a wave of intolerance wash over you….We have a biblical duty, we are called by God to conquer this country. We don’t want equal time. We don’t want pluralism.”1 Or more recently, speaking soon after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Jerry Falwell said on television, “I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way, all of them who have tried to secularize America. I point the finger in their face and say, ‘You helped this happen.’”

The possibility that intolerant coalitions can form when two different belief systems collide has been noted by previous scholars, and is of course a concern for democratic theorists (Gibson 1988; Jelen and Wilcox 1990). The hope of pluralism is that rarely is the same group disliked by multiple groups. Yet, by definition, when two different groups come together to act against a shared disliked behavior or group, there is naturally some distinction between the groups that are working together. While they may initially find common ground in their prejudice against an out-group, they are nevertheless going to encounter differences within their coalition; differences if

---

1 Quoted in Caylor, Bob. 1993. “Terry Preaches Theocratic Rule ‘No more Mr. Nice Christian’ is the Pro-life Activists’s Theme for the ‘90S.” The News-Sentinel (Fort Wayne, IN).
significant enough, may force coalition participants to reexamine previously held beliefs if the two groups are going to continue to get along, particularly at the grassroots level.

Basing my prediction in what we know to be true about cross-cutting networks and the history of evangelical-Catholic relations, I argue that one effect of the political cooperation between evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics could be greater tolerance exhibited by evangelical Protestants. Even though evangelicals cooperate with Catholics to pursue a so-called “intolerant” agenda, it is by way of their cooperation with an out-group that evangelicals may be exposed to cross-cutting messages that in effect lead to tolerance for Catholics and perhaps greater tolerance in general. Thus, using the survey-experiment introduced in chapter 4, I test whether or not exposure to dissonant viewpoints expressed by a Catholic leader makes evangelicals more or less tolerant of Catholics and then subsequently, out-groups at-large.

**White Evangelical Protestants and Political Tolerance**

The subject is worthy of analysis seeing that there is no shortage of studies asserting that religion predicts political intolerance, particularly for evangelical Protestants. (Stouffer 1955; Nunn, Crockett and William 1978; Erskine and Siegal 1975; Filsinger 1976; Corbett 1982; Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus 1982; Smidt and Penning 1982; Beatty and Walter 1984; Wilcox and Jelen 1990). Frequent church attendance (e.g. Smidt and Penning 1982; Stouffer 1955), denominational affiliation (e.g. Beatty and Walter 1984), biblical inerrancy (Wilcox and Jelen 1990), literalism (Green et al. 1994; Nana 2005) and a belief in the devil (Nunn, Crockett and William 1978) have all been shown to be negatively related to tolerance. Exhibiting many of the above beliefs
and behaviors, evangelical Protestants are found to be less tolerant of those with
different political views – specifically, atheists, homosexuals, socialists, militarists, and
racists – than are other citizens (Beatty and Walter 1984; Wilcox and Jelen 1990).

The positive relationship between religiosity and intolerance is troublesome for
democratic theorists that view the survival of the American experiment as dependent
upon some measure of sustained diversity. As a concept, tolerance “implies a willingness
to ‘put up with’ those things one rejects or opposes. Politically, it implies a willingness
to permit the expression of ideas or interests one opposes” (Sullivan, Piereson, and
Marcus 1982, 2). The idea James Madison put forth in Federalist #10 is that the
multiplicity of interests will curb the dangerous effects of factions. If religious citizens
practice intolerance and come to have an undue influence in policy-making, democratic
ideals such as equality and liberty for all might be threatened. Thomas Jefferson argued
that the very nature of religion, a system of absolutes, was incompatible with the
necessary compromise required of a democracy and thus strict separation between
church and state was required (Randall 1993).

However, it is questionable to suggest that intolerance in a political sense is
intrinsic to religious belief, belonging or behavior. Many of the studies noted above are
concerned with operational definitions of religiosity and what elements of religious faith
predict intolerance. There is of course some variation amongst those sharing certain
religious characteristics, and there are mediating factors that have not fully been
explored. Eisenstein (2006) for example finds no direct relationship between religious
affiliation and political tolerance after controlling for psychological determinants of
political tolerance, namely self-esteem and dogmatism (the latter is however a function of religious orthodoxy).

In addition, the bulk of research on the relationship between religion and political tolerance has relied on measures later criticized for being ideologically biased. Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1982) argue that the original items – measuring a willingness to extend civil liberties to atheists, communists or socialists – simply measure tolerance for the specific groups and not a generalized political tolerance. Religious conservatives are of course likely to object to these groups and therefore appear intolerant.

In comparison, evangelicals appear more tolerant than seculars when the measure is regarding the pro-life movement and its civil liberties (Raymond and Norrander 1990). To correct for this bias, Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus developed a content-controlled measure now referred to as the “least-liked” measure. The measure asks respondents to name the group they like the least and then consider whether or not they think the group should be allowed to engage in a particular activity. Nonetheless, when the “least-liked” measure has been employed, evangelical Protestants still emerge as politically intolerant relative to other citizens (Green et al. 1994).

To be sure, evangelical Protestants are hesitant to grant civil liberties to members of liberal and secular groups whose actions they perceive to be a threat to their faith and America. By definition, evangelical Protestants believe the Bible is the word of God and therefore, the final arbiter of all truth. This naturally favors an exclusive interpretation of

---

2 The measure was first utilized by Stouffer (1955) and later adopted by the General Social Surveys (GSS) upon which much of the tolerance literature is based.
political issues. In one survey, nearly 50 percent of members of Christian conservative groups said they believed there was only one correct view on most issues (Wilcox and Larson 2006, 137). Moreover, nearly 80 percent of members believed the U.S. was a Christian nation.

Thus, when public policy seems to contradict the Bible, evangelicals perceive the government is being more responsive to opposing groups and limiting religious freedom. According to James Gibson, a renowned political tolerance scholar, “From prayers in school and at football games to the display of religious symbols on state-owned property, fundamentalists are often thwarted today by the government” (2008, 106). Analyzing data from 2005, Gibson finds that 55.7 percent of those sympathetic with Christian fundamentalists perceive some constraints on their freedom; a larger percentage than that found amongst those sympathetic with gay rights activists or atheists. Many evangelical Protestants view increased freedom for opposing groups – such as homosexuals, feminists and atheists – as a threat to their own way of life.

As evangelical political influence has increased since the 1970s, concern has been expressed regarding evangelical Protestants’ commitment to tolerance and democratic values, particularly as evidenced by the Christian Right. In his study of democracy and associations, Mark E. Warren (2001) says the Christian Right is potentially both beneficial and harmful for a democratic system. According to Warren, groups that are ideologically or purposively driven, have distinct democratic effects on their participants. These groups are likely to instill their members with political skills,
but they are less likely to develop virtues like tolerance and support for democratic norms.

Moreover, because of their ideological payoff, group members are more likely to emphasize differences with out-groups then celebrate commonalities. Finally, this type of association has a mixed result when it comes to fostering important critical skills used to form judgments. In his discussion of Warren’s typology and the Christian Right, Wilcox (2000) says members of Christian Right groups rarely debate ends (only means) and there is a “general unwillingness to challenge assumptions and broad policy goals within the movement” (34).

Yet it is the contention of this project that within this movement, specifically between evangelicals and Catholic, differences and deliberation exist that challenge the notion that evangelical political activism is entirely marked by intolerance for out-groups. Even by itself, political participation has been found to be related to political tolerance (Peffley and Rohrschneider 2003). One study of participation in urban areas concluded that increased participation led to greater efficacy, information, and tolerance for diverse viewpoints, especially among those with lower levels of education and income (Berry, Portney, and Thomson 1993). One survey of Christian Right members in the Virginia GOP finds that those who have been active in politics the longest are the most willing to compromise (Rozell and Wilcox 1996).³ The assumption is that

³ The authors acknowledge that we cannot be sure that participation in politics makes Christian Right members more tolerant. It might be that more tolerant Christian Right members choose to participate for longer durations and the less tolerant drop out.
participation in politics teaches citizens the value of debate and the importance of tolerating alternative viewpoints.

In addition, over the course of interviews with Christian Right activists, Conger and McGraw (2005) find these religious citizens willing to negotiate with groups they disagree with. Moreover, there is empirical evidence to suggest that the longer one participates in the Christian Right, the more likely they are to have adopted democratic norms such as compromise.⁴ In another survey, the majority of evangelicals believes compromise is an important part of American politics and would say they believe in equality and liberty for all (Wilcox and Larson 2006, 137).

Though religion and evangelical Christianity in particular, appear at first to be in conflict with democracy, there is reason to believe tolerance attitudes within religious populations are at the very least malleable. I speculate here that exposure to Catholics and Catholic teaching within the arena of Christian Right activism may in fact bring about exposure to diversity that might not otherwise exist. This diversity in turn may produce democratic fruit. It is to that topic I turn now.

**Review of Theoretical Foundations and Expectations**

The intergroup contact hypothesis (introduced in chapter 3) leads us to expect that exposure to Catholics may contribute to evangelicals expressing more tolerant

---

⁴ A number of scholars will now argue that the Christian Right is good for democracy because it mobilizes a group of previously apathetic citizens and contributes to a more balanced policy debate (Conger and McGraw 2005; Shields 2007). These scholars shift the criteria by which to judge the Christian Right away from its policy ends and towards its contribution to citizenship and deliberative norms. Shields (2007), for example, finds that participants in pro-life groups are less likely to rely on theological appeals than on secular moral reasoning to frame their argument.
and later comes to realize that the same Catholic holds different political viewpoints on matters of war, immigration and social welfare. An evangelical may cooperate with Catholics to pass an amendment to the state constitution banning same-sex marriage, and over the course of the political partnership come to realize that Catholics have legitimate rationales for holding the beliefs that they do. As a result, an evangelical may discover that citizens holding opposing viewpoints aren’t as unreasonable as she originally thought and consequently may reexamine her attitude towards other out-groups. Indeed, studies on intergroup contact do find evidence for a “generalized” tolerance stemming from interaction with just one out-group (Pettigrew 1997). Interaction with one out-group appears to reduce prejudice for out-groups at-large.

Exposure to different views within the Catholic-evangelical partnership could ultimately contribute to what Warren (2001) calls bridging social capital – a cooperative connection across lines that informs and breaks down prejudice (see also Putnam 2000). Given the fact that traditional Catholics and evangelical Protestants differ in their source of authority, their political reasoning, and some of their political attitudes - and yet they come together to participate in one social movement – suggests an opportunity for cross-cutting exposure is available to these citizens.

Theory concerning the effect of such cross-cutting exposure helps guide my expectations. As outlined in chapter 3, Diana Mutz found that exposure to conflicting political viewpoints leads to greater levels of political tolerance. Here I ask whether
exposure to Catholics’ political views does the same for evangelical Protestants. To answer that question I draw on the same experiment introduced in the previous chapter. For Mutz (2002), the relationship between cross-cutting exposure and political tolerance is indirect and is a function of increased awareness of rationales for opposing viewpoints and perceived intimacy within dissonant dyads. Here, I assume some degree of perceived intimacy with Catholics, and I choose to control evangelicals’ awareness of rationales for opposing viewpoints while varying the source of those rationales.

Asked to consider the legitimacy of the rationales for opposing points of view, evangelicals may find themselves more understanding and perhaps more respectful of Catholic opinion. If theories suggesting that tolerance can be generalized are correct, this might lead them to be more respectful of opinions held by out-groups in general. Also, the degree to which evangelicals become internally conflicted and unsure about their own value priorities also has implications for tolerance. Studies find that when citizens simultaneously prioritize competing values, they are more tolerant as a result of the internal deliberation that ensues (Peffley, Knigge and Hurwitz 2001; but see Kuklinski et al. 1991).

Important to keep in mind however is the potential for increased polarization after citizens encounter opposing points of view. Some studies suggest that deliberation might encourage people, especially those with strongly-held views, to take more extreme positions (e.g. Barabas 2004; Peffley and Hurwitz 2007). It might be that evangelical Protestants are less tolerant of Catholics as a result of exposure to their rationales for favoring lenient immigration policy and opposing the death penalty.
At the very least, we would expect this to be a more likely response to the mainline Protestant treatment (same rationales, but source is from outside the social movement). In the absence of political intimacy, it is possible that dissonant messages cause more harm than good. If evangelicals already view mainline Protestants as a political opponent, these messages included here will likely reinforce that status. Reasserting the division between the two branches of Protestantism might spill over to divisions between evangelicals and other groups.

Similarly but to a lesser degree, I expect the evangelical treatment to decrease tolerance relative to the control because the stimulus will reinforce in-group identity and affirm evangelicals of their predispositions on these issues. However, I expect the effect of the evangelical treatment to be minimal given Mutz’s (2002) finding that exposure to consonant messages has little effect on political tolerance. Figure 5.1 displays the predicted effects of the experimental treatment on evangelicals’ political tolerance.
Results

Before turning to the results from the experiment used to test the effects of cross-cutting messages on political tolerance, I first examine the levels of political tolerance from my sample relative to the general evangelical population. As noted above, evangelical Protestants are not known for their political tolerance and one might suspect the particular sample used for this study – partisan and religiously observant – to be even less tolerant than evangelicals in the general public. However, after comparing evangelical donors in the control group (N=112) with evangelicals from the 2006 General Social Survey (N=309) on support for allowing an individual from an opposing group to make a speech, I do not find any significant difference (see Figure 5.2).\footnote{Tests of statistical significance based on the z-test for proportions. The tolerance measures differed slightly between the two survey instruments; therefore the comparison between groups should be}
The majority of both groups appear to favor allowing members of the four out-groups to make a speech in their community. Evangelical donors are slightly but not significantly less tolerant in each case. So while evangelicals are generally less tolerant than the mass public, the evangelical donors sampled here are not unusually intolerant relative to evangelicals at-large, though these samples differ in terms of age and education.\(^6\)

---

\(^6\) If I restrict both samples to only those with a college education, both samples are more tolerant overall, but I find college-educated evangelicals from the mass sample are significantly more tolerant compared to
Now turning to my experimental results, I begin by examining mean group ratings by experimental condition. Following the stimulus, the survey asked respondents to rate a series of groups and political and religious figures on a scale from 0 to 100 where 0 is most unfavorable and 100 is most favorable. The measure hardly constitutes political tolerance but it serves as a starting point for understanding how conflicting messages from groups may shape attitudes towards those groups and others. Moreover, earlier work on this topic describes tolerance judgments as being visceral opinions towards groups (Kuklinski et al. 1991) which is likely captured in this measure. Previous research leads me to expect that evangelicals will rate groups higher after encountering the rationales behind opposing viewpoints, particularly when attributed to a group with whom they have had some intimacy in the past.

I first investigate whether or not exposure to dissonant viewpoints held by Catholics make evangelicals more or less tolerant of Catholics or has no effect. To answer this question I draw on the same experiment in which I vary exposure to cross-cutting rationales and the sources of those rationales. Figure 5.3 displays mean ratings of “Catholics” by experimental condition.

college-educated evangelical activists. However, the result is largely explained by a difference in age between the two samples. The mean age for college-educated evangelicals at the mass level is 48 versus 63 for the activist sample.
The results are consistent with the hypothesis outlined above, though there are no statistically significant differences between groups and the effects should not be overstated. Evangelicals in the Catholic treatment group give “Catholics” a slightly higher rating on average than the other treatment groups. As explained in chapter 2, the evangelical donors sampled here likely perceive Catholics as political allies and are therefore inclined to feel warmly toward Catholics. The fact that they rate them slightly higher after encountering reasons behind their positions is encouraging for advocates of deliberative democracy. We know from the previous chapter that evangelicals disagree
with the positions advocated here. (They particularly support the death penalty and to a
different extent, oppose lenient immigration policy.) Yet they nevertheless appear to like
Catholics more after exposure to the reasons behind these viewpoints, or at the very least
do not rate them lower than the control group, as critics of deliberative democracy would
expect in light of their belief that disagreement will only intensify polarization.

The question remains however if the mainline Protestant treatment mirrors the
effect for evangelicals’ mean ratings of “mainline Protestants.” Evangelicals generally
do not perceive mainline Protestants as part of their social movement, and thus they are
not as likely to have befriended them, politically speaking, prior to this manipulation.
Thus, we expect evangelicals to feel less close to mainline Protestants and view them
with minimal credibility as a result. Figure 5.4 reports the mean “mainline Protestants”
.rating across conditions.
As expected, the same message attributed to a mainline Protestant leader produces the opposite effect on mainline Protestants that the Catholic treatment had on Catholics. The mainline Protestant treatment actually decreases evangelicals’ mean rating for mainline Protestants, though again the result is not statistically significant relative to the control (it differs from the evangelical treatment at p<.12).

The question remains however, does the Catholic treatment produce a generalized tolerance, and in the case of the mainline Protestant treatment, a generalized intolerance? How does exposure to dissonant messages expressed by these two sources affect attitudes towards out-groups in general? To test this, the survey-experiment also asked subjects to rate groups and figures generally known to be disliked by evangelicals.
In many cases, the modal rating for the group/figure was “0.” Therefore, I display the results as a comparison based on the percentage of respondents in each treatment group that rated the group/figure “0.” Figure 5.5 displays the results (tests of significance based on difference of proportions test).
Figure 5.5: White Evangelicals’ Negative Affect towards Out-Groups by Experimental Treatment

(a) Catholic treatment differs from the Control and evangelical treatment at p<.10 (based difference of proportions test)
(b) Catholic treatment differs from the Control at p<.05 and from the mainline Protestant treatment and Evangelical treatment at p<.01
(c) Catholic treatment differs from the Control at p<.1 (one-tailed), from the mainline Protestant treatments at p<.05 and from the evangelical treatment at p<.1

As expected, evangelicals in the Catholic treatment are less likely to rate homosexuals, feminists, illegal immigrants and, to a lesser extent, religious liberals at “0” relative to the control. The findings suggest that exposure to the dissonant message attributed to a Catholic leader is capable of reducing animosity between groups at-large. Meanwhile, the mainline Protestant and evangelical treatment have no such effect.\(^7\)

\(^7\) No experimental effects were found on ratings for neutral or well-liked figures/groups, such as Focus on the Family, James Dobson, Jerry Falwell, Concerned Women for America, Congress and the Supreme Court. Notably, the Catholic treatment had no effect on rating of Pope John Paul II.
means for each group yields similar results and supports the pattern noted here, though there is less statistical significance (t test and ANOVA).

The finding concerning illegal immigrants is particularly interesting given the null findings at the aggregate level reported in chapter 4 concerning immigration policies. While it appears the source of the cross-cutting message, Catholic or mainline Protestant, did not make a difference in terms of policy attitudes, the source makes a significant difference in terms of how the message shapes affect towards illegal immigrants. Nearly half of respondents in the mainline Protestant treatment group ranked illegal immigrants a “0” after reading the rationales in favor of lenient policy while only a third did so when the rationales were attributed to a Catholic leader.

An additional battery of questions allows me to more fully examine the experimental effects on political tolerance. The above analysis tells us little about what effect cross-cutting messages might have in the real world. More conventional tolerance questions demand that respondents tolerate groups in practice. Here, subjects were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that members of groups should be allowed to make a speech in their community and to what extent they agree or disagree that members should be allowed to teach in their community’s public schools. The list of individuals included members of religious groups (Jew, Mainline Protestant, Catholic and Evangelical Protestant) and individuals with distinct political orientations or beliefs counter to general evangelical orthodoxy (homosexual, a feminist, admitted Communist, person who is against all churches and religion, and a person who believe blacks are
genetically inferior). The mean response by experimental condition for an individual being allowed to speak is displayed in Figure 5.6.
Figure 5.6: White Evangelicals’ Tolerance for Groups’ Free Speech by Experimental Treatment

"Should individual be allowed to make a speech in your community?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Response</th>
<th>F-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homosexual</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admitted Communist</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jew</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>4.75</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person against religion</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>2.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>2.03*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person who believes Blacks inferior</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.1, tests of statistical significant are based on the ANOVA. For significant difference between conditions see Table 5.1.*
Across conditions, the evangelical donors generally agree that members of the religious groups mentioned here should be allowed to speak, and they fall somewhere between “neutral” and “agree” when it comes to the more extreme groups. However, the fact that 30 percent of evangelical donors across conditions disagreed that a homosexual should be allowed to make a speech is troublesome to many. If exposure to cross-cutting messages increases tolerance for this population, this would indeed be something deliberation scholars could celebrate.

Overall, the results are consistent with my expectations and do affirm the ideals of a deliberative democracy. I will begin by addressing the effect of the consonant message attributed to the evangelical leader as this would seem to be most “dangerous” to these ideals and increase intolerance. I find the evangelical treatment makes little difference when it comes to tolerance for religious groups, but the treatment does have a negative effect on tolerance for the other out-groups, most notably for a homosexual. Evangelicals that received the evangelical treatment are significantly less tolerant than those in the control or Catholic treatment group (p<.1).

Exposure to messages that reinforce one’s predispositions perhaps reinforces in-group identity, fueling bonding social capital at the expense of bridging social capital. In a sense, these messages might prime in-group identity and remind the citizen that they are different from out-groups. Also in this case, the consonant messages placed an emphasis on “law and order” as it relates to illegal immigration and capital punishment. The frame perhaps made biblical themes of justice more salient than evangelical teaching on compassion. The saliency of these features of Christianity likely shapes how evangelicals perceive certain out-groups.
I turn now to the effect of exposure to dissonant messages on evangelicals’
tolerance for members of out-groups making a speech in the community. The expectation
was that the dissonant message from the political in-group (Catholic) would increase
tolerance relative the control, and the dissonant message from the political out-group
(mainline Protestant) would decrease tolerance relative to the control. Overall, the findings
are consistent with these hypotheses. The two treatments moved the respondents in the
respective direction across the target groups, making the tolerance levels exhibited by these
groups’ respondents the most polarized of the four treatment groups.

The most statistically significant differences between the Catholic and mainline
Protestant treatment had to do with allowing a feminist to speak and a person against
religion to speak (p<.05). In both instances, those that read the message from a mainline
Protestant were less inclined to agree that the individual should be allowed, while those
that read the exact same message from a Catholic were more inclined to agree they should
be allowed to speak, relative to the other cross-cutting treatment, the consonant treatment,
and the control.
Figure 5.7: White Evangelicals’ Tolerance for Groups Teaching in Public Schools by Experimental Treatment

"Should members of groups be allowed to be a teacher in your community's public schools?"

Mean response by experimental treatment (Strongly disagree=1, Strongly agree=5)

- Homosexual (F=.49)
- Admitted Communist (F=.19)
- Jew (F=.80)
- Mainline Protestant (F=2.19*)
- Catholic (F=1.78)
- Evangelical Protestant (F=1.45)
- Person against religion (F=1.71)
- Feminist (F=.65)
- Person who believes Blacks inferior (F=.76)

* p<.1, tests of statistical significant are based on the ANOVA. For significant difference between conditions see Table 5.1.
The pattern is also evident when examining responses to whether members of outgroups should be allowed to teach in the community’s public schools. Allowing an outgroup to speak publicly is one thing for evangelicals, granting them a position of authority over children in the community in another. Not surprisingly, tolerance for the non-religious groups drops considerably in this figure. On average and across conditions, evangelical donors sampled here disagree that a homosexual, an admitted communist and a person who believes blacks are inferior should be allowed to teach. Interesting to note, across conditions evangelicals are less opposed to a person who is against all churches and religion teaching than a homosexual. Members of religious groups are equally tolerated as public speakers and as teachers in the community’s public schools.

Unlike the previous figure, the consonant message attributed to an evangelical has no real effect on tolerance for these individuals teaching in the community’s schools. One might initially argue that opposition to these groups in this context (teaching) has “peaked” and there is little room for movement even in the presence of messages that reinforce one’s predispositions and in-group identity.

However, we need only glance at the tolerance levels of those that received the mainline Protestant treatment to see that these attitudes are malleable. Evangelicals exposed to the dissonant message attributed to a mainline Protestant leader were the least tolerant group for eight of the nine cases. In four cases, tolerance levels for the mainline Protestant group were significantly lower than the levels expressed by the control group. In comparison, the same message attributed to a Catholic leader did not diminish tolerance and in fact made evangelicals less likely to disagree that a person against religion be allowed to teach ($p<.1$).
Indeed, the mainline Protestant and the Catholic treatment have the largest number of significant differences in tolerance levels between them across the two figures. Table 5.1 displays the statistically significant differences based on independent t-tests on the group means.
Table 5.1: Significant Differences between Experimental Treatments on Political Tolerance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catholic Treatment</th>
<th>Mainline Protestant Treatment</th>
<th>Control Treatment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evangelical</strong></td>
<td>Homosexual allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td>Homosexual allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td>Feminist allowed to speak, p&lt;.05 (Total: 3)</td>
<td>(Total: 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catholic</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Admitted communist allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to teach, p&lt;.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jew allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td>(Total: 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mainline Protestant allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to speak, p&lt;.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feminist allowed to speak, p&lt;.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jew allowed to teach, p&lt;.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to teach, p&lt;.05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Total: 7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mainline</strong></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Person against religion allowed to speak, p&lt;.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant**</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(Total: 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Tests of significance are based on independent *t* tests.
Following the list in each box, I provide the total number of significant findings between each pair of groups. The story that clearly emerges is one having to do with the effect of the source of dissonant messages on political tolerance. These messages appear to have a negative effect only when they are attributed to a mainline Protestant leader. The Catholic treatment, while not increasing tolerance to a significant degree relative to the control, at the very least does not make evangelicals less tolerant of out-groups. In seven of the 18 cases, the mainline Protestant and Catholic treatments produced significantly different results. The mainline Protestant treatment differed from the control group in five cases.

What is perhaps most interesting about the effect of the mainline Protestant treatment on political tolerance in Figure 5.7 and to a lesser extent in Figure 5.6 is that it is quite evident for members of religious groups. Evangelicals were less agreeable to allowing a Jew, a mainline Protestant, a Catholic and even an evangelical to teach after exposure to the messages from a mainline Protestant. To display the impact of the treatments across groups in Figure 5.8, I create a scale combining responses to all eight religious group questions (four public speaking, four teaching, Cronbach’s alpha=.932). Additionally, I create a scale combining responses to the eight “extreme” group measures (Cronbach’s alpha=.929) and a scale including all tolerance measures in the full battery (Cronbach’s alpha=.920).
(a) The Catholic treatment differs from the Mainline Protestant treatment at p<.10 and the Mainline Protestant treatment differs from the Control at p<.05.
(b) The Catholic treatment differs from the Mainline Protestant at p<.05.
(c) The Catholic treatment differs from the Mainline Protestant at p<.05 (t test)

Not surprisingly, tolerance for the religious groups in these contexts is relatively high (4.4 on a 5-point scale). However, the mainline Protestant treatment significantly lowers political tolerance, though the group still generally favors allowing these religious groups to speak and teach.

The finding is nevertheless remarkable given that the index includes generally non-threatening religious groups for evangelicals including evangelicals themselves. It suggests that contrary to producing generalized tolerance, exposure to cross-cutting messages might in fact produce generalized intolerance if expressed by political (and/or religious) out-groups. The additional scales confirm the trend – the dissonant message attributed to the mainline Protestant decreases tolerance relative to all other treatments, while the same message attributed to a Catholic does not. At the very least, it appears
we cannot fully understand the effect of cross-cutting messages apart from accounting for the relationship that exists between the messenger and the receiver.

*Contact with Catholics and Generational Effects on the Impact of Cross-cutting Exposure on Tolerance*

The results reported here seem to support the argument that evangelicals are likely to perceive Catholics as members of the in-group, and thus credible, while they perceive mainline Protestants as an out-group, and thus less credible. The findings support previous work that suggests the degree of intimacy one has with the source of the cross-cutting message determines the likelihood that the exposure will result in increased tolerance (Mutz 2002). Therefore, it is possible that those evangelicals that report the most contact with Catholics will be more responsive to the Catholic dissonant message than those with low levels of contact. Catholics may have more credibility in the former’s eyes. On the other hand, those evangelicals that encounter Catholics very often and have a high amount of contact with Catholics, may perceive themselves to be in a minority; they may feel threatened by the number of Catholics in their social context and thus be less tolerant after exposure to a dissonant view attributed to a Catholic leader. There is the possibility that the relationship between contact with Catholics and affinity for Catholics is non-linear.

In the previous chapter, those evangelicals with moderate amounts of contact with Catholics were more likely to be persuaded by the Catholic message on immigration, while those with low and high amounts of contact were not. Referencing Zaller (1992), I speculated that this was because those in the middle category had just
enough awareness to view Catholics as credible political partners and thus be open to persuasion by this group, but not enough exposure to have been previously persuaded by these messages. Does the same pattern prove true here?
Again, those evangelicals with moderate amounts of contact with Catholics appear to be the most positively affected by the Catholic treatment. The Catholic treatment increases tolerance relative to the control for those evangelicals in this group (p<.001), and it actually decreases tolerances for those that report lower amounts relative to the control (p<.05). Meanwhile, the mainline Protestant treatment’s negative effect on tolerance is most evident for those with high and low amounts of Catholic interaction, relative to the control (p<.1 and p<.05 respectively). It is unclear why contact with Catholics moderates the persuasive effect of the mainline Protestant message, but it likely has something to do with other factors correlated with low and high amounts of
contact with other faiths, such as age and education. Younger evangelicals are significantly more likely to report discussing matters with members of other faith traditions and have them in their social context.

Thus, it is possible that these effects are largely a function of age. Therefore, I divide the sample into thirds and compare the experimental effects on political tolerance by age in Figure 5.10.

Figure 5.10: The Effect of Experimental Treatment on Generalized Tolerance by Age

![Bar chart showing the effect of experimental treatment on generalized tolerance by age]

* For the older group, Mainline Protestant treatment differs from Control at p<.05. (t test) Generalized tolerance index based on all 18 group questions.

Interestingly, the experimental effects generally do not appear to be moderated by a respondent’s age. In only one instance is a segment of the population – those over age 70 – affected by a treatment. Older respondents’ tolerance levels are more likely to be negatively affected by the mainline Protestant rationales than the other age groups.
Even though age does not appear to explain the effects demonstrated in Figure 5.9, it is nonetheless still not clear if these contextual effects operate independently from other variables. To assess the size of the effect of the Catholic message * Catholic Contact measures relative to the control while taking other variables into account, I utilize regression analysis and report the results in Table 5.2.
Table 5.2: Effects of Catholic Treatment on Generalized Political Tolerance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unstandardized Regression</td>
<td>Unstandardized Regression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
<td>Coefficient (Standard Error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant (Control condition)</td>
<td>4.562*** (.349)</td>
<td>4.859*** (.330)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Treatment</td>
<td>.126 (.521)</td>
<td>-.247 (.167)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Amount of Contact with</td>
<td>.144 (.106)</td>
<td>.152 (.105)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Amount of Contact with</td>
<td>.240* (.108)</td>
<td>.242* (.107)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Treatment * Medium</td>
<td>.507* (.216)</td>
<td>.521* (.208)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Contact with Catholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic Treatment * High</td>
<td>.131 (.235)</td>
<td>.153 (.228)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of Contact with Catholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant Treatment</td>
<td>-.141 (.102)</td>
<td>-.010 (.173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Treatment</td>
<td>-.107 (.106)</td>
<td>-.113 (.106)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with Mainline</td>
<td>.081 (.051)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biblical Literalism</td>
<td>-.538** (.202)</td>
<td>-.559** (.202)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideology (Conservative)</td>
<td>-.118 (.258)</td>
<td>-.052 (.259)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.234* (.115)</td>
<td>.198^ (.116)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-1.300*** (.297)</td>
<td>-1.394*** (.266)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.059 (.077)</td>
<td>.056 (.077)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Contact with Mainline</td>
<td>.026 (.103)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Contact with Mainline</td>
<td>-.177 (.115)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant Treatment *</td>
<td>-.380^ (.219)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Amount of Contact with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant Treatment *</td>
<td>-.078 (.209)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Amount of Contact with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestants</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>^p&lt;.10</td>
<td>N 295</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*p&lt;.05</td>
<td>R^2 .261</td>
<td>.270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**p&lt;.01</td>
<td>F 7.075</td>
<td>6.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***p&lt;.001 (two-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All independent variables have been rescaled 0 to 1. Generalized tolerance index based on 18 group questions (1=low tolerance, 5=high tolerance)
Model 1 controls for one possible interaction effect (contact with Catholics*Catholic treatment). Model 2 builds on Model 1 and includes contact with Mainline Protestants * mainline Protestant treatment. This second model is designed to test whether or not contact with mainline Protestants moderates the mainline Protestant treatment. It is possible that contact with the source manifests itself similarly for both cross-cutting experimental conditions. In other words, it is possible that the source effects are not unique to Catholics and that medium amounts of exposure to mainline Protestants allow for the mainline Protestant treatment to increase tolerance as well.

I find that this is not the case. In both models, Medium Amount of Contact with Catholics * Catholic Treatment results in a statistically significant increase in tolerance relative to the control. In Model 2, however, Medium Amount of Contact with Mainline Protestants * Mainline Protestant Treatment has the opposite effect. It appears that those with medium amounts of contact with mainline Protestants are actually those most likely to decrease in tolerance (relative to low and high contact groups). Thus, it is not necessarily the case that contact with a group will increase that group’s credibility. The

---

8 “Contact with mainline Protestants” is based on the same six questions used to create a contact with Catholics scale. I asked respondents how regularly they discussed religion, politics or important matters with a member of a designated religious tradition and how many members of that faith they had as close friends, neighbors or co-workers. (mainline Protestant contact scale, Cronbach’s alph=.846.) I then divided the scale into three equal groups as much as was possible. Low contact n=102 , medium contact n=122, high contact n=119.

9 Using a polynomial term to measure the moderating effect of contact on the Catholic treatment produces similar statistically significant results.
group must have some degree of insider status already (which is true for Catholics but not the case for mainline Protestants).

In sum, exposure to dissonant messages from Catholics appears to increase tolerance levels primarily for those with moderate levels of contact with Catholics. The effect of the interaction term is not erased even after controlling for age, education and biblical literalism even though by themselves that are all related to political tolerance. Also important to note, the effect of contact with Catholics is not diminished when I control for the amount of contact with another faith group (mainline Protestants). One might suspect that it is simply the act of discussing matters and participating in a religiously diverse network that moderates the treatment effects, and not contact specifically with Catholics. After I control for contact with mainline Protestants, contact with Catholics remain significant.

Conclusion

In this chapter I tested the claim made by deliberative democrats that cross-cutting exposure will produce political tolerance. I found that previous research testing this claim was incomplete because it did not account for the source of a cross-cutting message. My results show that exposure to rationales for dissonant points of view only produces political tolerance when the rationales are attributed to a political in-group, in this case Catholics. And in this context, the increase in tolerance is restricted to those that had a medium amount of previous contact with Catholics. In contrast, when the same rationales are attributed to a political out-group, exposure is related to a decrease in political tolerance. The findings expand our understanding of cross-cutting exposure and
public opinion by demonstrating how source credibility matters might matter for deliberative democracy.

The implications of this analysis for evangelical-Catholic interaction specifically are mixed. Overall, the mainline Protestant treatment had a larger negative effect at the aggregate level than the Catholic treatment had a positive effect. Moreover, the positive effect of the Catholic treatment was limited to those with moderate amounts of previous contact with Catholics. For those with minimal amounts of previous contact, the Catholic treatment has the potential to decrease tolerance. Given that my sample consists of donors to Christian Right groups, it would still appear that Christian Right affiliation alone is not enough to make Catholics a credible source of political information. But it is perhaps the case that those evangelicals that are more active in Christian Right groups and have more exposure to Catholics in that context, are more tolerant as a result of that exposure. I cannot say for sure.

The survey-experiment provides little insight into the mechanisms explaining why contact and exposure to Catholics might increase tolerance for evangelical Protestants. Theorists suggest there are both affective and cognitive elements at work. To probe more fully the process behind this causal relationship, I turn now to a qualitative analysis of one particular evangelical-Catholic network.
Chapter 6
The Case of Evangelical-Catholic Interaction in the Witherspoon Fellowship

What evangelical-Catholic interaction looks like is difficult to gauge through survey questions. How this interaction might increase the tolerance of the participants is a challenge to measure as well. In this chapter, I continue my assessment of the relationship between cross-cutting exposure and political tolerance for evangelical Protestants through interviews and observation of evangelical Protestant and Catholic interaction at an internship program at one Christian Right organization.

***

It is Labor Day morning, and it is warm for September but not too humid in Washington, D.C. The dormitory on Capital Hill is quiet except for one room at the end of the 4th-floor hall where seven recent college graduates gather, some standing, some sitting, engaging in small talk as they wait for the orientation leaders to arrive. One graduate explains that he had a summer job at Starbucks after graduating last May and purchased a cappuccino maker with his employee discount before he left; a few of the new acquaintances hover around the hissing machine in the corner and compare caffeine addictions, a gateway to informal chatter not too demanding for complete strangers.

Well after 9:30 a.m. (the scheduled starting time), two orientation leaders – young men in their mid-20s – hustle into the room bringing with them Dunkin Donuts and a paper bag full of egg and cheese sandwiches to share. They chat briefly with a female leader who had arrived earlier, while the college graduates make their way over to the food. Everyone eventually finds a place to sit around the dorm room. With the
graduates quiet, settled and contentedly chewing the breakfast foods, the leaders proceed
to introduce themselves and then suggest before talking about anything else the group go
around the room and share their name, their college, their biggest pet peeve, their
favorite band in high school and finally, their religious affiliation.

The first graduate to the left of the leaders goes first. Pausing midway through his
egg and cheese sandwich, Ted tells the group he attended a small public university in
Pennsylvania, he dislikes cell phones, he doesn’t really have a favorite band, and he is an
evangelical Protestant. “But I’m not really linked to one denomination,” he explains. A
few minutes later, Ann concludes her introduction: “I’m Plymouth Brethren.” Kate is
next: “I’m Catholic.” Dave: “I’ve been part of a few denominations, but right now I’d
say I’m Southern Baptist.” Derek: “I grew up evangelical but I’m in the process of
becoming Roman Catholic. I consider myself Catholic even though I haven’t officially
joined the Church.” Brenda: “My father is a Southern Baptist preacher; I’m Southern
Baptist.” Kelly: “I was American Baptist when we lived in West Virginia, and I’m
Southern Baptist now that we live in South Carolina.” An eighth group member, Liam,
arrives late, and after pulling up a chair in front of the cappuccino maker and introducing
himself says, “I considered becoming a priest, so obviously I’m Catholic.”

The orientation leaders introduce themselves as a Pentecostal, a Presbyterian
considering Catholicism, and an evangelical convert to Catholicism. The recent college
graduates sit silently. “Just so you are aware,” says the Presbyterian orientation leader at
the conclusion of the introductions, “the Fellowship brings Christianity under one roof so
to speak and this can bring tension. During some semesters, the Protestant and Catholic
debate has almost been constant….You should take part in discussions [between Protestants and Catholics]. You should stay up until 1 a.m. discussing the differences. If you have questions about Catholicism and Protestantism, this is the place to ask the questions.”

The place is the Witherspoon Fellowship (WF), a civic and cultural leadership development program of the Family Research Council (FRC), a nonprofit public policy advocacy group which happens to be a prominent leader in the Christian Right movement. These students – five Protestants and three Catholics – will live together in this dorm as they complete a semester of study and an internship at FRC, just a few blocks away in Washington, D.C. As is typically the case in the program, within four months time the associate director of the program, Douglas Minson, expects “the Protestant reformation will play out all over again.”

The composition of the WF student body provides a unique opportunity to study evangelical-Catholic deliberation up close. Though it has never been an explicit intention of the program to bring Catholics and evangelicals together, Catholics and Protestants have crossed paths in all semesters but one since the fellowship began in 1997. (There

---

1 The program was named after Reverend Doctor John Witherspoon (1723-1794), the only active clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence. He is thought to be the most evangelical of the founders. During his time as the president of the College of New Jersey (later Princeton University), he was committed to preparing men for public service.

2 The Fellows participate in weekly seminars that cover a number of disciplines related to public life, including theology, philosophy, politics, history, ethics, art, and architecture. The academic portion of the program consists of four classes designed to inspire a Christian vision for citizenship and political involvement. The four classes – Natural Law, Family, Civil Society and the State, Culture and Christian Mission and finally, Christianity and American Political Order – are essentially graduate-level seminars that meet every Monday of the semester. Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays are spent in an intern role with a particular office within FRC. On Fridays, an instructor leads the group on a field study which typically consists of a study of American history and Christian heritage through the study of architecture in Washington, D.C. and surrounding areas.
are anywhere between eight to 14 fellows per semester, depending on the quality of the applicants.) One semester all the students were Protestant. On average, one-third of the student body each semester is Catholic. While many students are political science majors, others study philosophy, economics or theology. Some attend private colleges – Protestant or Catholic respectively – but many attend public universities.³

Students apply to WF for various reasons. Some students are encouraged to apply by their parents who are supporters or financial contributors of the Family Research Council. Many others hear about the program from former fellows that attend their university. A few Christian colleges offer course credit for completion of the program. In a small number of cases, college graduates have been looking for job opportunities in the Christian Right movement or in Washington, D.C. and view WF as a means to that end.

The religious mixing within WF is striking on a number of levels, not the least of which happens to be its organic origins. The Family Research Council is not an organization known for its religious diversity. It is not known as a particular haven for evangelical-Catholic deliberation. The organization is a brainchild of James Dobson of Focus on the Family fame, and is largely depicted by media and academics as a homogeneous (white evangelical Christian conservative) advocacy group. FRC, like most Christian Right organization, tends to rely on the Republican Party to help achieve its agenda. While a number of Catholics work at FRC, two even in prominent leadership

³ One student each semester (on average) is from Slovakia where a sister-organization exists. The student is almost always Catholic. Because my project is primarily interested in evangelical Protestants and traditional Catholics in the American context, I do not spend time outlining the ways cultural and national identities might moderate the effects of inter-religious dialogue. This is a worthwhile endeavor, but it is beyond the scope of my agenda here. I only include the experience of American Catholics at WF in the analysis below.
positions, FRC largely maintains an evangelical identity. The current president, Tony Perkins, is a charismatic evangelical. The literature coming out of FRC is predominantly fideist (primarily based on religious faith rather than general reason) in nature, less palatable to the traditional Catholic orientation, and the outreach to pastors conducted by the organization is heavily skewed towards evangelicals, charismatics in particular according to one insider source.

Thus, observers as well as potential evangelical applicants of the program are surprised to discover Catholics and evangelicals sharing the same political space within its walls. Generally speaking then, evangelical students entering the program are typically unaware of its cross-cutting dimensions until after the start of the semester. It is safe to say, from the evangelical side at least, that these students are not self-selecting into a cross-cutting network.

The experience of Brenda, the Southern Baptist introduced in the opening of this chapter, illustrates this well; Brenda chose not to go on a mission trip the summer before the WF semester began because she discovered Catholics were leading the trip. Yet a few months later she was assigned to room with a devout Roman Catholic at WF. The application material asks only that the student has a demonstrated “Christian commitment.” The web site and application material describe the program as “ecumenical” but most evangelical students said they never considered exactly what that might mean. Thus the evangelical fellows are not necessarily individuals that are

---

4 No one at FRC was able (or at least was willing) to tell me exactly what percentage of the staff at the national office is Catholic. Estimates ranged anywhere from 20 to 30 percent.
predisposed to deliberative discussion across lines of religious difference, nor are the evangelicals ones that necessarily embrace evangelical-Catholic unity. (Though, they are college-educated and politically aware enough to apply for the fellowship.)

Catholics applicants, on the other hand, are well aware that they are entering evangelical territory. While many consider themselves conservative Republicans, many are drawn to WF for its academic reputation and express minimal enthusiasm for FRC. They have hesitancies about the tone FRC uses at times to communicate its agenda, and they are more interested in working for political change outside the Republican Party structure. According to one Catholic student, “Abortion trumps everything. Without it, we don’t know how we would articulate why we are Republicans.”

To be sure, however, the fellows are generally like-minded when it comes to American politics on a grand scale. Whether they are Protestant or Catholic, they are at the very least orthodox and conservative in their views. Over the course of my research, cross-cutting conversation was isolated to religious matters (e.g. Mariology) or political matters that for many lie at the periphery of their convictions (e.g. Wal-Mart and labor unions), though, there was considerable debate concerning the role of religion in politics. Former fellows often pursue careers in Washington, and to my knowledge no former fellow is working for a Democratic member of Congress while many work for Republicans. Political diversity within WF is quite bracketed and should not be overstated.

However, relative to other circles these individuals may find themselves in, particularly the handful of evangelicals that attend evangelical colleges, WF offers a
departure from the typical social network these youth select into. The WF network includes two distinct religious identities, places them in close quarters and asks them to deliberate over political philosophy in an institutional setting. The classroom activities help facilitate this by assigning one student each week to write a response paper to the week’s set of readings and another student to critique the first student’s response. Disagreement is encouraged in this assignment, to say the least. The significant differences between evangelical and Catholic approaches to politics as well as their understanding of religion and society do not stay buried in such a context. Students are required to address one another by title (e.g. Mr. Smith or Ms. Johnson), which one Fellow referred to as “mandated respect.” Fellows told me this improved the deliberative process tremendously because disagreement was routinely expressed in a professional manner.

So what does evangelical-Catholic dialogue look like in such a setting and does it meet the standards of debate elevated by deliberative theorists, such as reasonableness, inclusion and equality? If intergroup contact reduces prejudice, how does it reduce prejudice between evangelicals and Catholics? This chapter addresses these questions and others relevant to our understanding of deliberative democracy and religious diversity. When I began researching WF, I expected to witness a group of strangers quickly transformed into cobelligerents, united by their political convictions and inspired by the faith and beliefs of the other. I expected evangelicals to reevaluate their predispositions and further examine their attitudes towards out-groups in general given what I found in the data analysis in chapter 5. Meanwhile, given the distinctiveness of
the Catholic tradition, I expected few Catholics to reconsider their religious beliefs per se, yet I did expect them to have a greater appreciation for the distinctive devotional life of evangelicals after witnessing it up close.⁵

What I found instead was much more complicated and somewhat less pretty. To be sure, evangelicals and Catholics did agree on many political issues and at the end of the day, they found common cause with members of the alternate religious tradition. In many cases, evangelicals reevaluated their attitudes towards Catholicism and were surprised at the respect they had for Catholics by the end of the program. A few evangelicals considered converting to Catholicism following WF, and in three known cases during the 2-year period under study they eventually did. While to my knowledge only one nominal Catholic converted to Protestantism soon after their time at WF, I heard indirectly that a few Catholics were inspired by the devotional practices of the evangelical tradition.

But what was undoubtedly clear is that there is no escaping the personal when it comes to evangelical-Catholic deliberation in this context. While in many cases the fruits of deliberation existed, it was the affective ties to one another solidified the end result – one way or the other. Exposure to Catholic points of view could only do much when it came to increasing awareness for evangelicals without the relationship with a Catholic

⁵ While this dissertation is primarily concerned with the effect exposure to Catholics has on evangelical Protestants, this chapter briefly addresses the effect exposure to evangelical Protestants has on Catholics in the Witherspoon Fellowship. My expectation that the effect on each group will be asymmetrical is primarily based on the anecdotal evidence reviewed in chapter 1 and 2. In short, I came across few examples of Catholics at the elite level converting or reconsidering their religious beliefs after exposure to evangelical Protestants while I found the reverse to be true for evangelical Protestants.
facilitating that learning. Thus, it was not just the message but also the relationship with
the messenger that brought about democratic change, if it happened at all.

Secondly, uniqueness was not sacrificed for unity at WF. Even within a program
designed to focus on the “highest common denominator” (according to WF staff)
evangelicals and Catholics remained in their separate corners as much as was possible.
They had distinct social identities that were hard pressed to merge into a collective
identity. They naturally make the effort to showcase their distinctions even while being
encouraged not to do so. (Therefore, it is not so much a shared identity that drives
evangelicals to respond positively to the Catholic cue in chapter 5, rather it is earned
credibility.)

Currently, the differences do not result in political division. As long as abortion
and same-sex marriage are part of the political discussion, the two groups will be united
as they perceive the same threat. In other words, they may live in separate corners of a
room, but they are nevertheless in the same room of the diverse political house called the
United States. That said, if remodeling is done and different walls are built, and a
different enemy threatens, evangelicals and Catholics could potentially find themselves
working in different rooms. The cooperation and togetherness between evangelicals and
Catholics witnessed in American politics today is thus more fragile that we might first
realize. A lot depends on the direction the Christian Right movement takes, the presence
and voice of Catholics in it, and the presence of other interfaith political networks.
Examining evangelical-Catholic interaction with a sample of young people enables me to speculate about the future of this relationship.\(^6\)

This chapter expands on the results first reported in chapter 5. Contact with Catholics moderates the effect of the Catholic message on political tolerance. Why a certain amount of contact with Catholic is necessary for the cross-cutting message to produce tolerance is explored in this chapter. I examine beliefs and characteristics of Catholicism as well as Catholics that might give Catholics credibility in the eyes of these evangelicals.

**Methodological Approach**

This chapter is based on my time spent with the eight fellows introduced above over the course of one semester at WF and 13 additional in-depth interviews conducted in 2007 and 2008 with Fellows that completed the program between 2005 and 2007. (See Appendix G for a complete record of my interviews and observations.) The time frame was selected to allow for multiple semesters and experiences to be represented, but also to limit the time that had passed between the fellowship experience and my interview. I had less confidence in the accuracy of individual accounts of events that took place many years ago, and it was more difficult to find other Fellows to corroborate those experiences, thus it was necessarily to designate a certain time period for the research.

Also, I selected the time frame to keep the leadership of the program constant. The

---

\(^6\) Even though the Witherspoon Fellowship is explicitly part of the Family Research Council (FRC) which is a prominent organization in the Christian Right movement, its leadership at the time of this analysis remained distinct from FRC and it maintained a separate agenda. The program sought to train up future public leaders, not necessarily Christian Right leaders. (However, numerous fellows do go on to work for Christian Right organizations.) Therefore, the findings reported here should be generalized to the Christian Right at-large with some caution.
founder of the program – Alan Crippen – left in 2005 to establish a similar program, the John Jay Institute in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The presence of the associate director, Douglas Minson, remained constant throughout the time, and he was in charge of the curriculum and had the most contact with the fellows.

In 2008, the Fellowship was undergoing a change in leadership with the departure of Minson and the curriculum was subsequently changing – both of which resulted in fewer Catholic applicants. The program appeared to be less deliberative and more activist in nature, more directly inline with the mission of FRC. The homogeneity of the student body in particular prevented my research from continuing into 2008. The implications of all this for the future of evangelical-Catholic cooperation will be discussed in the following chapter.

For the purposes of this project, the Witherspoon Fellowship is an instrumental case study that facilitates our understanding of cross-cutting dialogue between evangelicals and Catholics. Case study method is the “intrinsic study of a valued particular” (Stake, 2000, 439). In this case, the Witherspoon fellows provide a window into the world of evangelical-Catholic dialogue, and given their age, a window into the future of such dialogue. These fellows are not meant to be representative of participants in the Christian Right or members in their respective denominations. The case is simply an “an instance of an important theoretical concept or process” (Ragin 1992, 2) given its inclusion of Catholics and evangelicals in a deliberative setting. The sample is one of purpose and convenience. I know Catholic-evangelical dialogue occurs here, and I seek to understand the impact of those conversations. Case study is also a useful research
strategy for understanding social movements (Snow and Trom 2002), the movement here being the Christian Right.

Case studies involve multiple sources of data and this case is no different. While I primarily rely on in-depth interviews with Fellows, I also conducted direct observation and participant observation during one semester to trace the impact of Catholic-evangelical dialogue on these participants. I also read a sampling of the response papers students wrote during the academic portion of the fellowship. This was all done for the sake of triangulation; I sought to cross-check findings from one interview with additional interviews and observation.\(^7\) I used an interpretivist approach to analyze my data, that is, I tried to understand the perspectives and frameworks my subjects used to make sense of their experiences in WF. Interpretivist methods are meaning-focused and person-centered (Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea 2006).

During the semester of study, the Fellows were repeatedly interviewed over the course of the program to better gauge any change taking place in their perceptions of the deliberation and themselves. The semester long observation also allowed me to corroborate former Fellows’ accounts of the experiences as well. During the semester, access to the fellows was limited to time out of the classroom, apart from one academic session that I was permitted to observe. (WF staff believed my presence might compromise the intimacy of certain class discussions which sometimes involved sensitive matters. I was able to confirm that the session I observed was representative of

group dynamics apparent in other sessions.) I was also able to observe a morning-long orientation led by former Fellows. I spent time socially with the Fellows; I attended a pizza party, and I went to Catholic mass with a few of the Catholic Fellows on their lunch break. Almost all the interviews were conducted in person, often over lunch or coffee near FRC. I also emailed Fellows throughout the semester to casually ask how the semester was going.

Apart from the semester of focused study, which former Fellows I spoke with would generally be considered a snowball sample. I intentionally sought out Fellows that were not referred to me to confirm my generated sample was representative of fellows from the time period under study (2005-2007). I found no great differences in the make-up of students from semester to semester, nor between the fellows that I had been referred to and those that I sought out on my own. All Fellows that I spoke with were guaranteed anonymity in order to speak frankly about their relationships with other Fellows. (I use pseudonyms here.) I established consent informally at the beginning of each interview. To guard against bias as much as was possible, I initially told students that I was studying political leadership programs sponsored by Christian organizations.

---

8 The Fellows I observed over the course of one semester appeared less academically inclined than Fellows from other semesters. In other semesters, the Fellows were given a stipend and all living expenses were covered by FRC. Complete funding was no longer given to every Fellow at the time of my observation, some were funded in part and others received outside scholarships. However, this may have affected the caliber of students that applied to the program. If anything, the semester of concentrated study underestimated the intensity of disagreement and the amount of dialogue between Catholics and evangelicals.
At the time, I was looking into additional Christian leadership programs though not to the same extent.  

*Interview Research and Process Tracing*

In an ideal world, I could have been present for every instance of disagreement between an evangelical and a Catholic during the semester. If I could have spent two full years living with multiple groups of Fellows, I no doubt could have generated enormous amounts of data. However, because I was excluded from the majority of in-class discussions as well as not being able to anticipate many cross-cutting conversations that took place between the hours of midnight and 2 a.m., I relied on in-depth interviews with people that did participate in those late-night conversations and were present for all classes over the course of a semester.

Interviews of course have their limitations. “The interview, in a sense, stands outside the stream of interactions we seek to understand and, thus, offers only an indirect basis for accessing them…. interviews do] not allow me to observe everyday language actually being exchanged, to account for the rituals and conformity pressures in group negotiations, or to trace changes in framing over the course of a group discussion (see Walsh 2004)” (Soss, 2004, 139).

Nevertheless, I found interviews to be well-suited for the research questions at hand. Over the course of the interviews, students recounted to me their impressions of

---

9 By the end of the semester (and by the end of the interview in the case of former Fellows), many took notice of my particular interest in their conservations with Protestants/Catholics. Because the students had already been primed that the Protestant-Catholic debate was a major feature of WF during their orientation, I do not believe I brought attention to a dynamic that was not already there to begin with. Certain individuals were less engaged in the debate than others, and so I was careful to not assume a particular level of experience with this dynamic.
their fellow students, their uncertainty about some of their political attitudes, and their hesitations about Catholicism or Protestantism. As much as is ever possible, I was able to see “inside their head” and map out what Catholic-Protestant interaction triggered for these students. Observation alone would never have allowed me to understand the internal deliberation that was taking place.

In addition, a significant purpose of the WF case study was to tap into the causal mechanisms behind the results demonstrated in chapters 4 and 5. In the previous chapters, I investigated the effect of cross-cutting messages on evangelical Protestants’ political opinions towards issues and groups. Catholic messages significantly affected attitudes in both cases. What is less clear is why they had an effect. The quantitative analysis reported in chapters 4 and 5 provides little insight into the causal chain linking the independent variable (Catholic message) with the dependent variables (issue positions and political tolerance). What about these Catholic messages makes certain evangelicals’ less conservative on immigration policy? Why are evangelicals more tolerant after hearing a dissonant viewpoint from a Catholic? I did not necessarily ask evangelicals why they changed their opinion about Catholics; instead, I asked them to describe their opinion and then looked for how the reasons used to justify that opinion changed.

Only recently have researchers begun to take seriously a new method designed to analyze the causal process behind such relationships. Process tracing is a method that “attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the
dependent variable” (George and Bennett, 2005, 206 check page). “Methodologically, process-tracing provides the how-we-come-to-know nuts and bolts for mechanism-based accounts of social change” (Checkel, 2007, page 4).

Interviews are particularly well-suited for identifying causal mechanisms in this case. “Interviews can shed light on the hidden elements of political action that are not clear from analysis of political outcomes”.... ‘When interviewees have been significant players, when their memories are strong, and when they are willing to disclose their knowledge of events in an impartial manner, elite interviews will arguably be the most important instrument in the process tracer’s data collection toolkit.” (Tansey 2007, 7-9).

What follows is an account of WF based on the interviews and observations I gathered. What emerges is a picture of democratic deliberation that is sometimes messy, sometimes lop-sided, but democratically fruitful nonetheless, particularly for evangelicals.

**Personal Histories and Social Identities within Evangelical-Catholic Interaction**

Right before orientation began that day in September, I heard three evangelicals joking about “being raised” by James Dobson. Dobson is the founder of Focus on the

---

10 Though process tracing has only been under the limelight recently in methodology circles, interest in causal mechanisms has been around for decades and has gone by other names (“process tracing” George, 1979; “……” Dessler, 1991; “pattern matching” Campbell 1975). In *Redesigning Social Inquiry*, Brady and Collier refer to the concept as a causal-process observation: “[a]n insight or piece of data that provides information about context, process or mechanism, and that contributes distinctive leverage in causal inference” (278-8). At the heart of this technique, however, is a process by which one variable affects another. The method is not without its critics. Nathaniel Beck (2006) takes issue with Brady and Collier’s attention to causal-process observations and argues that in the end they are difficult to observe and might not be that useful. The time spent trying to unearth unobservable decision-making would be better spent gathering more data.
Family, an evangelical Christian (but predominantly Protestant) ministry that produces material based on biblical principles designed to support the traditional family unit. Brenda, a Southern Baptist, shared with the others that her parents named her brother “Dobson” after the evangelical leader. “Are you serious?” one evangelical said very amused. The conversation soon drifted to a popular children’s radio program produced by Focus – “Adventures in Odyssey” – a program they all enjoyed growing up, and admitted to still enjoying today even as adults. While some Catholics are familiar with Focus on the Family, the Catholic fellow present here remained a quiet bystander to the conversation taking place amongst the evangelicals in the room.

The anecdote helps to illustrate the fact that not only does WF bring together two religious identities, but it brings together two distinct social identities as well. Social identity theory attempts to explain how psychological attachment to a group affects one’s perceptions and attitudes. Political scientists often discuss the relevance of such identities in terms of “group consciousness.” The term incorporates a self-awareness of group membership and a subsequent attachment to the group which then contributes to a set of particular opinions (Miller, Gurin, Gurin, and Malanchuk 1981; Conover 1984). Within the evangelical-Catholic partnership are two groups that are not only divided by what they believe doctrinally speaking, but also by what they consume culturally, their family histories and experiences. They are members of different groups and thus have different group leaders and heroes; in the last decade many Catholics have named their child “John Paul” after Pope John Paul II while James Dobson is a hero to many contemporary evangelicals.
These separate identities pose a challenge to Christian Right leaders hoping to appeal to a broad base of religious conservatives and inspire collective action through symbols, heroes and narratives. Sociologists and political scientists agree that a social movement is dependent upon a shared interpretation of grievances in order to succeed (Snow et al. 1986). As Bruce and Wilcox (2000) argue, "Social movement organizations begin by trying to convince potential members that they share a common identity, and that identity has political implications… Once a group identity is in place, social movement organizations attempt to turn that into group consciousness" (18).

I observed a number of things at WF that suggest a collective identity for evangelical Protestants and Catholics is difficult to bring about and sustain, but is significantly more likely to happen if there is intergroup contact. In most cases the Fellows initially viewed the other religious tradition as indeed “the Other.” Political socialization in the family, especially as it relates to evangelical attitudes towards Catholicism, was apparent as I had the opportunity to ask evangelicals about their attitudes towards other faith traditions, including Catholicism. Lingering prejudice was evident at the start of the program. In numerous cases when asked about their relationships with other Fellows in the program, evangelicals would begin by telling me about what they were raised to believe about Catholics. They would recall what they were taught, and in many cases what they believed during the initial days at WF.

Ted, a non-denominational Protestant: “I grew up hearing ridiculous things about Catholicism, like they worship Mary and so forth…. That is what I would still hear if I talked to my dad.”
Connor, a Pentecostal: “I was raised that Catholics are crazy people, they worship all these things.”

Angie, Plymouth Brethren: “If I asked my parents today, they would say ‘Do you know what Catholics believe? They worship Mary. They believe in works-based salvation,’ blah, blah.”

Jenny, Reformed Baptist, “I grew up believing that it would be difficult if not impossible to be consistent Catholic and be a Christian.”

These students respected their parents and were grateful for their evangelical heritage. They indeed saw their evangelical identity as being distinct from Catholicism. One evangelical said, “What they think the makeup of Christianity is, is not what I think it is.” But after their experience at WF, all the evangelicals I spoke with appeared to perceive Catholicism differently. The tone of their psychological attachment to their group identity as it relates to out-groups appears to have slightly softened, though a line in the sand remained. In a later section of this chapter I will explain in greater depth the causal mechanism behind this change and examine whether or not the shift carries over into a more generalized tolerance towards out-groups at-large, but the change was real, dramatic and personal. Questions of faith have the utmost saliency for these students. They are not treated lightly. To adjust or even slightly temper one’s understanding of a religious out-group is significant.

The change was most often expressed as an admission that a Catholic really could be a Christian. “I know there are Catholics that really love Jesus,” says Brenda. Angie said just a few weeks into the program: “I know Derek [a Catholic in the program] doesn’t believe he gets to heaven by works.” Catholics also reported feeling more
respected by evangelicals at the end of the semester at WF. Jim, a Catholic from El Salvador said, “Protestants came up to me at the end of the fellowship and said, ‘you know, I have a lot more respect for Catholics after meeting you.’” Derek, who was roommates with Ted (quoted above), said this of his Protestant roommate: “He never encountered Catholicism before, but I think he is seeing some validity in it.”

For Catholics, the change (if one occurred at all) was less dramatic. Most of the Catholics I spoke with had previous exposure to Protestants. Some had family members that were evangelicals, others were converts from Protestantism, and others had friends that were Protestant. Also, it is important to keep in mind that these Catholics came into the program expecting to be in the minority, thus they were more likely to maintain their identity in the effort to remain distinct (Tropp and Pettigrew 2005). They had their “guard up” so to speak. Moreover, in general, I found the Catholics in this particular case to have explored the inter-workings of their faith with more intellectual rigor than most evangelicals prior to WF.

Catholics’ understanding of Protestantism and their impressions of the community did not appear to change over the course of the semester. If anything, the exposure to Protestants in this context further intensified their commitment to Catholicism, and in effect, their group identity. The only evidence of an effect from Protestant exposure came in the form of a behavioral change, and this was shared with me second-hand as I could not immediately observe this myself. According to the associate director of WF, he has seen Catholics reconsider their personal commitment to devotion in their faith. In other words, evangelical individualism may have worn off on a
few Catholics and made them consider their relationship with Christ in addition to their relationship with the church.

The Catholics I interviewed all made distinctions between themselves and the evangelicals in the program. A few expressed disrespect for evangelical Protestant thinking. “I think there’s a general tendency in Protestantism to lean towards the ‘we just can’t know’ argument,” said one Catholic woman regarding biblical teaching on contraception. Another described them as too individualistic. Mary said, “Protestants seemed to think we were all sheep; perhaps we thought they were a bit of the loose-cannon side of the spectrum and needed to grow up and stop being such radical individualists.” A few Catholic fellows told me they felt “judged” by evangelicals for going to the bars and drinking alcohol on the weekends.11

Evangelicals, likewise, reported feeling judged by Catholics. Jenny, a reformed Baptist said, “Sometimes it got personal…. Catholics perceived evangelicals as ‘Jesus and me’ with no authority. It was hard not to resent that because I grew up in a structured and reverent church.” In some cases, she said, Catholics came across as “uncharitable, defensive and frustrated.” Suspicion about Catholicism never disappeared amongst the evangelicals I spoke with. One evangelical said a year after completing the program, “I generally don’t view Catholics as Christians at this point. I think there can be Christians in the Catholic Church but I don’t think they can be fed spiritually there for long.”

11 Drinking is more likely to be frowned upon by conservative evangelicals than conservative Catholics. This was reinforced by FRC rules which prohibited alcohol from being served at FRC functions.
Thus, dialogue has its limits, even at WF. One Catholic woman told me, “You can’t perfectly converse. I can’t talk to Protestants before too long without hitting a wall.” The “wall” to which she refers is ultimately a question over authority. (The Catholics believe tradition, the Church and the Pope have authority equal to that of the Bible. The Protestants believe in the reformation doctrine of sola scriptura, and trust only the Bible as a source of special revelation.)

Also, certain evangelicals at WF seemed more open to dialogue with Catholics and more open to persuasion in general. Though variation across evangelicals is hard to measure with such a small sample, those most intellectually curious – as evidenced by an interest in graduate school – often times seemed more willing to reconsider their attitudes in light of Catholic arguments. Moreover, those evangelicals from southern states seemed to harbor a little more prejudice against Catholics and were more reluctant to reconsider their opinions.

In sum, neither evangelicals nor Catholic arrive at WF as blank slates. They come with distinct social identities and religious beliefs. Both also come with a set of expectations for the other. They come with stereotypes. However misinformed, the attitudes they hold immediately mediate any exposure that they have to the other – who they are and their positions – making forming a collective identity across religious traditions within the pro-family social movement all the more challenging.

Evidence of a Collective Identity Emerges at WF

It is especially interesting to examine the dynamic between evangelicals and Catholics at WF through the lens of social identity theory, given that such a serious
attempt was made by the WF/FRC staff to create a collective identity amongst the
Fellows. They desired the group to unite around an orthodox Christian identity. The
associate director, Douglas Minson, who spent the most time with the Fellows of any
staff member, said he consistently tried to “focus on the highest common denominator”
and “unearth deep commonalities.” An Anglican himself, it came quite naturally to
Minson to integrate liturgy with evangelical-style devotionalism. Each Monday morning
before classes began, the Fellows read together from the Book of Common Prayer and
sang hymns acapella. Creeds from the early church were recited. Minson would always
end the day with a benediction: “You are the light of the world, a city on a hill” from
Matthew 5. Many semesters included a “Life Together” component – a week night
gathering when the fellows would discuss living together as a Christian community.

To some extent, evangelicals and Catholic rallied around the mission of the
program and their shared political convictions. Fellows came to WF with a similar
orientation to politics believing their religious beliefs were relevant to the public sphere.
The four classes – Natural Law, Family, Civil Society and the State, Culture and
Christian Mission and finally, Christianity and American Political Order – used readings
if not immediately palatable to both traditions than at least balanced. Assigned readings
included works by C.S. Lewis, Thomas Aquinas, John Calvin, Pope John Paul II. No
Fellow I spoke to made mention of the readings being more favorable to one religious
tradition over another.

Moreover, regular attention was paid to the common threat that brought
evangelicals and Catholics together in the first place, namely untethered liberalism and
secular humanism. When a group perceives greater differences across groups than within their own group, than a collective identity is more likely to develop (Turner et al. 1994). By focusing on just who they are against, collective action comes about more easily (Gamson 1992). In the words of one Catholic Fellow when speaking about religious conservatives facing pro-choice and same sex marriage advocates, “We must be united or die.”

However, the collective identity that emerges amongst the Fellows does not mirror FRC nor does it fall in lock-step with their parents’ Christian Right movement. In fact, amongst evangelicals and Catholics alike, by the end of the program came a realization that their convictions about religion in the public sphere slightly opposed the agenda of FRC even. The distinction was not as surprising coming from the Catholics: “It’s a little too evangelical/Republican/pro-mobilization” said one Catholic of FRC. But even evangelicals expressed quite the opposite of allegiance by the end of WF. Over the course of the semester, in some small way, FRC became an out-group to these young people as they defined themselves in contrast to the organization – or perhaps the generation – they were interning at three days a week.

One evangelical was offered a job in FRC’s media department following the fellowship but declined the offer. “I felt I would be compromising,” she said. “I agreed with them on all the issues, but the tone just frustrated me.” She went on to describe FRC as “too narrowly focused” and more activism-oriented than what she wanted. One evangelical woman who was working for FRC prior to her semester at WF completed the semester and decided she didn’t want to go back to her job with FRC. She accepted a
position working for a member of Congress on Capital Hill instead. Another evangelical male distanced himself from FRC somewhat when he said in response to my question about his impressions of the organization: “There is no reason why they shouldn’t exist. Every interest should have a group.”

One evangelical Protestant, Molly, described herself entering WF as the “gung-ho type.” She had spoken out against homosexuality during her college years at an all-girl liberal arts college, and had received death threats as a result. “I was like ‘let’s stick it to ‘em’” she says. “I wasn’t the type to study theology and politics. I wanted to get some anti-gay marriage laws passed.” A little over a year after completing the program Molly said to me, “We would all still describe ourselves as Christian conservatives, but we don’t think Ann Coulter ‘woo-hoo,’ and hold pictures of dead fetuses. Though there is a place for that. We are much more about building up civil society. Let’s have babies and raise them to be good Christians.”

The “push back” from FRC on the part of evangelicals may have something to do with a generational divide. Studies suggest that younger evangelicals are politically distinct from their older counterparts, specifically they are less likely to be Republican but just as likely to be conservative (Cox 2007). But in this case, other factors apart from generational differences contributed to the collective identity. The assigned readings and class discussion routinely highlighted the importance of civil society and mediating institutions as the means to living out the Christian faith in the public sphere. Civic society and social pluralism, and not interest group lobbying, was celebrated as the means to improving society.
Moreover, Catholics in the program provided these particular evangelicals with a model for how Christian orthodoxy can function apart from party politics. Through their relationship with Catholics, evangelicals encountered religious conservatives that were just as opposed if not more opposed to legalized abortion than they were, but believed the best way to save unborn children was to volunteer at crisis pregnancy centers and be involved in community outreach.\textsuperscript{12} By the end of the program, I sensed evangelicals had a renewed appreciation for civic society and had even a small amount of disdain for the efforts made by FRC.

Apart from direct conversations about politics, even informal talk within a group such as WF can help redefine the boundaries of a group identity. “It does not take participation in a social movement, or even extended political participation to develop social identities with political relevance. Just as activists within social movements collectively construct their identity, people doing less dramatic political behaviors, such as informal talk, can also collectively define what it means to be people like themselves in the world” (Walsh 2004, 54). These evangelicals and Catholics came to view themselves as Witherspoon Fellows. Alumni of the program immediately belong to the Witherspoon Society, which now includes hundreds of graduates of the program. The Society serves as a place to continue deliberations that began while at WF, while also providing an opportunity to network and socialize.

\textsuperscript{12} There is nothing uniquely Catholic about this approach of course. Civil society is valued by both Catholics and Protestants. However, in the context of FRC and WF, the Catholic fellows were more likely to advocate for civic engagement at the local level and not praise interest group lobbying as readily as Protestants.
Causal Mechanisms: It is both the Message and the Messenger

What explains these shifts in identity? Why do evangelicals appear to be less prejudice towards Catholics at the conclusion of WF? Previous work has identified two primary bases for political tolerance judgments – affective and cognitive – which are generally consistent with the theoretical assumptions outlined in chapter 3.

First, for evangelicals, exposure to Catholics means exposure to new information. With new information about other groups, people learn that their identity and cultural beliefs are not the only way to make sense of the world around them (Pettigrew, 1997, 174). For example, Mutz (2002) finds that awareness of legitimate rationales for oppositional views causes people to more willing to defend the civil liberties of people with whom they disagree.\(^ {13} \) “The capacity to see that there is more than one side to an issue, that a political conflict is, in fact, a legitimate controversy with rationales on both sides, translates to greater willingness to extend civil liberties to even those groups whose political views one dislikes a great deal” (Mutz 2002, 122).

Evangelical exposure to Catholic views at WF not only resulted in evangelicals perceiving those views as legitimate; in some cases evangelicals were persuaded by “Catholic” arguments. This was most clearly the case when it came to natural law. Natural law is of course not exclusive to the Catholic tradition, however it has come to be associated with the Catholic tradition much more so than evangelical tradition, the

\(^ {13} \) Kuklinski et al. (1991) also identify a cognitive element to political tolerance judgments. However, in their experiments subjects are asked to think about the “consequences” of an opposing group committing an act or hosting an event. This form of deliberation is not associated with increased tolerance.
latter of which has grown more dependent upon special revelation (the Bible) to the exclusion of general revelation as the basis of its claims. The concept of natural law posits that God’s law is self-evident, that is, it is wired into the very nature of things and can be understood through reason. Thus, there are unchanging principles that are part of the natural world that define what is right and good.

When asked about differences between Catholics and evangelicals at WF, one Catholic fellow Ryan explained the difference in terms of natural law:

Because Catholics believe that all men are able to reason together about the common good, Catholics do not assume that they have to convert people as a prerequisite for political agreement. Many evangelicals and charismatics, however, believe that reason was utterly destroyed at the Fall, and therefore man cannot reason properly without the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

Interestingly enough, this man’s evangelical peers agreed with him full-heartedly by the end of WF. Jenny, a Reformed Baptist said, “Natural law is a good idea because it is a good idea. We right-wing Christian don’t have the corner on truth.” Another evangelical said his thinking about the pro-life movement changed as a result of the information he learned at WF. “Evangelicals that are politically active base their opinions on the Bible. They use a passage about being “knit together in my mother’s womb” to tell the world abortion is wrong. That’s good but God has given us a lot more to know the truths of this world by. They are appealing to an authority the world doesn’t recognize.”

To be clear, the assigned reading in the course did deal with natural law and orthodox Protestant thinkers were featured as advocates for natural law. Exposure to this teaching did not solely come from Catholics in the group. Thus, the readings sometimes
served to establish the credibility of such positions advocated by Catholics in the group. However, evangelical fellows were quick to appreciate the presence of this teaching within the Catholic tradition relative to its obscurity within contemporary evangelicalism.

Exposure to Catholic teaching on birth control further challenged evangelicals to reconsider their views on natural law and sexuality. One class period towards the end of the semester was committed to a discussion of sexuality. Readings featured Protestant and Catholic authors with a range of opinion on artificial birth control and family planning. The Catholic Church’s position came across loud and clear both in one reading assigned and by Catholics in the program: the sexual act is designed for procreation and should not be frustrated. Natural family planning (the rhythm method) is the only appropriate means of delaying pregnancy. When asked about the dynamics of the class discussion on birth control, one evangelical said “there was an immediate line you could spot right away between Catholics and Protestants. Until I had done that reading, I had never thought about [birth control] before. The Catholics definitely had. But there were layers to the opinion, and they radiated from there.” Another evangelical said in response to me asking whether or not she found anything about Catholicism persuasive, “I’m pretty set but it does cause me to think further into researching what I think and why. The conversations don’t make think I’m wrong. There have been times when I think “ah, I should re-look at why I think that.”

The cognitive mechanism, however, was not isolated from the affective ties between fellows. Living together, sharing meals and studying together no doubt
contributed to the transfer of information from one group to the other. Mutz, criticizing the dichotomy made between emotional and deliberative citizen, says “through social interaction people form relationship with affective components as well as judgments based on the information that is conveyed” (2002, 123). Paraphrasing Stoffer (1955), Mutz says, “one could learn from personal experience that those different from one’s self are not necessarily bad people” (2002, 114). This mechanism suggests that content of the conversation is less or equally important than the quality of the relationship that develops. Mutz finds that the degree of intimacy within a dissonant dyad has as much effect on tolerance judgments as does awareness of rationales for the opposing viewpoint.

It did appear, on the surface at least, that the affective tie between the Fellows was the glue that made the change in attitude and the collective identity possible. When I asked Connor, a Pentecostal, why he thought more positively about Catholicism after WF he said, “If I had never come to the Fellowship but read what we read, I would have changed somewhat but it wouldn’t have happened completely without the relationships.” The slippage of prejudice between evangelicals and Catholics was also apparent when evangelicals attempted to describe Catholic teaching on a particular matter. Instead of beginning sentences with “Catholics think…”, I noticed that evangelicals regularly personalized their attribution. “Derek doesn’t believe you are saved by works,” or “People like Jim…”. In some small way the personal references indicate greater appreciation for the diversity within the tradition. The assumption here too is that these
fellows liked one another, and thus the following equation takes root: “I like Derek, Derek is a Catholic, Catholics aren’t all that bad.”

Finally, one anecdote in particular helps illustrate the significance of affective ties for political tolerance and collective identity formation. One evangelical Protestant, Molly, recounted to me a conversation she had with her close Catholic friend from WF (Laurie) over a year after they had completed the program. Molly and Laurie were talking about their faiths late into the night with another evangelical friend of Molly’s. During the conversation, Molly said she and her evangelical friend were challenging Laurie’s beliefs about Catholicism. After the conversation, Laurie told Molly privately that she felt the other friend was shoving Protestantism down her throat and was somewhat offended. Molly thought this was very interesting because she thought she was saying the same thing as her friend, but Laurie wasn’t offended by what Molly had said. “She was more open to it coming from me because we had gone through the fellowship together.”

Conclusion

The interaction between evangelical Protestants and Catholics at WF cannot be immediately generalized to the religious conservative movement at-large. In many ways this group is different from the general Christian Right population, both in terms of age, education and degree of intimacy. In very few venues do evangelicals and Catholics have this much contact over a short period of time. Nor is there as much emphasis on respect and dialogue in a typical Christian Right organization as there was at WF.
Nonetheless, I argue that the dynamics witnessed here help illuminate the quantitative findings reported in earlier chapters.

First, the study of WF confirms that both cognitive and affective mechanisms explain why exposure to Catholic arguments might cause evangelicals to be more tolerant and reconsider their political viewpoints. Even though it remains unclear whether the changes I witnessed are a result of the interaction specifically, the curriculum or cues from the fellowship’s leadership, at the very least, it appears that repeated exposure to Catholicism and repeated interaction with Catholics does not appear to decrease tolerance in anyway. Additionally, the more evangelicals adopt natural law as a template for their political understanding, the more likely it is that they will use “public reason” to defend their interests.

Secondly, evangelicals and Catholics remain distinct groups. Evangelicals and Catholics readily assert their distinctiveness – both in terms of cultural consumption and religious beliefs. Yet a collective identity does emerge, one founded on general Christian beliefs, shared political concerns, and oddly enough – hesitations about the direction of the Christian Right. At the very least, this study suggests the future of this religious coalition may take a different form for the next generation. This will be discussed in greater length in the next chapter.

---

14 Future quantitative work should revisit which factor might matter more and how these features of the program might interact with one another. The evangelical fellows were quick to attribute all three variables – the curriculum, the interaction/friendships, and the WF leadership – with facilitating their respect for Catholics. If one was mentioned more than the others, it would have been interacting with Catholic themselves and the friendships that developed across lines of religious difference.
Finally, despite the limitations of this study, anecdotal evidence suggests that the cross-cutting conversations that took place at WF have ripple effects elsewhere. Take for example the story of Laurie. When Laurie returned home to Pennsylvania following her time at WF, she told her Pentecostal family that she was considering converting to Catholicism. Her parents weren’t happy with her decision, but she thought she at least had their respect, especially from her father. The church her family attended, however, was not as accepting. Church leaders told her parents that they were letting her off too easy, and they encouraged her parents to tell her that she was not following God. Laurie met with her pastor to explain her position and respect for the authority of tradition as taught by the Catholic Church. He argued with her, and defended the Bible as the only authority in the Christian’s life. The following week’s sermon was on the authority of Scripture – which Laurie believed to be in direct response to her situation.

As Laurie recounted her experience to me, she was not bitter. After all, she has many close evangelical friends from her time at WF who she knows love and respect her. She does however talk about how important it is for her to return to her hometown and expose the members of her church to who she is, “to what a Catholic is like.” She saw worth in continuing to attend the church of her childhood. She saw worth in cross-cutting exposure – both for herself and for others.

---

15 Laurie actually waited a year following WF before officially joining the Roman Catholic Church. She credits her relationship with Catholics at WF and the assigned readings for being the catalyst for her conversion. Later conversations with Catholics outside of WF and additional study led to her ultimate conversion.
Chapter 7
Conclusion

When evangelical theologian Francis Schaeffer first urged the early-day leaders of the Christian Right to agree to what he called “co-belligerency” and decide to cooperate with Catholics for the sake of political issues like abortion in the late 1970s, few evangelical leaders rallied behind the idea. Anti-Catholic sentiment still lingered. Yet today, Catholics maintain a welcomed-presence in nearly all Christian Right organizations.

In this project, I assessed the impact of Catholics’ participation in the Christian Right on evangelical political attitudes. I examined two ways in which exposure to Catholic rationales on political issues might influence evangelical thinking, namely their policy preferences and their political tolerance. In general, the results of the survey-experiment suggested that evangelical supporters of the Christian Right are not uniformly affected by Catholic arguments in the information environment. Specifically, previous contact with Catholics appeared to moderate how these messages were received, perhaps by altering the perceived credibility of the source of the message.

The relevance of source credibility to our understanding of cross-cutting messages was more readily apparent by my results that demonstrated how the impact of dissonant arguments attributed to a political in-group (Catholics) differs from those attributed to a political out-group (mainline Protestants). In this way, my study makes a significant contribution first to the literature on public opinion and cross-cutting exposure. I find that previous research testing the claim that exposure to different points
of view will increase tolerance, for example, is incomplete because it did not account for
the source of a cross-cutting message. Thus, evangelical-Catholic interaction in
contemporary American politics informs our understanding of cross-cutting exposure and
deliberative democracy in unique ways.

Secondly, the project contributes to the ever-increasing body of literature
concerned with religion and political behavior. Most of the research seeking to assess the
impact of religion on political attitudes pays little attention to how the information
environment may moderate the effect of religion on policy preferences. I found that
evangelical attitudes at least towards out-groups are malleable in this respect.

In this final chapter, I address the implications of my project for these two areas
of political science research. I conclude with a brief reflection on what my results suggest
for the future of the Christian Right and the evangelical-Catholic partnership within its
walls.

**Hearing the Other Side…But From Whom?**

In an effort to test deliberative democratic theories, political scientists have held
deliberative forums and conducted experiments designed to examine the relationship
between exposure to different points of view and opinion change and political tolerance.
In general, most of the previous studies found support for deliberative democrats’ claims
that cross-cutting exposure can produce more informed and more tolerant citizens.

However, up until now, minimal attention has been paid to how the source of a
cross-cutting message might moderate its effect. Previous research failed to account for a
significant body of work that shows how source credibility is relevant to political
persuasion (e.g. Hovland and Weiss 1951-52; Mondak 1990; Miller and Krosnick 2000; Druckman 2001).

This project filled this gap by examining how the source of a cross-cutting message moderates its effect. Unlike previous source credibility experiments that relied on dramatic comparisons between credible and non-credible sources (e.g. Colin Powell vs. Jerry Springer, *New York Times* vs. *National Enquirer*), I based my experiment on real-world interaction between evangelical Protestants and Catholics. I found that even a subtle change in the perceived trustworthiness of a source – Catholics, a political in-group and mainline Protestants, generally a political out-group – can significantly affect how a message is interpreted. The fact that the distinctions between these religious groups and their political in-group/out-group identities are not always clearly defined makes my findings even more impressive.

In my study the moderating effect of source credibility was most evident in the results for political tolerance. In chapter 5, the major finding was not necessarily that exposure to opposing rationales attributed to a Catholic can increase tolerance relative to the control (though they can for those with some amount of previous contact with Catholics); rather, the most significant findings had to do with the different effects between the in-group and out-group dissonant political messages. In short, exposure to cross-cutting messages attributed to a political out-group significantly decreased tolerance for evangelicals while the same rationales attributed to a political in-group had the potential to increase tolerance. My research suggests that political scientists should
not make broad claims about the effect of cross-cutting exposure on political tolerance without first accounting for the source of a cross-cutting message.

The results of my survey-experiment concerning issue persuasion in chapter 4 were not as pronounced. Overall, I found little evidence that cross-cutting exposure leads to opinion change at the aggregate level. Evangelical attitudes towards the death penalty appeared to be relatively fixed, and I found only a few source effects when it came to attitudes towards immigration policy. (For example, the rationale for lenient immigration policy respondents found most persuasive varied depending on whether the rationale was attributed to a Catholic leader or a mainline Protestant leader.)

What is apparent in both chapters 4 and 5, however, is that evangelicals do not uniformly respond to Catholic messages. The finding is perhaps an indication that the relationship between evangelicals and Catholics is still being negotiated in certain segments of the evangelical community, and anti-Catholic attitudes might still linger. By accounting for previous contact with Catholics, I reveal variation across the evangelical sample. Evangelicals with little previous contact with Catholics rejected the message as they perhaps would a political out-group. These evangelicals in chapter 4 were more opposed to lenient immigration, relative to the control, after exposure to Catholic arguments in favor of lenient policy, and in chapter 5 they were less tolerant as a result of that exposure. Meanwhile, evangelicals with moderate amounts of contact with Catholics seemed most responsive to the Catholic stimulus and were more supportive of lenient immigration policy and were more tolerant compared to the control group as well. (I found little movement for evangelicals with high amounts of previous contact, as they
were already more tolerant and already more supportive of lenient policy, perhaps as a result of the previous contact though I am unable to say for sure.)

To summarize, it appears that contact with a source determines the source’s credibility at least as it relates to evangelicals’ perception of Catholics. The qualitative study reported in chapter 7 illustrated how interaction with Catholics facilitates tolerance through cognitive and affective means. Overall, the project’s findings are relevant to scholars of public opinion and intergroup relations that seek to better understand how social networks affect attitude formation. I demonstrated how the source of cross-cutting messages and previous contact with the source matters for our understanding of deliberative democracy.

Finally, a brief word should be said about basing my theoretical claims primarily on the empirical results from a survey of PAC donors. One disadvantage of my sample is the minimal variation I have on key independent variables, namely age and education. It is quite possible younger evangelicals or less-educated evangelicals respond differently to these treatments. I am unable to speak to these populations directly. Moreover, I am unable to speak to Mutz’s (2002) claim that perspective-taking ability moderates the effect of cross-cutting messages on tolerance judgments given the lack of variation on this variable as well. However, this sample is advantageous in that I have a sample that is more or less representative of Christian Right supporters and includes both small (less than $200) and large donors, and the evangelical respondents varied in terms of their previous contact with Catholics.
Expanding Scholarship on Religion and Politics

The study also makes a significant contribution to the religion and politics subfield. A number of scholars have noted the absence of theoretical paradigms in religion and politics scholarship that would make the subfield more appealing to political science in general (Jelen 1998; Wald, Silverman and Fridy 2005). Previous work in this area could more easily be classified as topical summaries of particularly religious tradition, the Christian Right, or the role of clergy in American politics.

In this project I approached the Christian Right as a cross-cutting network in an attempt to generalize my findings to social movements at-large. I treated evangelicals and Catholics as groups with distinct social identities interacting with one another. This enabled me to present the study in such a way as to allow for comparison to other contexts involving multiple group identities with distinct political orientations. Thus, I showed how the study of religious groups and citizens in American politics might reveal truths relevant to the larger political science field.

Moreover, I have demonstrated to religion and politics scholars how general theories concerning political persuasion are pertinent to our understanding of how religious identity manifests itself politically. Typically, religion and politics scholars focus on the ways in which beliefs, behaving and belonging shape religious citizens’ political outlooks. This is a rather static understanding of religion and one that fails to account for the information environment. In fact, as I demonstrated, religious identity may mean different things at different times, depending on what messages and people the religious citizen encounters. Without a dynamic understanding of religious identity, the
religion and politics subfield has been at a loss to examine the ways in which shifts in the information environment might affect religious citizens’ attitudes. I hope this project is an incentive for others to reexamine through experimental work the relationship between religion and political behavior.

The Future of “Co-belligerency” and the Christian Right

Finally, my project offers a fresh perspective on the Christian Right and the results hold practical implications for its future. While previous work has examined the number of Catholics in the movement and their political orientation (e.g. Wilcox, Rozell and Gunn 1996; Bendyna et al. 2001a; Bendyna et al. 2001b), few have speculated about their impact, on the Christian Right agenda or its members. In this project I restricted my investigation to the individual level and assess the impact Catholic messages might have on evangelical Christian Right supporters. Small, incremental attitude shifts evident at this level, such as an increase in political tolerance, might explain change already underway in the movement and predict change that is yet to come.

Ever since the movement’s entrance on the political stage in the late 1970s, scholars have been anxious to assess change within its borders and predict its success or demise. At numerous points in the last 30 years, the Christian Right has been pronounced dead (e.g. Bruce 1988). Circa 2008 is no different. A string of recent books on the topic argue that the Christian Right’s influence is waning as a Protestant left gathers
momentum. Moral and cultural issues no longer appear to be the defining issues of campaigns and electoral behavior, as economics and foreign policy dominates our focus. (Dionne 2008). Said Washington Post columnist E.J. Dionne, “The era of the religious right is over. Even absent the rise of urgent new problems, Americans had already reached a point of exhaustion with a religious style of politics that was dogmatic, partisan and ideological” (2008, B5).

Numerous theories have been presented as to why the Christian Right appears to be losing its influence or at least taking a new shape. These include such things as the weakening of the Republican Party, in particular its electoral losses in 2006. Moreover, the presidency of George W. Bush has largely been a disappointment to Christian Right leaders. Hoping a president that shared their religious convictions would use the bully pulpit to restrict homosexual and abortion rights instead made economic policy and the war in Iraq the centerpieces of his administration. Finally, the selection of Sen. John McCain as the Republican Party’s 2008 presidential nominee suggested that the evangelical base was no longer a determining force in Republican politics.²

Even the most competitive evangelical Protestant candidate in the primary race, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee did not entirely align with the Christian Right agenda, and the movement’s leaders were reluctant to endorse him. According to one media report, over the course of the campaign “Huckabee became a political leader in a

---

conservative evangelical movement that is going through a generational change, shifting its focus from issues such as same-sex marriage and abortion to global warming and poverty” (Bacon 2008).

In my dissertation I propose an addition, not necessarily an alternative, to the theories outlined above. I suspect that the presence of Catholics within the Christian Right social movement has provided evangelicals with an alternative framework with which to evaluate and participate in American politics. Catholic teaching generally falls outside the confines of partisan politics. For example, the “seamless garment of life” ethic espoused by many Catholic leaders opposes legalized abortion (a position more consistent with the Republican Party) but also opposes the death penalty (a position more consistent with the Democratic Party). Referring to Catholics as “political orphans,” two columnists had this to say about “pro-life” voting in 2008: “There is rarely a candidate, and certainly not a political party, that embodies the consistent ethic of life that would make casting a truly pro-life vote a simple or straightforward choice” (McCloskey and Leibold, 2008, A19). The dilemma extends to other issues as well. Catholic teaching on marriage, women’s role and sexuality tend to favor conservative public policy while the teaching on war, poverty and justice tend to favor liberal public policy.

There is more and more evidence to suggest that evangelicals, particularly young evangelicals, are beginning to face this same “dilemma.” Young evangelicals have expressed concern for the environment, poverty and health care while at the same time maintaining their opposition to abortion and homosexuality (Slater 2007; Banerjee 2008; Harris 2008). As I just noted, these are a set of convictions not easily embodied by a
political party. Nor do these convictions match those shared by older evangelicals.

According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life’s 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape survey, 58 percent of white evangelicals between ages 18-29 favor “bigger government providing more services” over “smaller government providing fewer services” while 56 percent of older evangelicals prefer smaller government. And in an analysis of surveys conducted between 2001 and 2007, Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found Republican partisanship is declining at a faster rate amongst younger evangelicals than older evangelicals. Thus, in some sense, young evangelicals today look like some of their Catholic peers that find casting a vote for a political party to not be a straight-forward choice.

Empirically, my analysis revealed little difference across age groups in terms of responsiveness to the Catholic messages (though my sample is quite skewed in the older direction so it is difficult to speak to the effect on evangelicals under age 30). However, the analysis of the Witherspoon Fellowship in chapter 6 suggests that the next generation of evangelicals does not mirror the previous generation. Many of the fellows I interviewed, though committed Republicans, did not want to work for Christian Right organizations upon graduation from the program. Instead, they wanted to strengthen civil society and had an interest in pursuing a broader policy agenda. The fact that FRC shifted the focus of the Witherspoon Fellowship’s curriculum in 2008 to be more activist in nature suggests the older generation of evangelicals is not entirely on board with the political orientation of the youth.
It is difficult to know for sure whether or not exposure to Catholics or Catholic teaching caused young evangelicals to critically examine the older generation’s Christian Right and come to a different conclusion about political involvement. It is likely some of this change might have happened on its own, without the presence of Catholics, simply as a backlash to the techniques employed by figures like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson.

However, young evangelicals (outside WF) I spoke to that were already employed by Christian Right organizations also expressed to me some reservations about the current direction of the social movement and did attribute a shift in their perspective to Catholic teaching. The shift does not necessarily entail a rebuke of conservative ideology, but it does suggest a softer, milder version of the ideological form previously evident in the Christian Right and it happens to be coupled with greater interaction with Catholics.

For example, Jim, a director of government affairs for one national Christian Right organization, is an evangelical in his mid-30s who sees a need for evangelicals to cooperate with Catholics to “improve society.”

Jim says the agenda of religious conservatives should be broader and not fall into the trap of elevating abortion above all other issues. Though a conservative Republican, Jim says a group he liked to see develop should “draw a line in the sand, internally within both parties” and be inclusive of all faiths. He said future organizations cannot be a “personality cult” which he suggests the previous Christian Right generation suffered from. He says he is aware of many evangelicals that rely on Catholic teaching to a certain extent and describes the

---

evangelical agenda as “miles wide but an inch deep” as compared with the social teachings of the Catholic Church. He is currently working on a yet-to-be-named initiative with a young colleague from another Christian Right organization to bring evangelicals and Catholics together to support candidates that favor limited government – intentionally steering clear of the “pro-family” label typically employed by contemporary Christian Right groups.

Ecumenical networks exist on Capitol Hill as well. Bill Wichterman, a political consultant now in his mid 40s and a former a policy advisor to former Sen. Bill Frist (R-TN), began the group, Faith & Law, while he was a young Hill staffer in 1983.4 It began primarily as an evangelical network designed to provide Christian fellowship though reading groups and a monthly lecture series. Over time, the number of Catholics participating in the group has increased.5 Wichterman estimates nearly one-third of the monthly guest speakers are Catholic. After working on various issues with Catholics, Wichterman sees the relevance of Catholic teaching to many political issues and says, for example, “I’ll take my cues on bio-ethics from the Vatican any day.” He described himself as being in “listening mode” on other issues for which evangelicals and Catholics disagree.

One Catholic participant of a Faith & Law reading group is chief of staff to a prominent evangelical U.S. senator. An older evangelical, he says he is appreciative of young evangelicals’ efforts to “merge the religious rhetoric” between evangelicals and

---

5 Few Catholics regularly attend the reading groups however, and I came across no evangelical-Catholic network in particular that allowed for deeper analysis.
Catholics. “It shouldn’t be about going to church here or not going to church there….The agenda should be about more than the normal issues.” He notes homosexuality as one of the “normal” issues regularly addressed by religious conservative groups. He believes the initiative to pass a federal marriage amendment banning same-sex marriage in particularly “played into the hands of the enemy, embarrassed the base, and never had traction among Catholics.”

These anecdotes are not evidence that all Catholics are being won over by the ecumenical initiatives of young evangelicals, nor do they suggest evangelicals are becoming less conservative or even less Republican. Nonetheless, a change appears to be underway. These evangelicals do appear tolerant of Catholics, and respectful of Catholic teaching. Moreover, it appears that these young evangelical political operatives see Catholics as critical to the success of any religious conservative movement. Thus, the future of the Christian Right – or at least the next generation’s evangelical movement – is one in which Catholics, and even the Catholic Church to a certain extent, maintain a credible voice. Consequently, what the Pope says about the environment, poverty and war may one day come to matter to large portions of evangelicals in the United States. For many, anecdotally at least, it already seems to make them think twice about their rationales for their own political orientation.

**Conclusion**

---

In closing, I argue that the future of “co-belligerency” looks to be less belligerent. Political cooperation between evangelicals and Catholics appears to have produced a good unanticipated by democratic theorists, a group typically fearful of religious mobilization. Not only have two former political foes become political friends, but their friendship seems to have made evangelicals more tolerant political participants. Therefore, religious coalitions may provide a unique opportunity for citizens to encounter differences in a non-threatening environment.

The degree to which religions intermingle and expose adherents to different political viewpoints has implications for deliberative democracy specifically. The hope of deliberative democrats is that identity politics will take a back seat to the public good and public reason will triumph over sectarian arguments. Ecumenical cooperation does seem to contribute to that end by uniting citizens across lines of religious difference. But in American politics at least, it is possible that evangelicals have just exchanged one divide for another. As the wall came down between evangelical Protestants and Catholics it appears to have been rebuilt between evangelical Protestants and mainline Protestants, and a new religious divide exists today. Thus, religious mobilization, no matter how diverse, may continue to pose a unique challenge to the goals of deliberative democracy even while offering the goals some hope.
Appendix A: Religion and Politics: Defining the Terms

Any scholar seeking to conceptualize and operationalize religious identification for the purposes of social science research encounters a large body of literature committed to this exercise. The research has provided great insight into the complex ways in which religious identities and characteristics can take on political significance. “There is nothing natural or inevitable about religious activity in political life or about the manner in which religion expresses itself politically” (Wald, Silverman and Fridy, 2005, 140). Indeed, one need only glance at the plethora of churches in the yellow pages to see the diverse set of religions practiced even within one American town and realize the subsequent challenge this poses for scholars seeking to make broad generalizations about religion and political behavior. So what are evangelical Protestant and Catholic identities?

For my purposes here, I follow in the tradition most recently embraced by political scientists and conceptualize religion as believing, behaving and belonging.7 In this arena, political science work has its roots in sociology. Max Weber and Emile Durkheim set in motion what is called here the belief and belonging approaches, respectively. Weber viewed religion as primarily an individual phenomenon with religious beliefs directly shaping a person’s behavior. In contrast, Durkheim believed it was the social aspect of religion – meeting together with other believers – that defined individual behavior. Later work determined it was not an either/or matter, and expanded

---

7 See Layman (2001) chapter 2 and Kellstedt, Smidt, Green and Guth (2008) for especially helpful reviews of the literature concerned with the conceptualization of religion and analytical issues.
these paradigms to be multi-dimensional (Lenski 1963; Glock and Stark 1965; Leege and Kellstedt 1993).

Leading scholars tend to view belonging – the social nature of religion – as the most significant dimension (Smidt, Kellstedt and Guth 2008). Here, religious groups work like other social groups in American politics (Conover 1984). “Through patterns of association and interaction, as well as variation in the content of religious teachings and the way religion is linked to politics, members of different religious groups acquire divergent political attitudes and behavior” (Smidt, Kellstedt and Guth 2008, pp). Studies of the electorate have long recognized that religious affiliation has political significance (Lazarsfeld, Berelson and Gaudent 1944). On the local level, congregations provide members with political cues used to make sense of the information environment (Wald, Owen and Hill 1988).

Where you belong, who you associate with may be closely linked to what you believe, though a sociological versus a cognitive distinction remains. Religion as belief assumes that how one behaves politically is primarily a function of individual predispositions. Sociologists were the first to recognize that behavioral differences existed within religious groupings, along the lines of belief. Those holding more orthodox beliefs appeared to be more politically conservative than their progressive counterparts (Wuthnow 1990; Hunter 1991).

The “culture wars” thesis stems from these findings. The thesis rings true in numerous studies in political science. For example, there are clear distinctions between
traditionalists, centrists and modernists\textsuperscript{8} within Protestantism and Catholicism when it comes to vote choice in presidential campaigns (Green, Kellstedt, Smidt and Guth, 2007). Traditionalists across religious traditions tend to oppose same-sex marriage while religious progressives lean the other way (Campbell and Robinson 2007). Traditionalism is often operationalized using all or some of the following survey items meant to capture religious belief and behavior: view of the Bible, belief in God, frequency of church attendance, frequency of prayer, the importance of religion to one’s life.

Within Protestantism, the sociological divide most readily observed is between three groups: white evangelical, black evangelical and mainline denominations. Members of white evangelical denominations tend to hold more traditional values and prefer conservative public policy. White evangelicals are more likely than other Protestants to oppose same-sex marriage and legalized abortion, and they are more conservative when it comes to gender roles (Wilcox and Larson 2006, p. 56). In contrast, the majority of black evangelicals and mainline Protestants hold less conservative beliefs, politically speaking at least, and are more likely to be mobilized on behalf of liberal public policy (Harris 1999; Olson book). (It is important to point out, however, that within these three groupings, political distinctions exists between traditionalists and progressives, with the former being more politically conservative.)

\textsuperscript{8} Other terms used to classify distinctions within religious groups include orthodox and progressive, conservative and liberal. I use the terms interchangeably here.
A consistent point of division within Catholicism is more difficult to identify, but is again largely a function of variation in religious beliefs and behaviors.\(^9\) For example, 74 percent of traditional Catholics voted for George W. Bush in 2004 while only 38 percent of modernists Catholics voted for the Republican candidate (Green, Kellstedt, Smidt and Guth, 2007). Welch and Leege (1991) find that Catholics exhibiting evangelical-like behaviors (e.g. Bible reading, pray with friends) are more politically conservative than other Catholics on issues related to the Christian Right agenda, including the use of boycotts, prayer in public schools, teaching creationism in public schools and the “threat” of secular humanism.

Scholars have been increasingly interested in the political behavior of Catholics as they have been less likely to vote democratically in recent years (Leege and Mueller 2000). While once a pillar of the Democratic coalition given their immigrant status and being lower on the socioeconomic scale, the Catholic vote is now evenly split between the two parties. Much has been made of the fact that no single “Catholic vote” exists (Dionne 2000). The shift in partisanship amongst Catholics is said to be related to a number of things.

First, Catholics are more assimilated in mainstream culture today than they were in the 1950s. The percentage of white Catholics with some college education and self-identifying as part of the middle class sharply increased over the last 50 years, corresponding with a decline in Democratic partisanship (Mockabee 2007). Given their

\(^9\) I restrict my study to white, non-Hispanic Catholics given the distinct religious and cultural identity of racial groups (Dantonio 2001).
increase is socioeconomic status Catholics may be more attracted to the fiscal policies supported by the Republican Party.

Moreover, though Catholics’ ideological orientation hasn’t really changed during this time, we have seen greater polarization between the two parties, especially at the elite level (Poole and Rosenthal 1997). Thus, Catholics are better able to vote along ideological lines (given the visibility of these lines) as opposed to the previous ethnocultural criteria which tended to favor the Democratic Party (see Mockabee 2007). The Christian Right – working for pro-life policy by electing pro-life Republicans – is no doubt contributing to the perception of these lines.

Finally, many scholars have discovered political cleavages within Catholicism along generational lines – defined by their relationship to Vatican II. As explained in greater detail in chapter 2, the Second Vatican Council opened the Church up to dialogues with other faiths and gave more freedom to individuals to apply their faith to politics as they saw fit. Catholics born after Vatican II are less likely to be Democrats than earlier generation, but this likely has to do with their improved socioeconomic status and their preference for conservative fiscal and foreign policy. They are actually more pro-choice than pre-Vatican II Catholics (Mockabee 2007).

Traditional Catholics – across generations – and traditional evangelical Protestants are the focus of this project. I restrict my analysis to only those evangelical Protestants and those Catholics participating in the Christian Right social movement. I outline in detail how I go about operationalizing these identities for data analysis in later chapters. Suffice it to say here, I consider evangelical Protestants and traditional
Catholics to be members of separate religious groups. Though their religious beliefs (e.g. Jesus Christ is Son of God) and behavior (e.g. Bible reading) may align in some cases, it is the sociological divide accompanied by disparate beliefs systems and the subsequent exposure to another group which I believe constitutes cross-cutting exposure and holds the potential to produce democratic fruits.

*The Christian Right*

The Christian Right social movement is the umbrella under which evangelical-Catholic mobilization has taken place. The movement’s history has been documented at length elsewhere (see Wilcox and Larson 2006) and will be discussed in more detail as it relates to evangelical-Catholic interaction in chapter 2. Here I put forward a general description of its origins and its significance before outlining why Catholic-evangelical interaction is relevant as pundits and scholars assess its future.

The contemporary Christian Right came about in response to the sexual revolution of the 1960s and a string of court decisions which religious conservatives perceived to be a threat to their traditional values. Religious leaders, such as the Rev. Jerry Falwell, saw an urgent need to mobilize conservative Christians into politics in order to defend Christian principles. Organizations built around such figures like Falwell and the televangelist Pat Robertson effectively mobilized conservative evangelical voters and lobbied government on their behalf.

Throughout all the institutional iterations, the Christian Right’s policy agenda has remained somewhat wide. At various points in time, institutions within the movement have been concerned over foreign, economic and domestic policy. Education, abortion,
marriage, the rights of women, homosexual rights, and health policy are just a few of the items on the policy agenda of a Christian Right organization on any given day.

While the primary goal of the movement has always been to enact conservative policy, the movement has viewed electoral politics as a means to that end. The movement has been largely successful in helping Republican candidates win at the local, state and federal level (e.g. Deckman 2004, Rozell and Wilcox 1996; Rozell and Wilcox 1997; Green, Rozell and Wilcox 2007). Evangelical voter turnout increased as a result of Christian Right mobilization, and Republicans have primarily reaped the benefits of this new found constituency.
Appendix B

Definitions of Variables

*Pro-life*: View on abortion “By law, abortion should never be permitted.” OR “The law should permit abortions only in case of rape, incest, or danger to the woman’s life.”

*Pro School Vouchers*: Agree or strongly agree with the statement “The government should provide vouchers to parents to help pay for their child to attend private or religious school.”

*Oppose laws protecting homosexuals*: Disagree or strongly disagree with the statement “The law should protect homosexuals from job discrimination.”

*Death penalty should be law*: Agree or strongly agree with the statement “Mandatory death penalty for murder should be law.”

*Government aid for poor*: Agree or strongly agree with the statement “The federal government should spend more to reduce poverty and hunger in the U.S.”

*Favor Labor Unions*: Feeling thermometer rating of 50 degrees or above.
Appendix C: Support for the Death Penalty 1974-2006

![Graph showing support for the death penalty for murder by White Evangelical Protestants and All Others from 1974 to 2006. The graph displays data points for each year, showing fluctuations in support percentages.]

Source: GSS Cumulative File
Appendix D: Mail Survey (Control Condition)

Religion and Politics Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by circling or marking the response that comes closest to your views. Please answer the questions in the order in which they are presented. You may skip any question you do not feel comfortable answering. Thank you for your assistance.

First, I want to know your views on some of the political issues facing our country.

1. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Controlling and reducing illegal immigration should be an important foreign policy goal.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Gay and lesbian couples should be allowed to form civil unions giving them many of the same rights as married couples.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The government should abolish the death penalty.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Using the birth-control pill is morally acceptable for married couples.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Methods of birth control should be available to teenagers between the ages of 14 and 16 even if their parents do not approve.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Which of the following best reflects your view on abortion? Please check one.

( ) By law, abortion should never be permitted.

( ) The law should permit abortions only in case of rape, incest, or danger to the woman’s life.

( ) The law should permit abortions only when the need has been clearly established.

( ) By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.

3. How much influence do your religious beliefs have on your attitudes toward the following issues?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>A great deal</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>Little or none</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Abortion</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Death penalty</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The use of military force</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Immigration policy</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Now, I’d like to know your views on some religious matters.

4. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. It is important for religious people to speak with one united voice on political matters.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. The statues and images in Catholic churches are idols.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Christians, Jews and Muslims should pray together for the country.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Many Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the United States.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Catholic rosaries and holy medals are spiritually meaningful.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Churches should put more emphasis on transforming the social order.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. The U.S. is a Christian nation, and should make certain that its laws are consistent with Christian teachings.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Catholics really are not permitted to think for themselves.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now I would like to understand how you feel about how Christianity is treated in American society today.

5. Would you say society’s treatment of Christianity makes you feel:

( ) VERY anxious
( ) SOMEWHAT anxious
( ) NOT VERY anxious
( ) NOT AT ALL anxious

6. Would you say society’s treatment of Christianity makes you feel:

( ) VERY angry
( ) SOMEWHAT angry
( ) NOT VERY angry
( ) NOT AT ALL angry
7. From time to time, people *discuss important matters* with other people. How often do you discuss important matters with an individual or individuals from the following religious traditions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jewish</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslim</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholic</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormon</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. From time to time, people *discuss government, elections, and politics* with other people. How often do you discuss politics with an individual or individuals from the following religious traditions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jewish</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslim</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholic</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormon</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. How often do you *discuss matters of religion* with an individual or individuals from the following religious traditions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jewish</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslim</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholic</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormon</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10. Think of all the **close friends** you had contact with in the past month, whether the contact was in person, by telephone, or by email. Of all these people, about how many of them are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Many</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A few</th>
<th>None that I know of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jews</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslims</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholics</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormons</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious citizens</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Think of all the **neighbors** you know. Of all these people, about how many of them are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Many</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A few</th>
<th>None that I know of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jews</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslims</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholics</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormons</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious citizens</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Think of all your **co-workers (past and present)**. Of all these people, about how many of them are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Many</th>
<th>Some</th>
<th>A few</th>
<th>None that I know of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Jews</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Muslims</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Catholics</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Mormons</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Evangelical Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Mainline Protestants</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Non-religious citizens</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Generally speaking, where would you place yourself? (Circle one)

Extremely Conservative
Conservative
Slightly Conservative
Moderate
Slightly Liberal
Liberal
Extremely Liberal

14. Here is a list of groups. Please read over the list and place an X next to any group(s) you feel particularly close to--people who are most like you in their ideas and interests and feelings about things. Please check all that apply.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor People</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealthy people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-class people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelicals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southerners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Now please tell me how well the following statements describe you. The statements inquire about your thoughts and feelings in a variety of situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in his/her place.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. If I'm sure I'm right about something, I don't waste much time listening to other people's arguments.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. “Flexibility in thinking” is another name for being “wishy-washy.”</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. I have never discovered a system of beliefs that explains everything to my satisfaction.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. It is best to be open to all possibilities, and ready to reevaluate all your beliefs.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to &quot;put myself in his/her shoes&quot; for a while.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. I can understand why some people think differently than I do about abortion.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. I believe that there are two sides to every question and try to look at them both.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from the “other guy’s” point of view.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Some people seem to follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election going on or not. Others aren't that interested. Would you say you follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, some of the time, only now and then, or hardly at all? (Circle one)

- Most of the time
- Some of the time
- Only now and then
- Hardly at all

17. Are you a member or supporter of a pro-family, pro-life or Christian conservative political group or groups?

- Yes
- No → Please skip to Question 18

a. Name of group or groups: ________________________________

b. During your involvement in this group(s), how often have you come across a political viewpoint that you disagreed with?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never

c. During your involvement in this group(s), how often have you come across a religious viewpoint that you disagreed with?

- Very often
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
d. How often do you interact face-to-face with Catholics in this group(s)?
( ) Very often
( ) Sometimes
( ) Rarely
( ) Never

e. How often do you interact face-to-face with Evangelicals in this group(s)?
( ) Very often
( ) Sometimes
( ) Rarely
( ) Never

18. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself to be a: (Circle one)

   Strong Republican
   Weak Republican
   Independent leaning Republican
   Independent
   Independent leaning Democrat
   Weak Democrat
   Strong Democrat

19. Now I would like to ask you a few questions about your childhood. For each question, circle one response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. When you were growing up, about how often did your parents take the position that certain topics are better left undiscussed?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. How often did your parents encourage you to give in on arguments rather than risk antagonizing people?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. When you were growing up, how often did your parents emphasize that getting your point across is important even if others don’t like it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. How often did your parents have spirited discussions of controversial matters like politics or religion?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** STIMULUS HERE ***
20. Now I am going to ask you a few questions about your media use and political activity.

21. From which of the following, if any, did you turn to for news during the last week? (Circle all that apply)

   Television  Radio  Newspaper  Internet  Magazine  None

22. Do you ever turn to religious media outlets for news? (Circle one)  
   Yes  No → Please skip to Question 23

   a. If yes, how often do you turn religious media sources for news? (Circle one)
      Rarely  Sometimes  Very Often

   b. Please list the name(s) of the religious program(s), publication(s) or Web site(s):
      ____________________________  ____________________________
      ____________________________  ____________________________

23. In the past year, did you go to any political meetings, rallies, fund-raising dinners, or similar events?
   Yes  No

24. During the last election campaign, did you wear a campaign button, put a campaign sticker on your car, or place a sign in your window or in front of your house?
   Yes  No

25. During the last election campaign, did you talk to any people to try to convince them why they should vote for or against a particular candidate?
   Yes  No
26. Now please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The government should provide a program of health insurance for those not currently insured.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Public funding should be available to religious organizations to provide social services.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. The federal government should spend more to reduce poverty and hunger in the U.S.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Nothing in other countries can beat the American way of life.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. The federal government should spend more money on border security to prevent illegal immigration.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Illegal immigrants already here should be granted temporary worker status.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Legal immigration should be decreased.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. The United States should make it easier for illegal immigrants to become citizens of the United States.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The death penalty is morally unacceptable.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (Circle one)

- Strongly favor
- Favor
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

28. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for juveniles convicted of murder? (Circle one)

- Strongly favor
- Favor
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly Oppose

29. Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of terrorism? (Circle one)

- Strongly favor
- Favor
- Neutral
- Oppose
- Strongly Oppose
30. In your opinion, is the death penalty imposed: too often, about the right amount, or not often enough? (Circle one)

Too often  About the right amount  Not often enough

31. Please rate the following individuals, groups, or organizations on a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 is most unfavorable, 100 is most favorable, and 50 is neutral, and you may use the entire 0 to 100 scale. If you have no knowledge or opinion of the person or group, please place an X on the line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual/Group</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jerry Falwell</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestants</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supreme Court</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George W. Bush</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillary Clinton</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalists</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Dobson</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Business</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholics</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on the Family</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pope John Paul II</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Wallis</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal immigrants</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminists</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious liberals</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuals</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned Women for America</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor people</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelicals</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. Suppose an individual wanted to make a speech in your community. Should the following individuals be allowed to speak, or not?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. A homosexual should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. An admitted Communist should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A Jew should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. A Mainline Protestant should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. A Catholic should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. An Evangelical Protestant should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. A person who is against all churches and religion should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. A feminist should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. A person who believes Blacks are genetically inferior should be allowed.</td>
<td>(1) (2) (3) (4) (5)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
33. Assuming professional conduct, should members of the following groups be allowed to be a teacher in your community’s public schools?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Description</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. A homosexual should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. An admitted Communist should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. A Jew should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. A Mainline Protestant should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. A Catholic should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. An Evangelical Protestant should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. A person who is against all churches and religion should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. A feminist should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. A person who believes Blacks are genetically inferior should be allowed to teach.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34. When you think about God, how likely is each of these images to come to your mind?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Extremely likely</th>
<th>Somewhat likely</th>
<th>Not too likely</th>
<th>Not likely at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Judge</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Redeemer</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
<td>( )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35. Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. All religions basically teach the same thing.</td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Evangelical Protestant churches and Catholic churches basically teach the same thing.</td>
<td>1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
<td>(5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
36. Thinking about the political issues that concern you the most, how interested are you in learning about other religious traditions' positions on these issues? (Check one)

( ) VERY interested
( ) SOMEWHAT interested
( ) NOT VERY interested
( ) NOT AT ALL interested

37. For which of the following issues would you be interested in attending a lecture to learn more about the Catholic Church’s points of view? Please check all that apply.

( ) Abortion
( ) Foreign policy
( ) Death penalty
( ) Welfare reform
( ) Immigration
( ) None

38. For which of the following issues would you be interested in attending a lecture to learn more about the Mainline Protestant points of view? Please check all that apply.

( ) Abortion
( ) Foreign policy
( ) Death penalty
( ) Welfare reform
( ) Immigration
( ) None

39. I am interested in hearing about the reasons people have for favoring and opposing the death penalty for persons convicted of murder.

a. Regardless of your own views, what reasons can you think of for favoring the use of the death penalty for persons convicted of murder? (List all the reasons that come to mind. You do not need to use complete sentences. You do not need to fill up the space provided.)

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................

• ........................................................................................................
b. Regardless of your own views, what reasons can you think of for opposing the use of the
dead penalty for persons convicted of murder? (List all the reasons that come to mind. You
do not need to use complete sentences. You do not need to fill up the space provided.)

• ______________________________________________________________________

• ______________________________________________________________________

• ______________________________________________________________________

• ______________________________________________________________________

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. State of residence ________

2. Year of birth ________

3. Gender: ( ) Male ( ) Female

4. Race/ethnicity: ( ) White ( ) Black ( ) Hispanic ( ) Asian ( ) Other

5. Religious denomination (Please be specific.)

____________________________________________________________________

6. Do any of the following terms describe your religious identity? Please check all that apply.

( ) Fundamentalist Christian ( ) Evangelical Christian ( ) Ethical humanist

( ) Liberal Christian ( ) Charismatic Christian ( ) Born-again Christian

( ) Pentecostal Christian ( ) Mainline Protestant ( ) Traditional Catholic

( ) Progressive Catholic ( ) Orthodox Jew ( ) Conservative Jew

( ) Reform Jew ( ) Atheist, Agnostic

( ) Other _________________________

7. Do either of the following statements describe you? (Check one)

( ) I was raised Catholic, and I converted to Protestantism.

( ) I was raised Protestant, and I converted to Catholicism.

( ) Neither statement describes me.
8. How often do you attend religious services?
   ( ) More than once a week  ( ) Once a week  ( ) Several times a month
   ( ) A few times a year  ( ) Seldom/never

9. Overall, how important is your religious faith to your life?
   ( ) Very important  ( ) Important  ( ) Of some importance
   ( ) Not very important  ( ) Not at all important

10. Which comes closest to your view of the Bible:
    ( ) The actual word of God, to be taken literally, word for word
    ( ) The inspired word of God, with no errors but not to be taken literally
    ( ) The inspired word of God, but it contains human errors
    ( ) A good book but not the word of God

11. How often do you read or study the Bible on your own, with your family or in a small group?
    ( ) Several times a day  ( ) Once a day  ( ) Several times a week
    ( ) Once a week  ( ) Less than once a week  ( ) Never

12. Education:
    ( ) High School or less  ( ) Some College  ( ) College Degree
    ( ) Some Graduate School  ( ) Graduate Degree

13. Current occupation (or former if retired):
   ( ) Current  ( ) Retired

14. Annual family income:
    ( ) Less than $50,000  ( ) $50,000-$99,000  ( ) $100,000-$249,000
    ( ) $250,000-$500,000  ( ) Above $500,000  ( ) I prefer not to answer.
15. Please answer the following questions from memory to the best of your ability.

a. Do Democrats or Republicans currently control the House of Representatives? Check one.  
( ) Democrats  
( ) Republicans  
( ) Don’t know

b. Who is the Speaker of the House?  
( ) Rep. Dennis Hastert  
( ) Rep. Nancy Pelosi  
( ) Rep. John Boehner  
( ) Don’t know

c. How long is a U.S. Senator’s term in office? Check one.  
( ) 2 years  
( ) 4 years  
( ) 6 years  
( ) Don’t know

d. Who nominates justices to the U.S. Supreme Court? Check one.  
( ) President  
( ) Congress  
( ) Other Supreme Court Justices  
( ) Don’t know
Appendix E: Sources for Rationales Included in Stimuli
Dissonant Rationales (pro-immigrant, anti-capital punishment)

Immigration:
“We should welcome immigrants from Latin America to North America because they often bring with them a cultural and religious heritage which is rich in Christian elements.” Source: Pope John Paul II, in his apostolic exhortation Ecclesia in America, said that immigrants from Latin to North America “often bring with them a cultural and religious heritage which is rich in Christian elements.” While this address was originally delivered on January 22, 1999, this particular quote was repeated by number Catholic leaders in the lead up to the immigration reform debate. For one example, see Burger, John (2005) “Heading North: Can Hispanic Immigration Restore America’s Christian Culture?” http://www.crisismagazine.com/julaug2005/burger.htm

“In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus calls upon us to “welcome the stranger,” for “what you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.” (Mt. 25:40-45).” Source: The Bible. Again, religious leaders in favor of more lenient immigration policy often turned to this passage of scripture to defend their views. For one example, see Bishop Paul S. Loverde Labor Day statement dated August 31, 2006 printed in the Catholic Herald. http://www.catholicherald.com/loverde/06homilies/laborday06.htm

“Studies show that immigrant workers are employed in jobs in industries that do not attract sufficient U.S. workers. Without an ‘earned legalization’ program, the United States will have a worker shortage.” Source: The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops included this statement in their press release stating their position on immigration and immigration reform. http://www.usccb.org/mrs/mrp.shtml

Capital Punishment:

“Our society has the means of protecting itself, without denying criminals the chance to reform.” Source: Pope John Paul II, in a homily at a Jan. 27, 1999 Papal Mass in St. Louis, Missouri. Quoted by numerous sources.

“Punishment and imprisonment have meaning only if they serve the rehabilitation of the individual by offering those who have made a mistake an opportunity to reflect and to change their lives in order to be fully reintegrated into society and receive forgiveness.” Source: Pope John Paul II, in his message to prisoners in the Year of Jubilee. Quoted by numerous sources.
Consonant Rationales (anti-lenient immigration policy, pro-capital punishment)

Immigration:


“We have a right to expect the government to fulfill its divinely ordained mandate to punish those who break the laws and reward those who do not (Romans 13).” *Source: Phyllis Schlafly, “To Build Or Not To Build The Fence” No date. Schafly is the president of the Eagle Forum, a Christian conservative organization. While the organization is made up of mostly evangelical Protestant, Schlafly herself happens to be a traditional Catholic. [http://www.eagleforum.org/column/2006/oct06/06-10-25.html](http://www.eagleforum.org/column/2006/oct06/06-10-25.html)*

Capital Punishment:
“Justice in God's eyes requires that the response to an offense—whether against God or against humanity—be proportionate.” *Source: Chuck Colson, Prison Fellowship Ministries, Personal Statement November 11, 2002. [http://www.rutherford.org/Oldspeak/Articles/Religion/oldspeak-capitalpunishment.html](http://www.rutherford.org/Oldspeak/Articles/Religion/oldspeak-capitalpunishment.html)*

“Capital punishment is an essential element of justice. On the whole, the full range of biblical data weighs in its favor.” *Source: Ibid.*

“Mercy extended to offenders whose guilt is certain yet simply ignored creates a moral travesty which helps pave the way for collapse of the entire social order.” *Source: Ibid.*
# Appendix F: Christian Right Donors in 2006: Social, Religious and Political Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full Donor Sample (N=794)</th>
<th>Evangelical Donors (N=426)</th>
<th>Christian Right Activists in 2004 (N=612)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>White</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Male</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Region</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school or less</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College degree</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retired</strong></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-50</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-65</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious tradition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelical Protestant</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainline Protestant</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evangelical denomination</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-denominational</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist (all)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td></td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greater than weekly church attendance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bible, literal word of God</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong Republican</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican (all)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideology</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Conservative</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative (all)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attention to public affairs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Amount of PAC donation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1-$99</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100-$199</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$200-$299</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$300-$499</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 or more</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Mail survey of donors to federal political action committees associated with the Christian Right movement conducted April-May 2007 by author. *Source: Survey of donors to federal political action committees associated with the movement and members of movement organizations (Green, Conger, and Guth, 2007).
Appendix G: The Witherspoon Fellowship Interviews and Observation

My first encounter with the Witherspoon Fellowship (WF) came long before I had settled on a dissertation topic. In October 2005, I accompanied Prof. Clyde Wilcox, my advisor, on a talk he was giving at WF at the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C. The talk was on the general subject of religion and politics. We assumed the group to be strongly aligned with the agenda and tenor of the Family Research Council – a leader in the Christian Right movement – thus, we wanted to be sensitive to the group’s leanings as we spoke about how social scientists attempt to understand religious sentiment and political behavior. The talk took place early on in President George W. Bush’s second term and just shortly after the nomination of Harriet Miers, an evangelical Christian, to the Supreme Court. Thus, current events largely dictated the confines of our discussion.

To our surprise, the Q&A portion of the talk revealed a dynamic in this group altogether different from what we expected from a group under the umbrella of the Family Research Council. The fellows disagreed with some of the policies advocated by the evangelical U.S. president, they seemed disillusioned by interest group politics, and they agreed with us that evangelical groups working within the Republican Party have lost their prophetic voice. By no means were these fellows going to vote Democrat in 2008, but their Republican partisanship was only lukewarm.

A conversation I had with one fellow in particular following the talk provided me with insight into the dynamics at work in WF. Desiring to better understand the perspective these fellows were coming from, I asked Ryan to tell me a little bit about his
faith and religious beliefs. He told me he was a Pentecostal who was seriously
considering converting to Catholicism as a result of his time at WF. He said a few of the
fellows were Catholic, and some of the readings they were assigned for their coursework
were written by Catholics, and he said he found himself agreeing with their take on
Christianity. For Ryan at least, it was immediately clear that his spiritual conversion was
intermingling with a political one as well.

Ryan said Protestant-Catholic differences regularly came up at WF, and he was
not alone in his interest in the topic. Intrigued, I decided to conduct an informal focus
group a few weeks later with fellows that were interested in talking about their views on
Protestant-Catholic relations in the United States today. Four fellows came, including
Ryan, and I asked them to a respond to a number of questions about Catholicism’s
influence on evangelical politics and evangelicalism’s influence on Catholic politics.
Their answers suggested this was a very salient topic to this generation. I left the meeting
wondering how the dynamics between these two faiths witnessed that day might one day
become the basis of a research question worthy of a dissertation.

Two years after encountering WF for the first time, I returned to study a group of
fellows over the course of one semester. I was able to comfortable engage most fellows I
spoke with. Being only a few years older, I was generally accepted as a peer. As a
Protestant curious about Catholicism, I am familiar with the key debates between the two
traditions, and I was able to speak their language in most cases. This worked to my
advantage in that I think both Protestants and Catholics thought I could relate to where
they were coming from, and I was quick to express respect for their beliefs and
backgrounds. At the same time, to the extent that I am part of the very culture I am studying, I was perhaps unable to notice all of the idiosyncrasies of the dialogue between Protestants and Catholics, and I of course was more interested in certain aspects of it than others.

Methods of Recording and Analyzing Conversations

On September 1, 2007 I greeted the fellows as they moved into their residence for the semester. At that time I gave them a copy of a letter on Georgetown University letterhead introducing myself as a graduate student and telling them that I would be interested in speaking to them over the course of the semester in order to learn about WF. It also included my contact information.

Over the course of the next few days I set up a time later in the month to chat with many of the fellows I met that day. My interviews with the fellows usually took place over the lunch hour or during an afternoon break from work. They typically lasted between 1 hour and 1.5 hours. Because I was asking the fellows to talk about their relationship with other fellows, I wanted the interviews to be as informal and comfortable as possible. I chose not to tape record the interviews to increase the forthrightness of the interviewees. I came with a number of prepared questions but then let the conversation take its own course. I composed field notes during and immediately following the meetings with the fellows.
Dates of Observation and In-depth Interviews with Fellows (Washington, D.C.)

Angie: September 1, 3, 20 and December 3, 18, 2007

Brenda: September 1, 3, 26 and December 3, 2007

Connor: September 3, 2007 and January 10, 2008

Derek: September 1, 3, 26 and December 3, 18, 2007

Dave: September 1, 3 and December 3, 2007

Liam: September 3 and December 3, 2007

Kate: September 3 and December 3, 2007

Ted: September 3, November 6, December 3 2007 and January 10, 2008

Laurie: January 16, 2008

Douglas Minson: August 30, 2008

Jim: September 3, 2007

Molly: January 30, 2008

Mary: November 7 and 28, 2006

Ryan: November 7 and 27, 2006

Jenny: December 6, 2008

Kelly: September 1, 3 and December 3, 2007
Works Cited


Caylor, Bob. 1993. “Terry Preaches Theocratic Rule ‘No more Mr. Nice Christian’ is the Pro-life Activists’s Theme for the ‘90S. *The News-Sentinel* (Fort Wayne, IN).


http://pewresearch.org/pubs/605/young-white-evangelicals-less-republican-still-conservative


257


Kiely, Kathy. 2007. Immigrants’ advocates look to churches; Religious leaders tapped to help lobby for a path to citizenship. USA Today. April 2. P. 4A.


Kuhnhenn, Jim. 2008. Televangelist John Hagee apologizes to Catholics
http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20080513/ap_on_el_pr/hagee_letter_14
May 13, accessed May 14


266


http://www.townhall.com/columnists/FrankPastore/2007/05/13/where_are_the_protestant_benedicts

268


273


http://www.nytimes.com/2006/03/19/weekinreview/19swarns.html


Tajfel, Henri. 1978. Differentiation between social groups: studies in the social psychology of intergroup relations. London; New York: Published in cooperation with European Association of Experimental Social Psychology by Academic Press.


