

RELIGION AND POLARIZATION IN AMERICAN POLITICS

By

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To Denise and Marcia Magee, my mother and grandmother.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
Chapter	
I. THE POLITICAL SORTING OF AMERICAN RELIGIOUS BEHAVIOR	1
Abstract	1
A Generalized Process of Political Change in Churches	3
Political Change in Contemporary Evangelical Churches	6
Expectations and Research Design.....	9
Establishing Causation – Panel Models of Party and Church Attendance	12
The Influence of Party on Church Attendance	12
The (Lack of) Influence of Church Attendance on Party	16
Who Changes Religious Behavior because of Political Preferences?.....	19
Partisanship’s Influence on Religious Behavior prior to the Rise of the Christian Right	23
Conclusion.....	27
Works Cited.....	29
Supporting Information	38
II. HOW POLITICS CHANGES CHURCHES	49
Abstract	49
A Generalized Theory of the Politicization of Churches	51
The Politicization of Churches in the Contemporary United States	54
Expectations and Research Design.....	57
Politics of Organizational Satisfaction with Churches.....	59
The Polarization of Friends in Church	63
Politicized Appreciation and Criticism in Churches	65
The Politics of Investment in Churches	67
The Politics of Transmitting One’s Faith	70
The Polarization of Proselytizing.....	70
Politicized Transmission of Religion from Parent to Child.....	73
Conclusion.....	76

Works Cited.....	79
Supporting Information	88
III. SOCIAL GROUPS AND THE SELF-INTENSIFYING NATURE OF POLARIZATION	92
Abstract	92
How Polarization Links Subordinate Groups with Superordinate Groups	95
Why People Link Social Groups with Political Coalitions: Information Processing and Social Identity	98
Which Social Groups Link with Political Coalitions?	102
Expectations and Research Design.....	103
Christian Fundamentalists: The Test Group.....	105
The Effect of Superordinate Group Preferences on Subordinate Group Preferences	114
The Effect of Subordinate Group Preferences on Superordinate Group Preferences	115
Experimental Evidence for Self-Intensifying Polarization	117
Conclusion.....	123
Works Cited.....	126
Supporting Information	134

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1.1 Church Attendance as a Function of Lagged Partisanship, 2000-2004 Panel	14
1.2 Partisanship as a Function of Lagged Church Attendance, 2000-2004 Panel	16
1.3 Church Attendance as a Function of Partisanship Conditioned by Centrality Measures, 2000-2004 Panel	21
1.4 Comparing the Party and Church Attendance’s Relationship 1976 vs. 2004.....	25
2.1 Church Evaluation as a Function of Party and Other Variables	62
2.2 Friends in Church as a Function of Party and Other Variables	64
2.3 Criticism and Appreciation in Church as a Function of Party	66
2.4 Church Donations and Volunteering as a Function of Party and Other Variables	69
2.5 Sharing Religion as a Function of Party and Other Variables	71
2.6 Intergenerational Religious Transmission as Function of Party and Other Variables	75
3.1 Feeling toward Christian Fundamentalists as Function of Ideology and Other Variables	111
3.2 Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists in 2004 as a function of Feelings about Conservatives in 2000.....	115
3.3 Feelings toward Conservatives in 2004 as a Function of Feelings toward Christian Fundamentalists in 2000.....	117
3.4 The Effect of Political Prime on Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists	119
3.5 The Effect of Christian Fundamentalist Prime on Feelings about Conservatives	122

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1.1 The Effect of Party in 2000 on the Probability of Attending Church Almost Weekly or More in 2004.....	15
1.2 The Effect of Church Attendance in 2000 on Party Identification in 2004	17
3.1 The Self-Intensifying Nature of Polarization.....	95
3.2 Christian Fundamentalists Thermometer Correlations, 1988-2004.....	107
3.3 Feeling Thermometer Responses: Liberals vs. Conservatives	109
3.4 Effect of Ideology on Christian Fundamentalists Thermometer, 1988-2008 ...	112
3.5 Effect of Political Prime on Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists in 2004 Conditional on Prior Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists	121
3.6 Effect of Christian Fundamentalist Prime on Feelings about Conservatives in 2004 Conditional on Prior Feelings about Conservatives	123

CHAPTER I

The Political Sorting of American Religious Behavior

Abstract:

One bedrock finding in the study of mass politics is that religious behavior affects political behavior. However, the successes of movements such as the Christian right have complicated matters. Using a variety of methods, I find that, as religious conservatism has become an exemplar of political conservatism, political behavior has come to affect the religious behavior of a significant number of Americans. Specifically, political predispositions are now a key factor for many individuals' social integration and organizational satisfaction with evangelical Protestant churches. Republicans sort into while Democrats sort out of frequent attendance in these churches. The resulting void of Democrats in evangelical churches contributes to polarization of the broader political environment.

In 1986, only 8% of white Southern Baptists considered themselves to be strong Republicans. By 2004, the percentage of strong Republicans had tripled. Meanwhile, the proportion of strong Democrats attending Southern Baptist churches fell by almost half (General Social Survey 1972-2004). What explains this changing partisan composition? A common response is that churches have persuaded their members to become more Republican as the parties have taken distinct positions on moral issues. This answer is consistent with a long history of social science research treating the relationship between religion and politics as unidirectional. Since people are “born into” a religion, the conventional wisdom is that religious behavior must affect politics, a view encapsulated in foundational works in the study of mass behavior (e.g. Campbell et al. 1960).

However, the relationship between religion and politics has become more complex. Quite apart from the notion that people are born into a religion, American religion is actually fluid (Wuthnow 1988). People make choices about both the role of faith in their lives and how intensely they are involved with religious organizations. Some churches take controversial positions on, and become strongly associated with, hot button political issues. I argue these trends combine to make politics a major factor for some people’s satisfaction and integration with churches as organizations. This weakens the commonly held scholarly understanding that religion affects politics but politics does not affect religion. I offer an alternative explanation for why religious affiliations have become more politically homogenous. People whose political preferences clash with the dominant political direction of a church become less involved with that church. Conversely, participation increases among those whose political preferences resonate with the dominant positions espoused in and about their church. Specifically, I

demonstrate that the intensifying divisiveness of moral and social issues has caused the causal arrow between political preferences and religious behavior to switch for members of evangelical Protestant denominations.

My findings suggest the overall relationship between religion and politics is increasingly complicated. I argue that a substantial number of Americans choose to attend or sort into churches reflecting their political values, attitudes and worldviews embodied by partisanship, a pattern that likely results in an intensification of polarization within the United States. First, I offer a theory of how political preferences influence religious behavior. Then, I apply that theory to the United States, both in the 2000s and the 1970s. Using panel survey data, I show an evolution of the relationship between religion and politics culminating in a finding of strong effects of party on religious behavior but not significant effects of religious behavior on party.

A Generalized Process of Political Change in Churches

Individuals receive political information about a church from many sources. Most obviously, pastors discuss politically relevant topics during church services (Brewer et al. 2003). Informal social networks within churches also transmit political information (Djupe and Gilbert 2009). People glean political information about churches from the broader social environment as well.¹ For instance, many who have never attended a

¹ During the 2000s, just under three-fifths of New York Times articles (311 of 528) that contained the phrase “Southern Baptist” also contained the words “conservative”, “Republican”, or both (Lexis-Nexis).

Southern Baptist church often recognize the Southern Baptist churches as organizations with a decidedly conservative political bent.

Political information about churches can trigger two mechanisms with the potential to change religious behavior. One mechanism is psychological; political messages in church can cause either affirmation or unpleasantness. The other mechanism is social; politics can enhance or compromise social integration in a church. Both mechanisms have the potential to affect organizational satisfaction, initiating a process of neglect (Withey and Cooper 1989).

Political messages in church sometimes deviate from people's prior understanding of the world. The clash of messages from a church with a person's prior political understanding can compromise a person's ability to preserve a concept of self that is stable, competent, and morally good (Festinger 1957). Because such instances are psychologically unpleasant or "dissonant," it can lead to change, either in religious or political behavior. Traditionally, scholars assume that individuals adapted their political preferences to meet their church, but neutralizing a source of conflicting information can also reduce dissonance. For people conflicted by a church, this means evaluating the church experience less favorably than they would if they rarely experienced discomfort. In the diminished favorability of the church, the individual becomes a member of an organization that provides declining satisfaction.

For others, political information in a church is not contradictory or dissonant. Some members of a church may criticize gay marriage legalization in front of another member with a similar opinion. Likewise, a pastor might deliver a sermon admonishing a court decision before a similarly minded congregant. These consonant political messages

could enhance well-being by providing adherents with a narrative that affirms prior beliefs and a consistent view of the world (Jost et al. 2004; Jost et al. 2008). Therefore, consonant political messages can increase satisfaction with a church.

In addition to this psychological mechanism, politics can influence churches through a social mechanism. Church-based social networks carry political information (Djupe and Gilbert 2009), and politics influences social connections (Alford et al. 2011; McPherson 2001). Politics can strengthen or weaken social ties in a church in several ways. Church members can either directly clash or agree about issues. For the former, the experience may be unpleasant. For the latter, it might be reinforcing (Mutz 2006). Moreover, those who agree about politics are likely to agree about other aspects of life as well (Hillygus and Shields 2008). As a result, political “minorities” in a church may feel like they just do not “fit in” with fellow church goers, while people in line with the dominant attitudes of their congregation may be more likely to corroborate with coreligionists on a wide-array of non-political matters such as business and social outings. Enhanced social integration then aids in maintaining long-term involvement with the organization (Kim and Rhee 2010; Kuipers 2009; O’Reilly et al. 1989).

In the end, political messages associated with churches can influence social ties and psychological well-being. These factors, in turn, can reduce or increase satisfaction with a church as an organization. When organizational satisfaction is high or improving, people are more likely to be heavily invested in their church. When organizational satisfaction is low or declining, people are more likely to respond by exiting or neglecting their prior commitments (Hirschman 1970; Rusbult et al. 1988). By exit, I mean the abandonment of an organization- leaving or switching churches. By neglect, I mean

disengaging from an organization through declines in attendance, donating, volunteering, and other forms of organizational investment. In the case of a religious organization, neglect is particularly likely, in so far as it is a compromising response to dissatisfaction that allows a person to retain both their political and religious social identities.

Political Change in Contemporary Evangelical Churches

Because the groups who experience satisfaction or dissatisfaction change across place and time, the process described above ought to depend on context. In the contemporary United States, it applies primarily to members of evangelical Protestant churches. Evangelical churches have great directional clarity in political messages. While a few evangelical churches promote policies favored by Democrats, the overwhelming majority of evangelical churches are associated with the Republican Party.² Their associated messages on issues such as abortion and gay marriage are emotional, salient, and easily-understood (Carmines and Stimson 1989; Layman 2001) lending enough potency to disrupt what is often viewed as a deep seated and private activity. This characteristic is strengthened in a well-sorted political environment (Hetherington 2009). Furthermore, political messages associated with evangelicals are ubiquitous, originating from the broad political environment and from the evangelical religious elites who often express their conservatism (Hunter 1991; Hunter 2010).³

² Examples of liberal evangelicals include Jim Wallis and President Jimmy Carter.

³ Environmental heuristics have been clear about evangelicals for some time; more than twice as many people could not offer an opinion about the general favorability of

In contrast, most Catholics and mainline Protestants do not experience such intense, clear, and ubiquitous opportunities for political dissonance or consonance. Political information outside of evangelical churches does not overwhelmingly favor Republicans (Putnam and Campbell 2010). Similarly, mainline Protestant clergy tend to discuss issues like homosexuality in less divisive language (Olson and Cadge 2002). And, African-Americans typically lack clear directions in political messages in churches as many churches advocate some Republican social policies (Sherkat et al. 2010) while maintaining a clear preference for many Democratic economic policies (Brown 2009).

In addition, the experience of altering religious behavior to accommodate personal preferences is far less common outside of evangelical churches. Evangelicals have more market choices, closer substitute churches, and fewer social pressures against “shopping” for churches (Sherkat 2001; Smith and Sikkink 2003). Consequently, in the contemporary context, the religious behavior of mainline Protestants and Catholics is not likely to be influenced by the alignment of a person’s political preferences with the positions associated with his or her church.

Overall, the theory offers a clear, testable hypothesis for contemporary evangelicals. Because Republicans are most likely to integrate with fellow congregants and receive consonant political information in churches, evangelical Republicans are most likely to experience high satisfaction and to attend with high frequency. Because Democrats are most likely to receive dissonant political information and not integrate

Lutherans or Presbyterians than those who had no such opinion about Baptists (Barna 1991).

with fellow congregants, evangelical Democrats are most likely to experience low satisfaction and to attend with low frequency.

Though expectations are consistent with findings of Patrikios (2008), they extend from a distinct theoretical process. Contrary to a notion of “American Republican Religion”, the theoretical process leading to politicized churches is not because Republicans have a special individual characteristic leading them to attend church more frequently than Democrats. Rather, evangelical American Republicans should attend church more frequently than Democrats because their churches, on average, are associated with Republican politics. However, this association is not constant over region, denomination, or congregation, leading to expectation of heterogeneous effects of political preferences across groups, individuals, and time. Republican members could decrease in frequency of attendance while Democratic members could increase in churches associated with Democratic political preferences. Though, leaders of many of today’s liberal mainline churches are likely too subtle in communicating their preferences to alter organizational satisfaction (Neiheisel and Djupe 2008; Olson and Cadge 2002). Nonetheless, if the religious left somehow outpaced the religious right in growth and political intensity, American Republican Religion could become American Democratic Religion.

This is not to say that politics is the foremost force guiding religious behavior. On the contrary, only a handful of scholars have identified politics as an important independent variable (Campbell et al. n.d.; Hout and Fischer 2002; Patrikios 2008) while many have recognized several groups of factors that influence religious behavior. The first group is family socialization (Bader and Desmond 2006; Bao et al. 1999; Dudley

and Laurent 1989; Ellison and Sherkat 1990; Hunsberger 1984; Nelsen 1980; Nelsen 1981; Ozorak 1989; Perkins 1987). The second group is composed of demographic explanations such as gender and age (Alston 1979; Batson et al. 1993; Hunt and Hunt 2000; Kalmijin 1998; Krause 2003; Krause 2005; Nash and Berger 1962; Shibley 1996; Smith et al. 1998). Finally, the third group hinges on contextual circumstances faced by the individual such as church characteristics and religious market forces (Ammerman 1995; Chaves 2006; Dyck and Starke 1999; Iannaccone 1994; Kelley 1977; Mark 2003; Stern 1999). Consequently, politics does not explain all variance in church attendance. Other non-political factors will decide many people's religious behavior. Nonetheless, politics in churches should significantly influence behavior of a sizeable portion of the population.

Expectations and Research Design

The investigation of this theory has three parts. First, I show a powerful effect of partisanship on religious behavior among evangelicals through analysis of the 2000-2004 American National Election Study panel survey, while finding that church attendance does not have a similar influence on partisanship. Second, I examine heterogeneity of political effects within individuals to test who is more likely to change religious behavior because of politics. I find that party identification has robust effects among evangelicals for whom politics is central, but not for those for whom it is peripheral. Third, I apply the theory to another context and investigate heterogeneity of effects over time by replicating contemporary models with data from the 1972-1976 American National Election Study

panel survey, finding that church attendance had a significant influence on party during this period.

I use panel data to establish the direction of causation. Religious leaders, the broad environment, and church based social networks transmit political messages often with persuasive intent. Those who attend church frequently have higher exposure to this same political information. Consequently, religious behavior could also influence partisan attachments. Indeed, this has been the conventional wisdom. The same process that theoretically affects attendance change could also lead to partisan change. Panel data are well suited to address the basic causal problem. Finding a significant relationship between a dependent variable and an independent variable measured at a time prior to the dependent variable is meaningful evidence that the independent variable is driving the relationship. Similarly, not finding such a relationship is strong evidence that the independent variable does *not* influence the dependent variable.

The central dependent variable in my models is frequency of church attendance, a commonly used indicator of religious behavior.⁴ Party identification and a dummy variable indicating if the respondent belongs to a church within an evangelical

⁴ Survey respondents often over-report their frequency church attendance, largely out of a social desirability bias (Hadaway et al. 1993; Hadaway et al. 1998; also see Hout and Greely 1998; Smith 1998). And, members of fundamentalist religious groups have a relatively high non-response rate leading to potential sampling bias (Sherkat 2007). Neither of these concerns is condemning. Over-reporting error is more of a concern in overtime comparison of aggregate religious behavior than in the analysis here. At worst, non-response rates among some fundamentalists constrain degrees of freedom.

denomination are explanatory variables in all models. I also create an interaction between the two, which allows me to assess whether party's effect is more robust for evangelicals than for those from other religious traditions. The interaction will reflect party's additional influence among evangelicals.⁵

Although the truth is undoubtedly more complicated, I assume for empirical purposes that political messages in and around evangelical Protestant churches in the United States generally are consistent with the Republican Party. This assumption is consistent with the overall distribution of evangelical churches' political leanings. To the extent that this assumption is violated, it will only serve to undermine my results, not enhance them. Hence the estimates derived from my models are likely quite conservative.

I limit samples to Protestants and Catholics. This isolates variation to allow meaningful comparisons of evangelicals with the reference category, Catholics and non-evangelical Protestants. I do not analyze the behavior of non-Protestants and non-Catholics for two reasons. First, the most politically active religious organizations in the United States are Catholic or Protestant. Second, sample sizes of non-Catholics and non-Protestants are too small for meaningful conclusions.⁶ In addition, I limit the sample to

⁵I follow Steensland et al. (2000:294) in defining evangelical Protestants as those who are members of churches that “have typically sought more separation from the broader culture, emphasized missionary activity and individual conversion, and taught strict adherence to particular religious doctrines.” Lists of Protestant denominations coded as mainline or evangelical follow appear in Supporting Information A.

⁶ Cell sizes would be in the single digits for many non-Christian groups. For example, only four Muslims appear in one of the datasets (NES 2000-2004 Panel).

whites. Because many churches are racially homogenous (Dougherty 2003), minorities who identify as evangelical Protestants are unlikely to be members of churches favoring Republican policies.

Establishing Causation – Panel Models of Party and Church Attendance

I employ a two-part test of the influence of partisanship on religion using the 2000-2004 American National Election Panel study. First, I establish that lagged partisanship has a significant effect on contemporaneous church attendance for evangelicals even when controlling for lagged church attendance and a host of other variables. Next, I find that lagged church attendance does not have a significant effect on contemporaneous partisanship.

The Influence of Party on Church Attendance

A simple comparison of means shows major differences between partisans in their proclivity to change in frequency of church attendance between 2000 and 2004. Regardless of religious tradition or partisan affiliation, the average respondent declined at least slightly in attendance frequency between 2000 and 2004 (mean: -0.05; std. dev 1.17).⁷ However, evangelical Democrats declined eight times more than evangelical

⁷ Party's seven values range from 0 (strong Democrat) to 1 (strong Republican).

Republicans (-0.67 compared to -0.08; $p < .05$). In contrast, the partisan difference in decline was negligible among non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics.⁸

These patterns become even more distinct in the multivariate context. In Table 1, I present estimates from a model of church attendance frequency, as measured in 2004. Partisan identification, a dummy variable for being an evangelical Protestants, and their interaction, all measured in 2000, are the independent variables of principal interest. Frequency of church attendance in 2000 is present as a covariate, making other estimates on the right hand side reflect change in frequency of church attendance between 2000 and 2004 (Kelly and Keele 2006). I recoded all independent variables on 0-1 intervals and employed ordered probit regression.

Estimates follow theoretical expectations. The main effect of party is not significant (coef: 0.156; s.e.: 0.159), suggesting party has no effect on non-evangelicals.⁹ However, the interaction between party and the evangelical Protestant dummy is substantively and statistically significant in the expected direction (coef: 1.381; s.e.: 0.407). This means the effect of party is significantly greater for evangelicals than for Catholics and non-evangelical Protestants. Among evangelical Protestants, party in 2000

⁸ The 9/11 terrorist attack occurred between surveys. However, as Putnam (2002) observed, the attacks did not produce long-term effects on church attendance.

⁹ Models combine both Catholics and non-evangelical Protestants in the reference category. Supporting Information B reports an extension of the model in Table 1 that includes an additional interaction between party and a Catholic dummy variable. Party's effect among Catholics is substantively similar to party's effect among non-evangelical Protestants (Catholic interaction: coef. 0.0446, std. error 0.315).

is positively associated with church attendance in 2004, even when controlling for lagged church attendance.

Table 1: Church Attendance as a Function of Lagged Partisanship, 2000-2004 Panel

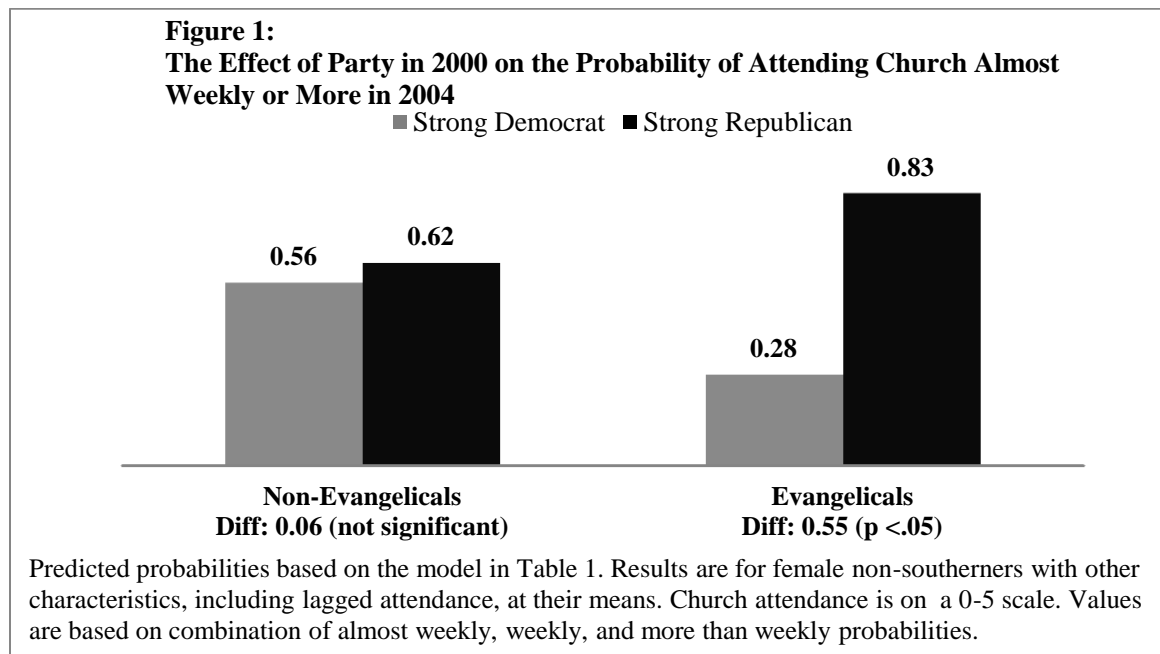
	Param. Est	(Std. Error)
Party ₀₀	0.156	(0.159)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	1.381***	(0.407)
Evangelical ₀₀	-0.733**	(0.280)
Prayer Frequency ₀₀	0.490*	(0.223)
Biblical Literalism ₀₀	-0.627**	(0.203)
Age	0.570*	(0.280)
Education ₀₀	0.228	(0.181)
Female	0.048	(0.105)
South ₀₀	-0.172	(0.122)
Attendance ₀₀	3.088***	(0.212)
cut 1	0.596*	(0.251)
cut 2	1.328***	(0.254)
cut 3	1.975***	(0.261)
cut 4	2.901***	(0.276)
cut 5	3.870***	(0.289)
Pseudo R ²	0.247	
N	464	

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. Ordered probit estimates. Dependent variable is 6-pt. church attendance in 2004. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

A strong Democrat evangelical has about a 6% probability of attending church weekly.¹⁰ This probability increases fivefold for a strong Republican to a statistically distinct 34%. Similarly, a simulated strong Democrat evangelical has less than a 1% chance of attending more than weekly while a strong Republican has a 17% probability. Figure 1

¹⁰ All predicted probabilities were calculated in Stata using Long's post-estimation command (Long and Freese 2005) and simulate a female not in the South with other characteristics at their sample means.

shows the effect of party on the cumulation of three high attendance categories: almost weekly, weekly, and more than weekly. Strong Republican's 83% chance of high attendance is over three times greater than 28% chance of high attendance for strong Democrats. Partisan differences are also stark in likelihood of low attendance. The effect of party among evangelicals is between two and three times greater than first order effects of prayer frequency and age, variables of recognized importance for church attendance frequency.¹¹



¹¹ Because the theory addresses change in frequency of church attendance, substantive effects of party can also be discussed in term of change in attendance from 2000 to 2004. Supporting Information C reports models re-estimated by transforming Y_t , with church attendance at Y_{t-1} on the right hand side, into $Y_t - Y_{t-1}$.

The (Lack of) Influence of Church Attendance on Party

I test the competing hypothesis that evangelical church attendance does not influence party identification using the 2000-2004 NES panel survey. The OLS model of seven-point 2004 party identification appears in Table 2. The key independent variables are church attendance in 2000, a dummy variable for evangelicals, and an interaction between church attendance and the evangelical indicator. Party in 2000 is also included on the right hand side of the model. Other right-hand side variables include ideology, income, gender, education, and residency in the South. All independent variables are on a 0-1 interval and are from 2000 measurements.

Table 2: Partisanship as a Function of Lagged Church Attendance, 2000-2004 Panel

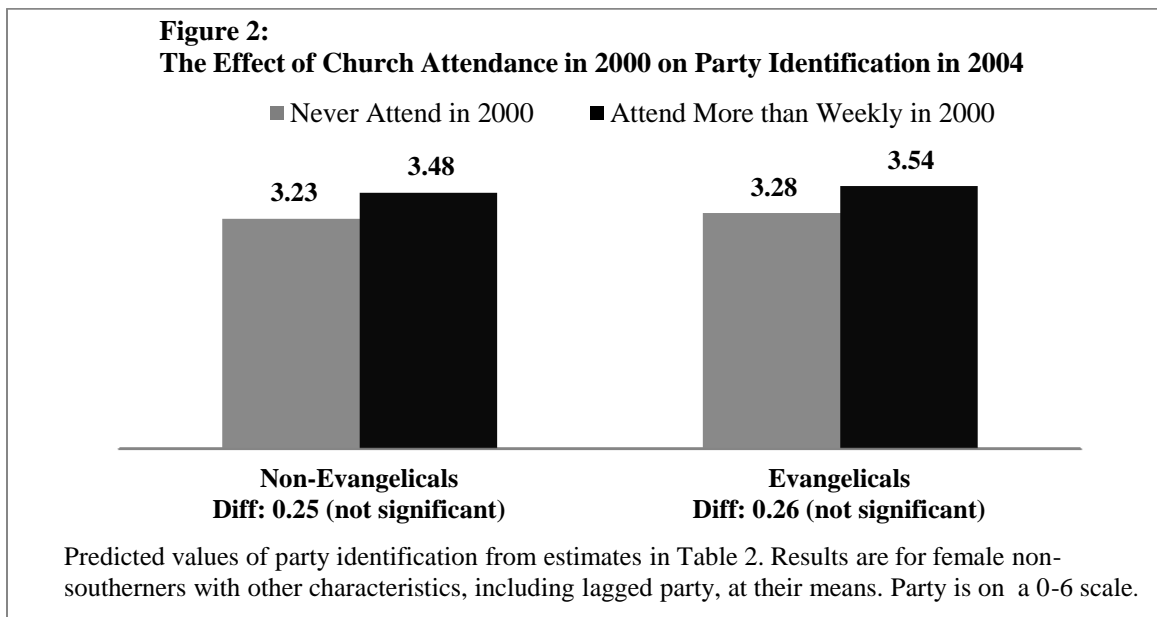
	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Attendance ₀₀	0.250	(0.187)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Attendance ₀₀	0.007	(0.374)
Evangelical ₀₀	0.055	(0.253)
Conservatism ₀₀	0.884***	(0.251)
Income ₀₀	-0.066	(0.388)
South ₀₀	-0.041	(0.128)
Female	-0.027	(0.115)
Education ₀₀	-0.132	(0.190)
Party ₀₀	5.210***	(0.190)
Constant	-0.080	(0.213)
Adj. R ²	0.785	
N	404	

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. OLS regression. Dependent variable is 7-pt. party in 2004. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to white Protestants and Catholic. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

Church attendance in 2000 does not have a significant effect on party in 2004.

The main effect is not statistically significant from zero (coef: 0.250; s.e.: 0.187), and the

interaction is not statistically different from the main effect (coef: 0.007 s.e.: 0.374). The effect of lagged attendance is substantively trivial for both evangelicals and non-evangelicals. As shown in Figure 2, evangelicals who attend more than weekly have a predicted party identification at 3.48. Evangelicals who never attend have an indistinct predicted party identification at 3.23. Among both evangelicals and non-evangelicals, the difference in 2004 party between a person who never attends church in 2000 and one who attends more than weekly is about 0.25, roughly 3% of the total 7-point scale of party.¹²



¹² Following the same transformation approach noted above and detailed in Supporting Information C, change in party identification between 2000 and 2004 has a theoretical range of 5 (increase) to -5 (decrease). The difference in change between a person who never attends church in 2000 and one who attends more than weekly is indiscernible from zero at 0.229 for non-evangelicals and 0.284 for evangelical

Because party's effect on church attendance is far more important for evangelicals than other groups, the hypothesis arguing that church attendance is driving party would call for attendance to be a more powerful predictor of party identification for evangelicals than for non-evangelicals. However, the effect of attendance on party is insignificant for evangelicals just as it is for non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics. The combination of results in Tables 1 and 2 provides confidence that partisanship influences church attendance for contemporary evangelical Protestants, but church attendance does not influence partisanship. These findings provide considerable support for the argument that the causal arrow only points one way among contemporary evangelicals- from partisanship to religious behavior, a direction contrary to conventional scholarly understanding.

An alternative explanation of these results is that party serves as a proxy for religious belief. Such an alternative argues that Republicans have a more intense creed or spirituality, which, in turn, promotes frequent attendance. Or, in starker terms, Democrats are not responding to political alienation but rather their decline in attendance is because they are not as faithful as Republicans. If this was true, it would compromise causal inferences drawn from previous findings.

However, this alternative explanation is unlikely. Religious belief and religious behavior are conceptually distinct. Prayer frequency is a commonly used measure of intensity of belief. Party makes no difference in the prayer frequency of white evangelicals. On a 0-1 interval of prayer frequency, Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents register a mean prayer frequency of 0.741 (American National Election Study 2000-2004 Panel). Republicans and Republican-leaning independents have an

indistinguishable ($p = 0.68$) mean of 0.748. Overall, the variation in prayer frequency between traditions is greater than variation within traditions. The 0.112 difference in prayer frequency between evangelicals and non-evangelicals who attend church at least a few times years is both statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and over seventeen times greater than the 0.007 difference between Democrat and Republican evangelicals.

Who Changes Religious Behavior because of Political Preferences?

Although results suggest that, on average, evangelicals' political preferences affect religious behavior, the effects may not be equal for all evangelicals. For some, religion is too central to their lives to be influenced by politics. And, for others, politics is simply too peripheral to cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Centrality ought to moderate the relationship between religious behavior and political preference. When a person does not hold politics central, it is unlikely to cause much change in other attitudes of behaviors (Converse 1964). Similarly, when a person holds religion central, he or she has ample reason to ignore whatever political dissonance he or she might encounter. People who care deeply about religion are less likely to decrease in attendance while those who care deeply about politics are more likely to change. If I find such a pattern of results, it would increase confidence in my findings.

I continue with the 2000-2004 American National Election Study to construct three indices for testing these conditional hypotheses. One index measures political centrality. Another index measures religious centrality. Both religious and political centrality measures use a combination of subjective and objective indicators. A final

index measures political centrality relative to religious centrality by subtracting the religious centrality measure from the political centrality measures. Indices rely on 2000 measures from the 2000-2004 NES Panel Survey and are coded to 0-1 intervals ranging from low to high centrality.¹³

I replicate the basic model from Table 1 and split the sample according to high and low values of these three indices. Estimates for the ensuing six models, two for each of the three centrality indices, appear in Table 3. Findings are consistent with theoretical expectations. In all models, lagged attendance affects contemporaneous attendance. While the main effect of party is always insignificant, the interaction is significant in three of the six models, representing scenarios when religious centrality is low, when political centrality is high, and when religious centrality is low relative to political centrality.

The sample in Model 1 in Table 3 is limited to those who scored above 0.5 on the index of religious centrality while the sample in Model 2 is limited to those in the sample who scored below this 0.5 value. As expected, the main effect of party is not significant in either model. However, the interaction is significant when religious centrality is low (coef: 2.702; s.e. 0.714), but not when religious centrality is high (coef: 0.765; s.e. 0.532). Party matters for evangelical church attendance when religion is less important, but party does not matter when religion is very important. Strong Republicans who do not hold religion as central have an 87% probability of attending at least once or twice a month. Meanwhile, the likelihood of frequent attendance drops to just over 5% for Democratic evangelicals with low centrality of religion.

¹³ Supporting Information D details index construction.

Table 3: Church Attendance as a Function of Partisanship Conditioned by Centrality Measures, 2000-2004 Panel

Conditional:	<i>Religious Centrality</i>		<i>Political Centrality</i>		<i>Religion vs. Politics</i>	
	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>	<u>Model 6</u>
	Religious Centrality High Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Religious Centrality Low Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Political Centrality High Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Political Centrality Low Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Politics Relatively High Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Politics Relatively Low Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party ₀₀	0.341 (0.257)	0.043 (0.207)	0.109 (0.187)	0.405 (0.319)	0.029 (0.185)	0.510 (0.331)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	0.765 (0.532)	2.702*** (0.714)	1.850*** (0.522)	0.810 (0.695)	1.743*** (0.524)	0.292 (0.707)
Evangelical ₀₀	-0.106 (0.371)	1.871*** (0.486)	1.248*** (0.377)	0.026 (0.447)	-1.095** (0.348)	0.131 (0.508)
Prayer Frequency ₀₀	0.100 (0.409)	0.660* (0.294)	0.410 (0.271)	0.799* (0.408)	0.523* (0.256)	0.151 (0.477)
Biblical Literalism ₀₀	-0.560* (0.293)	-0.601* (0.293)	-0.622** (0.260)	-0.683* (0.335)	-0.507* (0.256)	-0.656* (0.349)
Age	0.511 (0.441)	0.770* (0.376)	0.586 (0.434)	1.376* (0.656)	0.571 (0.424)	0.930 (0.690)
Education ₀₀	0.467 (0.287)	0.039 (0.238)	0.231 (0.220)	0.256 (0.330)	0.225 (0.218)	0.224 (0.344)
Female	0.118 (0.159)	0.005 (0.143)	0.052 (0.126)	0.108 (0.197)	0.023 (0.126)	0.074 (0.210)
South ₀₀	-0.268 (0.172)	-0.026 (0.179)	-0.105 (0.146)	-0.432* (0.234)	-0.145 (0.149)	-0.252 (0.229)
Attendance ₀₀	2.615*** (0.328)	3.597*** (0.310)	2.873*** (0.258)	3.670*** (0.396)	2.854*** (0.248)	3.746*** (0.446)
cut 1	0.575 (0.464)	0.606 (0.326)	0.473 (0.346)	1.603** (0.530)	0.612 (0.347)	0.859 (0.570)
cut 2	1.032* (0.462)	1.512*** (0.331)	1.162*** (0.347)	2.493*** (0.547)	1.334*** (0.351)	1.653** (0.570)
cut 3	1.607*** (0.467)	2.241*** (0.345)	1.828*** (0.354)	3.165*** (0.569)	1.984*** (0.358)	2.319*** (0.591)
cut 4	2.467*** (0.481)	3.292*** (0.376)	2.709*** (0.368)	4.285*** (0.614)	2.898*** (0.374)	3.368*** (0.627)
cut 5	3.416*** (0.494)	4.337*** (0.405)	3.623*** (0.381)	5.433*** (0.644)	3.828*** (0.388)	4.465*** (0.647)
Pseudo R ²	0.171	0.261	0.228	0.312	0.206	0.280
N	212	252	313	151	317	147

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. Ordered probit estimates. Dependent variable is 6-pt. church attendance in 2004. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

Estimates for political centrality follow the trend established by religious centrality. Party only matters for an evangelical's religious behavior when politics is central to that person. Model 3 in Table 3 reflects those who hold politics as highly central. Model 4 in Table 3 reflects those who do not hold politics as central. The samples are split at the 45 percentile. In both models, the main estimate for party remains insignificant. The interaction is insignificant in Model 4 (coef: 0.571; s.e. 0.590), when political centrality is relatively low. However, the interaction is highly significant ($p < .001$) in Model 3 (coef: 1.850; s.e. 0.522), when a person scores in the upper portion of the political centrality index. High attendance is dramatically different between partisans with high political centrality. A simulated strong Democrat evangelical with high political centrality has a 13% probability of attending church at least almost weekly while a comparable strong Republican has over an 80% probability.

The third index subtracting political centrality from religious centrality yields further confirmation that political preferences affect religious behavior when politics is relatively important or when religion is relatively unimportant. Those in Model 5 are above the mean in the measure of political centrality minus religious centrality and care more about politics relative to religion than those in Model 6. Again, weak estimates for the main effect of party imply that partisan influence is constrained to evangelicals. The interaction variable is not significant for those evangelicals in the lower third of the relative index, as shown by the 0.292 coefficient (s.e. 0.707) in Model 6. However, the significant interaction in Model 5 (coef: 1.743; s.e. 0.524) reflects a powerful effect of party for those evangelicals in the upper two-thirds of the relative index. An evangelical strong Democrat with high political centrality relative to religious centrality has a scant

10% chance of attending at least almost weekly, significantly less than the 70% chance of her simulated strong Republican counterpart.

Party changes religious behavior when either religious centrality is low or when political centrality is high. When religion and politics compete, politics “wins” when a person places more emphasis on politics relative to religion compared to the typical person. On the other hand, a person’s religious behavior can be immune to political influence if that person holds religion with great centrality.

Partisanship’s Influence on Religious Behavior prior to the Rise of Christian Right

The relationship between political preferences and religious behavior has evolved over the last half-century. Despite the strong findings that political preferences influence church attendance of contemporary evangelicals, politics likely did not have such effects in prior decades. The contextual conditions underlying the present relationship between religion and politics have not been the norm until relatively recently. The direction and intensity of political information in evangelical churches has not always been clear, eliminating a context with ample opportunities for cognitive strife, compromised social integration, and subsequently altered organizational satisfaction.

Prior to the rise of the Christian right between 1980 and 1992, major evangelical groups still maintained the historical norm of favoring strict separation of church and state (Jelen 2010). Affiliations such as the Southern Baptist Conventions had many members across the political spectrum. A full 62% of white evangelical Protestants identified with the Democratic Party in 1972 (General Social Survey 1972-2004).

Moreover, evangelicals often supported politicians of both parties as evidenced by Jimmy Carter's heavy reliance on their support. Carter's 54% of the white evangelical vote in 1976 was roughly twice that of John Kerry's in 2004 (General Social Survey 1972-2004). Consequently, prior to 1980, Democratic evangelicals should be no more likely than Republican evangelicals to decrease church attendance and the coefficient of the evangelical and party interaction should be insignificant.

I test this hypothesis using the 1972-1976 American National Election Study Panel Survey. I replicate as closely as possible the contemporary model of church attendance from Table 1. Because data limitations bar an exact replication, I include reduced versions of the 2000-2004 models alongside models using the earlier survey.¹⁴ Table 4 reports estimates for for both dependent variables of church attendance and partisan identification. All independent variables are lagged to either 1972 or 2000. Dependent variables are from 1976 or 2004.

Results generally support theoretical expectations. The main effect of party remains insignificant (coef. 0.174; s.e. 0.146) and the interaction between party and being evangelical remains powerful (coef. 0.905; s.e. 0.356) in the truncated model of 2004 church attendance. However, estimates from the 1970s depict a different relationship. Partisanship is statistically significant in 1976 (coef. 0.264; s.e. 0.120), suggesting that mainline Protestant and Catholic churches may have experienced a relatively weak

¹⁴ The "more than weekly" attendance response was not available in the older surveys. For replication purposes, I collapse responses in the later survey of "more than weekly" into the "weekly" category.

Table 4: Comparing the Party and Church Attendance's Relationship 1976 vs. 2004

<u>Frequency of Church Attendance as a Function of Lagged Party</u>				
Dependent Variable Year:	1976		2004	
	Model 1		Model 2	
	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Party (lagged)	0.255*	(0.128)	0.219	(0.164)
Party x Evangelical (lagged)	-0.355	(0.237)	1.383**	(0.427)
Evangelical (lagged)	0.275*	(0.146)	-0.554*	(0.282)
Age (lagged)	0.342	(0.226)	0.815*	(0.367)
Education (lagged)	0.192	(0.136)	0.071	(0.177)
South (lagged)	-0.024	(0.090)	-0.230*	(0.125)
Female (lagged)	0.123	(0.072)	0.041	(0.107)
Church Attendance (lagged)	2.574***	(0.112)	2.857***	(0.169)
Cut 1	0.281	(0.148)	0.893***	(0.268)
Cut 2	1.517***	(0.151)	1.590***	(0.271)
Cut 3	1.996***	(0.155)	2.210***	(0.278)
Cut 4	2.580***	(0.161)	3.073***	(0.291)
Pseudo R ²	0.198		0.250	
N	1,004		495	

<u>Party as a Function of Lagged Frequency of Church Attendance</u>				
Year:	1976		2004	
	Model 3		Model 4	
	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Church Attendance (lagged)	-0.141	(0.121)	0.241	(0.161)
Church Attendance x Evangelical (lagged)	0.607**	(0.225)	0.294	(0.342)
Evangelical (lagged)	-0.333*	(0.155)	-0.126	(0.256)
Age (lagged)	0.827***	(0.245)	-0.622*	(0.368)
Education (lagged)	0.495***	(0.149)	-0.317*	(0.191)
South (lagged)	-0.212*	(0.096)	-0.021	(0.126)
Female (lagged)	-0.055	(0.077)	-0.029	(0.115)
Income (lagged)	0.201	(0.170)	-0.054	(0.392)
Party (lagged)	4.568***	(0.116)	5.601***	(0.155)
Constant	0.091	(0.189)	0.661*	(0.271)
Adj. R ²	0.636		0.776	
N	1,028		424	

Sources: 1972-1976 & 2000-2004 American National Election Study Panel Surveys

Note: Ordered probit in Models 1 and 2. OLS in Models 3 and 4. Party as dependent variable is on a seven-point scale. Church attendance as a dependent variable is on a five-point scale. Sample limited to Catholic and Protestant whites. All independent variables are on a 0-1 scale and lagged to either 1972 or 2000. *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001, one-tailed tests

sorting process. The interaction carries a negative sign, although it is not significant (coef. -0.368; s.e. 0.224).

Strong Republican evangelicals have a 27.3% probability of attending weekly, which is indistinct from the 30.8% probability for strong Democratic evangelicals. Unlike in the 2000s, party did not influence church attendance of evangelicals in 1976. However, Catholic and non-evangelical Protestant strong Republicans in 1976 had a 30.1% chance of attending weekly while similar strong Democrats had a 21.9% chance. This 8% difference is significant statistically but minor substantively, indicating a comparatively weak political sorting in during the 1970s.

Models 3 and 4 of Table 4 reflect church attendance's influence on party in 1976 and 2004. As with the more fully elaborated model in Table 1, church attendance did not influence the 2004 party identification of either non-evangelical Christians or evangelicals. Similarly, the main estimate for attendance frequency was not significant in 1976. In contrast, the positive and significant interaction (coef. 0.607; s.e. 0.225) supports the traditional notion of religion's political influence as an "unmoved mover" by suggesting that high church attendance discouraged evangelicals from identifying with the Democratic party in the 1970s. This effect should not be overstated, though; a simulated evangelical who never attended church in 1972 had a predicted party identification in 1976 at 2.56, a statistically distinct value but with minor substantive difference from the 3.03 of her counterpart who attended weekly. Both those who

attended weekly and those who never attended would round to the category of Democratic leaning independents.¹⁵

Conclusion

This essay provides further evidence of and a theoretical explanation for a pattern first recognized by Hout and Fischer (2002) and Patrikios (2008). The political successes of the Christian right have had unintended consequences for churches. Through forceful engagement of the public sphere, evangelical religious elites placed a partisan filter in front of their sanctuary doors.¹⁶ Despite the importance of religion for political decision making among both citizens and elites, political preferences emerged to become a major factor causing both frequent and infrequent church attendance. Recognizing this interdependency between religion and politics strengthens understanding of their causal relationship, cautioning scholars to consider the validity of established findings about the

¹⁵ Supporting Information E presents similar models using various years of data from the General Social Survey. In these models, party did not significantly influence evangelicals' church attendance in 1976 but had dramatic effects in 2004, adding confidence to results in Table 4.

¹⁶ From the perspective of evangelical churches, the normative consequences of political sorting are mixed. While they have lost the active membership of many Democrats, they also have made gains among Republicans. Regardless, stereotypes of evangelical churches likely counteract efforts of individual leaders to shield their congregations from political change.

political effects of church attendance when those findings do not account for the endogenous nature of religious behavior.

While the theory is tested among Christians in the United States, it could be adapted to other religions and countries if modified to account for different norms and religious freedoms. This paper's investigation has been limited to religious behavior, but it suggests that future work should consider how political preferences may also influence religious belonging, belief, secularization, and extremism. Additionally, the theory of politically influenced organizational satisfaction could be extended to explain membership patterns in other voluntary associations. For example, members of politically active organizations like local chambers of commerce often join for non-political reasons, but their long term involvement may, in part, depend on politics.

Religious sorting is a process initiated by broader political sorting. A well-sorted political environment creates a context favorable for churches to homogenize along partisan lines. The loss of actively involved Democratic evangelicals eliminates a counterweight that may have restrained some evangelical leaders from taking increasingly conservative positions. Amplified messages promise to induce a backlash by threatened Democrats which may, in turn, threaten Republicans. Simultaneously, cross-cutting information withers in an important social setting, encouraging both Democrats and Republicans to take more extreme positions. The resulting dynamic produces a feedback loop in which polarization emerges as a self-intensifying process.

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Supporting Information

- A: Denominational Coding
- B: Catholics Model
- C: Transformed Models (Church Attendance Change)
- D: Measuring Centrality
- E: General Social Survey Models

Supporting Information A: Protestant Denomination Coding

Coding of Protestant denominations is generally consistent with Layman and Green (2006).

Evangelical Protestants

Seventh-Day Adventist, American Baptist Association, Baptist Bible Fellowship, Baptist General Conference, Baptist Missionary Association of America, Conservative Baptist Association of America, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, National Association of Free Will Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Reformed Baptist, Southern Baptist Convention, Mennonite Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical Free Church, Congregational Christian, Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), Church of the Nazarene, Free Methodist Church, Salvation Army, Wesleyan Church, Church of God of Findlay, Ohio, Plymouth Brethren, Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America, Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Congregational Methodist, Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Church of God (Huntsville, Al.), International Church of the Four Square Gospel, Pentecostal Church of God, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God of the Apostolic Faith, Church of God of Prophecy, Apostolic Pentecostal, Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America, Evangelical Presbyterian, Christian Reformed Church.

Note: Several small denominations are not represented in the data or the codebook does not fully distinguish the small denomination from a larger denominational label. For example, the ANES does not have a special code for Church of God of Findlay.

Non-Evangelical

Other Protestant denominations and non-denominational Protestants are coded as non-evangelical Protestant. Given the importance of not conflating political preferences with religious tradition for the purposes of this paper, I break with this coding scheme in the case of ambiguous Protestants, which I code as non-evangelical. Layman and Green (2006) details in Appendix A: “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as fundamentalist, evangelical, or charismatic/spirit-filled were coded as evangelical Protestants.” and “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as liberal were coded as mainline Protestants.” While some non-denominational churches should ideally be classified as evangelical, it is difficult to distinguish them from those that are not. Placing members of evangelical non-denominational churches in the reference category should only make results harder to find.

Supporting Information B: Catholic Interaction

Table 1B: Church Attendance as a Function of Lagged Partisanship, 2000-2004 Panel

	Param. Est	(Std. Error)
Attendance ₀₀	3.151***	(0.214)
Party ₀₀	0.128	(0.215)
Evangelical ₀₀	-0.866**	(0.298)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	1.438***	(0.431)
Catholic ₀₀	-0.274	(0.203)
Catholic ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	0.0446	(0.315)
Prayer Frequency ₀₀	0.513*	(0.224)
Biblical Literalism ₀₀	-0.564**	(0.206)
Age	0.655*	(0.356)
Education ₀₀	0.168	(0.184)
Female	0.0292	(0.106)
South ₀₀	-0.213*	(0.124)
cut 1	0.575*	(0.307)
cut 2	1.313***	(0.309)
cut 3	1.960***	(0.316)
cut 4	2.890***	(0.330)
cut 5	3.867***	(0.340)
Pseudo R ²	0.249	
N	464	

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. Ordered probit estimates. Dependent variable is 6-pt. church attendance in 2004. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

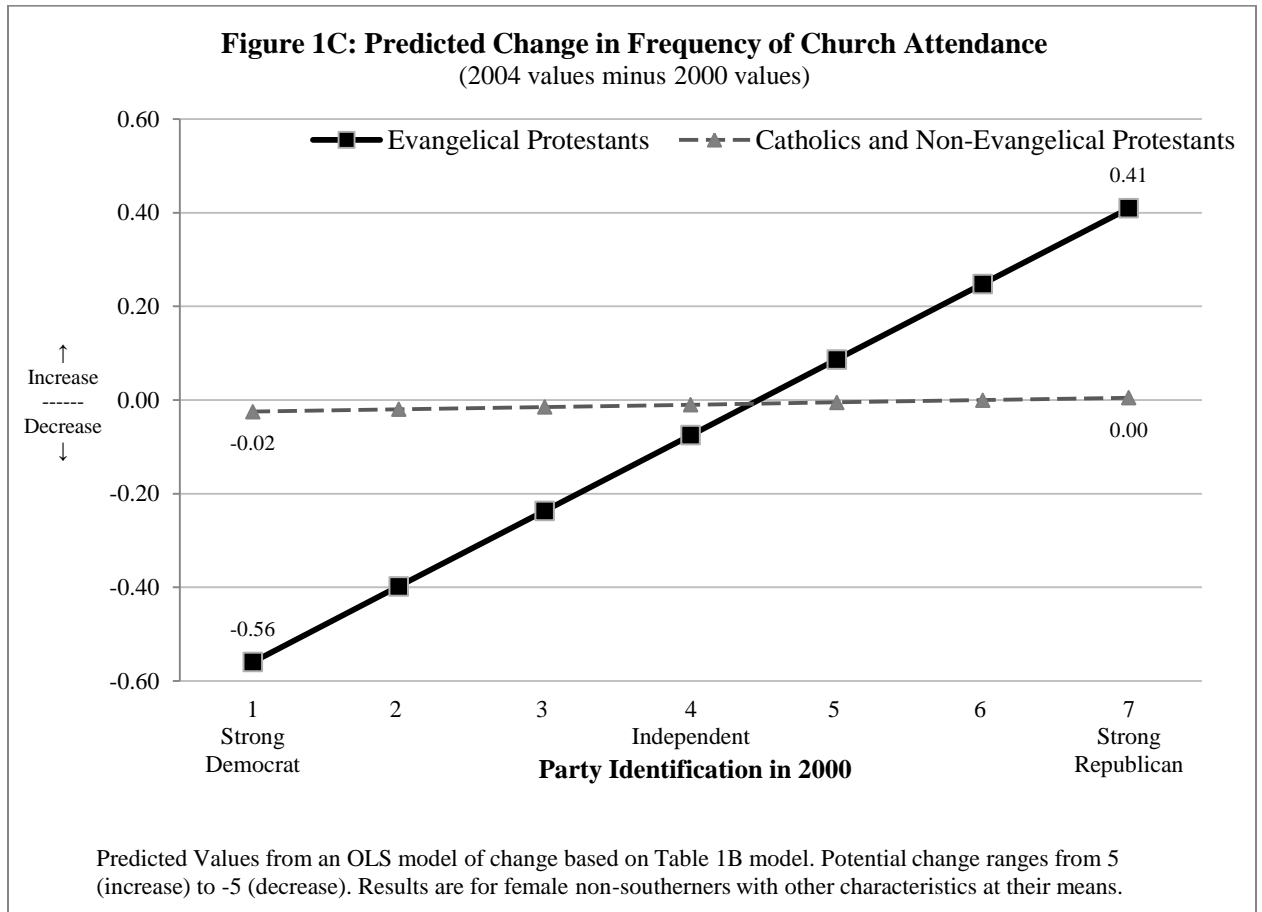
Supporting Information C: Transformed Models (Church Attendance Change)

Table 1C: Church Attendance as a Function of Lagged Partisanship, 2000-2004 Panel

	Param. Est	(Std. Error)
Party ₀₀	0.0296	(0.173)
Evangelical ₀₀	-0.535*	(0.297)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	0.940*	(0.421)
Prayer Frequency ₀₀	-0.455*	(0.211)
Biblical Literalism ₀₀	-0.379*	(0.218)
Age	0.174	(0.376)
Education ₀₀	-0.103	(0.192)
Female	-0.0106	(0.114)
South ₀₀	-0.261*	(0.132)
Constant	0.413	(0.304)
Adjusted R ²	464	
N	0.018	

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. OLS estimates. Dependent variable is change in church attendance from 2000 to 2004. 5 indicates maximum increase; -5 indicates maximum decrease. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

Supporting Information C: Transformed Models (Church Attendance Change)



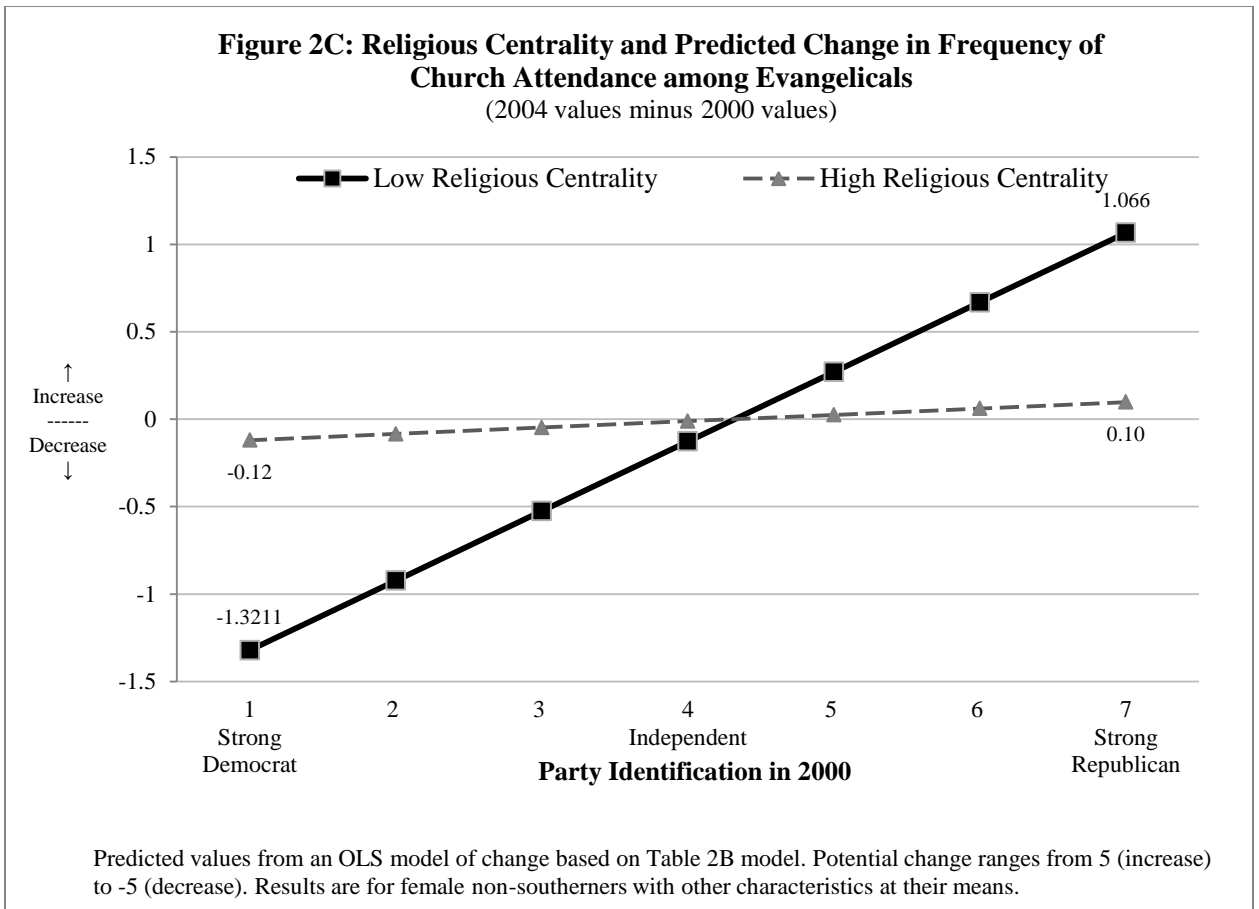
Supporting Information C: Transformed Models (Church Attendance Change)

Table 3C: Church Attendance as a Function of Partisanship Conditioned by Centrality Measures, 2000-2004 Panel

	<i>Religious Centrality</i>		<i>Political Centrality</i>		<i>Religion vs. Politics</i>	
	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>	<u>Model 3</u>	<u>Model 4</u>	<u>Model 5</u>	<u>Model 6</u>
Conditional:	Religious Centrality High	Religious Centrality Low	Political Centrality High	Political Centrality Low	Politics Relatively High	Politics Relatively Low
	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party ₀₀	0.443 (0.309)	-0.119 (0.211)	0.0390 (0.205)	0.0340 (0.300)	-0.112 (0.213)	0.374 (0.305)
Evangelical ₀₀	0.105 (0.420)	-0.946* (0.418)	-1.387*** (0.416)	0.0164 (0.442)	-1.026** (0.384)	0.384 (0.459)
Evangelical ₀₀ x Party ₀₀	0.398 (0.650)	1.336** (0.560)	2.348*** (0.644)	0.184 (0.602)	1.823*** (0.582)	-0.437 (0.609)
Prayer Frequency ₀₀	-0.0889 (0.345)	-0.634** (0.267)	-0.151 (0.258)	-0.649 (0.466)	-0.471* (0.258)	-0.530 (0.396)
Biblical Literalism ₀₀	-0.356 (0.315)	-0.387 (0.295)	-0.308 (0.282)	-0.617* (0.348)	-0.292 (0.292)	-0.444 (0.318)
Age	0.807 (0.611)	-0.115 (0.479)	0.603 (0.463)	-0.316 (0.622)	0.0310 (0.480)	0.558 (0.615)
Education ₀₀	-0.145 (0.307)	-0.0849 (0.245)	-0.211 (0.230)	0.115 (0.325)	-0.0350 (0.247)	-0.182 (0.297)
Female	0.0632 (0.190)	-0.00379 (0.144)	0.0335 (0.142)	0.00217 (0.187)	0.0420 (0.145)	-0.139 (0.191)
South ₀₀	-0.371* (0.223)	-0.245 (0.165)	-0.106 (0.176)	-0.305 (0.200)	-0.266 (0.172)	-0.323 (0.206)
Constant	-0.524 (0.500)	0.798* (0.381)	0.0690 (0.363)	0.700 (0.591)	0.436 (0.390)	0.275 (0.514)
Adj. R ²	0.024	0.022	0.045	-0.001	0.023	0.007
N	151	313	252	212	317	147

Source: National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel. OLS estimates. Dependent variable is change in church attendance from 2000 to 2004. 5 indicates maximum increase; -5 indicates maximum decrease. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

Supporting Information C: Transformed Models (Church Attendance Change)



Supporting Information D: Measuring Centrality

The religious centrality index has two components. I place each component on 0-1 scale, add them together, and divide by two. The resulting index weights components equally. Higher values equal greater centrality. This does not mean that people who score above 0.5 hold religion as central and those who score below do not. Rather, the mean religious centrality score is 0.67 with a standard deviation of 0.25. The first component comes from a question that asks how frequently a person reads the bible. This question asks, “Outside of attending religious services, do you read the Bible several times a day, once a day, a few times a week, once a week or less or never?” The Bible-reading question has several strengths. Bible reading is a widespread, discretionary religious behavior that does not require organized church involvement.

The second religious centrality component measures how much guidance religion gives a person in his or her life. It has two branches. The first stage reads, “Do you consider religion to be an important part of your life, or not?” Interviews asked a second branch to those who answered yes. This branch read, “Would you say your religion provides some guidance in your day-to-day living?”

The political centrality index combines two components: four questions on political issue importance and a question if a person sees a difference between the two parties. Each component received equal weight in the 0-1 index. The party differences component is from a question that asks, “Do you think there are any important differences in what the Republicans and Democrats stand for?” The dichotomous variable has a mean of 0.70. The four issue importance questions tap importance of a range of issues reflecting a range of social and economic issues. These issues are jobs, taxes, the

environment, and abortion. Survey interviewers introduced each question with the lead up reading, “How important is this issue to you personally?” The taxes and jobs questions come from the 2002 survey because they were not in the 2000 questionnaire. However, these questions remain useful given that they remain lagged and lead to loss of few cases.

The third index compares these two measures. I subtract the religious centrality measure from the political centrality and scale the resulting index on a 0 to 1 scale. The mean of this index is 0.618 with a standard deviation of 0.184. Values above 0.5 indicate that the political centrality index is higher than the religious centrality index for that individual. It is important to note that values above 0.5 do not mean politics is more important than religion for that person. Any given value on one index is not equal to the same value on the other index. The index is relative *between* individuals rather than within individuals. People above the sample mean on this scale evaluated politics as more important relative to religion relative to the rest of the sample. While an absolute index would be ideal, it is not practical with existing data and potentially theoretically implausible. However, this subtractive index is worthwhile in splitting samples.

Both religious and political centrality measures use a combination of subjective and objective indicators. The religious objective measure is bible reading. The religious subjective measure is self-reported religious importance. The political objective measure is the party difference question. The political subjective measure is self-reported issue importance. Combining subjective and objective measures should lead to a better overall index.

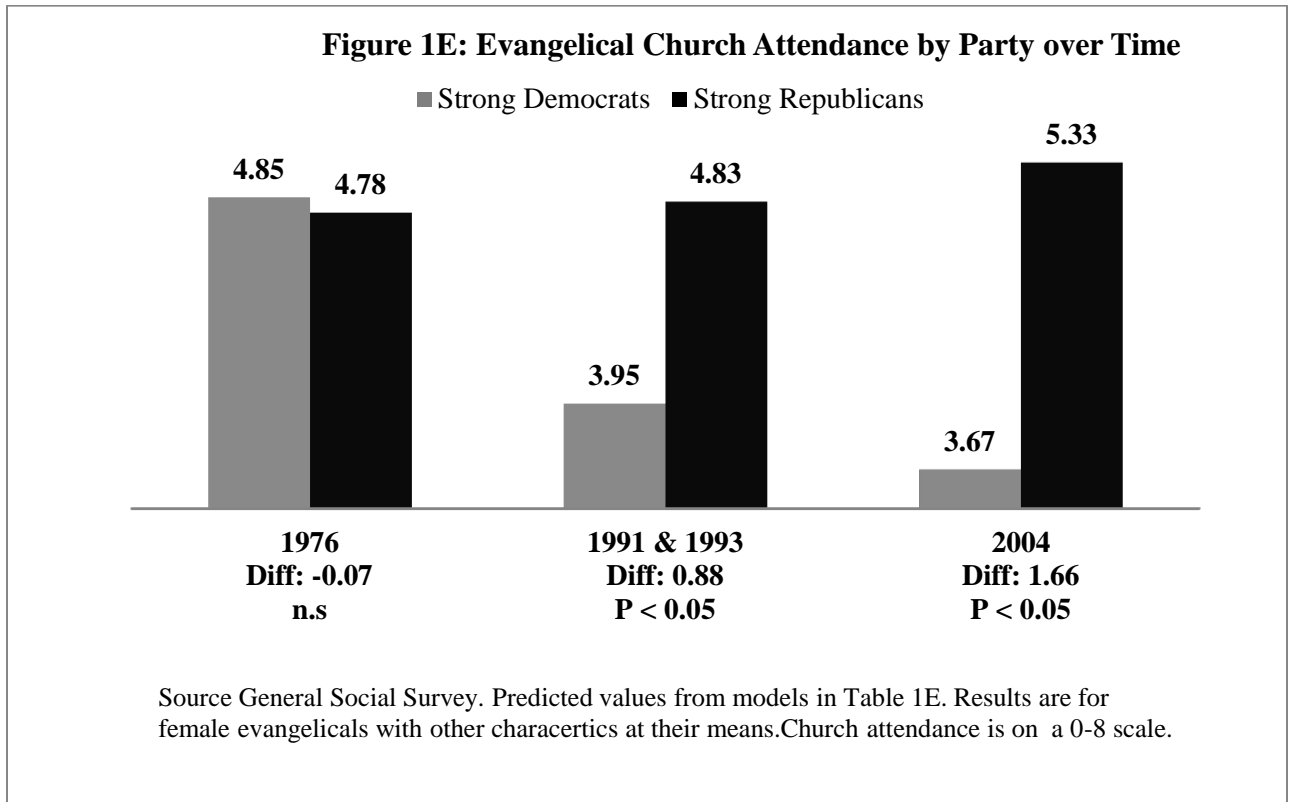
Supporting Information E: General Social Survey Models

Table 1E: Church Attendance Frequency at Different Times as a Function of Party and Other Variables

<i>Year:</i>	<i>1976</i>	<i>1991 & 1993</i>	<i>2004</i>
	Model 1 Param. Est. (Std. Errors)	Model 2 Param. Est. (Std. Errors)	Model 3 Param. Est. (Std. Errors)
Party	-0.256 (0.256)	-0.034 (0.166)	0.293 (0.178)
Evangelical	0.381 (0.315)	-0.519* (0.247)	-0.810** (0.297)
Party * Evangelical	0.191 (0.631)	0.909* (0.399)	1.368** (0.440)
Age	2.057*** (0.421)	2.201*** (0.300)	1.428*** (0.343)
Female	0.511*** (0.148)	0.534*** (0.106)	0.693*** (0.114)
Education	0.968** (0.309)	1.178*** (0.208)	0.959*** (0.211)
Income	0.317 (0.582)	0.233 (0.326)	-0.056 (0.266)
Constant	2.718*** (0.283)	2.483*** (0.205)	2.761*** (0.219)
Adj. R ²	0.030	0.042	0.043
N	1,236	2,417	1,966

Source: General Social Survey. OLS estimates. Dependent variable is 9-pt. church attendance frequency. Independent variables on 0-1 scale. Sample limited to Protestants and Catholics. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 -all one-tailed

Supporting Information E: General Social Survey Models



CHAPTER II

How Politics Changes Churches

Abstract:

Scholars often treat churches as organizations exogenous to politics, assuming a unidirectional relationship between religion and political preferences. However, I argue that politics changes some American churches. Through analysis of a variety of surveys, I find that party has major effects on individual behavior within churches. Specifically, partisan conflict within evangelical Protestant churches creates an environment leading to partisan differences in religious experience. Evangelical Republicans are more likely than evangelical Democrats to report high satisfaction with church services and high levels of social integration. In turn, these Republicans are more likely than Democrats to invest time and money into their church and share their faith with others. The corresponding decline of actively involved Democrats in evangelical churches has the potential to exacerbate mass polarization.

Leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, gathered in 2011 to consider changing their name in hopes of addressing a long-term problem- membership steadily fell over the last four years and new baptisms reached a half-century low (Smietana 2012). Membership changes are particularly pronounced among some groups within the denomination. Between 1986 and 2004, white strong Republicans tripled while white strong Democrats declined by half (General Social Survey 1972-2006). Southern Baptist churches are not unique in experiencing membership changes. American religion is fluid. Almost half of Americans change their religious affiliation in their lifetimes (Pew 2009), and nearly 80% vary their church attendance from childhood to adulthood (General Social Survey 1972-2006). Given the active political role of churches, these congregational dynamics are important.

I argue that politics lies at the heart of membership changes within evangelical denominations. Many of these churches take provocative stances on political issues. And, the rising polarization of politics means people are likely to have strong feelings about these positions (Hetherington 2009). Democrats' political preferences often clash with the dominant political direction of evangelical churches while evangelical Republicans are likely to experience an affirming political environment. Consequently, political predispositions may have a powerful influence on many Americans' relationships with their churches. I present a theory of politicization of churches. Applying that theory to the contemporary United States explains how politics alters satisfaction with and social integration in churches, processes that, in turn, influence investment in churches. Democrats have sorted out of while Republicans have sorted into intense involvement in

evangelical churches. I test resulting expectations with a variety of surveys about organizational behavior in churches.

A Generalized Theory of the Politicization of Churches

The politicization of churches functions through two coinciding mechanisms: social and psychological. Political messages associated with a church can offer psychological comfort and distress while both forging and breaking social bonds. People increase their commitment when have ample friends in a church or enjoy being involved with the organization. In contrast, people leave an organization, neglect it, or attempt to change it when they are dissatisfied (Hirschman 1970; Withey and Cooper 1989).

The process of compromised satisfaction begins when a churchgoer receives a political message that signals the prevailing political preferences of the organization. Political preferences become associated with churches in several ways. First, clergy communicate political messages. Though the extent to which politics is mentioned from the pulpit varies, sermons often address controversial political issues (Brewer et al 2003). Second, fellow church members often discuss politics in church (Djupe and Gilbert 2009). These discussions can center directly on a political topic or they can reveal political preferences as part of a broader discussion of values (Walsh 2004). Third, the social environment external to a church informs churchgoers of politics internal to that church. The media craft narratives depicting certain churches as favoring clear political positions, allowing even those who have never personally participated in a group's services to view that group as having distinct political preferences.

When political information transmitted through these sources is inconsistent with a churchgoer's preexisting political preferences, the ensuing conflict can cause dissonance (Festinger 1957). By lowering evaluation of the church, the churchgoer is able to resolve dissonance and reconcile conflicting information that might otherwise make it difficult for that person to maintain a sense of self that is competent and moral. On the other hand, many political messages associated with a church are consistent with a person's prior preferences. Encountering a message that sustains one's political beliefs promotes a stable understanding of the world (Jost et al. 2004; Jost et al. 2008), allowing politics to enhance organizational satisfaction.

Additionally, politics can alter the social fabric of a church. Churches have historically served as community centers where relationships form and friendships develop. These strong social ties encourage members to participate in their churches (Kuipers 2009; O'Reilly et al. 1989), fostering the development of civic resources and social capital (Putnam 2001; Brown and Brown 2003). However, political preferences should have major influence on social integration within churches. Fellow church members frequently communicate their own political preferences in church (Djupe and Gilbert 2009). When members agree about politics, such conversations can reinforce the security of existing beliefs, promote mutual appreciation, and enhance satisfaction (Mutz 2006; Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). Conversely, when members disagree about emotional issues, political discussion in churches can be unpleasant, fostering discontent and social atrophy (Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004; Jehn 1995).

Similarly, political disagreement may lead to political minorities feeling criticized by fellow church members, especially if political preferences are associated with lifestyle

preferences. Political minorities can disturb the consistency of preferences within a church. Fellow members may view this consistency as a positive feature of their church that distinguishes it from competing social organizations. If so, political minorities in a church may find themselves as “black sheep” faced with scrutiny (Hornsey et al 2004; Abrams et al 2000; Khan and Lambert 1998; Marques et al. 1988).

Political agreement may also have indirect influence on how deeply connected a person is with other members of his or her congregation. Homophily, the tendency of people to associate with others similar to themselves, is well-recognized as present within social organizations like churches (McPherson 2001). In a well-sorted society, politics is a criterion in which people make associative choices (Alford et. al 2011; Gentzkow and Shapiro 2011). Similarly, political preferences are correlated with consumer preferences and other non-political behavior, suggesting that those who disagree about politics may also disagree on other topics important for social integration (Hillygus and Shields 2008). Consequently, those with political preferences consistent with their congregation should find ample opportunities to become involved with other church members while those with inconsistent political preferences may find it difficult to build relationships within their church.

Politics within churches has the potential to enhance or to reduce both social integration and the experience of attending church, leading to changes in organizational satisfaction with a church. Individuals respond to increasing organizational satisfaction by loyally increasing investments in that organization. Conversely, individuals should respond to decreasing organizational satisfaction with exit, voice, or neglect (Hirschman 1970; Rusbult et al. 1988; Withey and Cooper 1989). Exit involves leaving the church

altogether, potentially joining another church or dropping out entirely. Voice involves attempts to amend the aspect of the organization that causes dissatisfaction. Neglect involves reduced participation and diminished organizational investment. Diminished organizational investment in churches can take the form of reduced donations of time and money and constrained efforts at sharing one's faith.

The Politicization of Churches in the Contemporary United States

For political messages to cause upheaval in churches, the informational environment within churches should have three characteristics: ubiquity, potency, and lack of ambiguity. By ubiquity, I mean that politics must be common enough to prevent a member from overlooking its presence. By potency, I mean the issue must be, as Layman (2001) describes "broad and deep" with the "capacity to provoke resistance." By lack of ambiguity, I mean that information associated with a churches supports a single party platforms, giving the information the ability to reinforce existing cleavages. If such characteristics help an issue change the party system, they also aid in disrupting behavior within private social organizations.

In the contemporary United States, these three requirements are most often met in evangelical Protestant churches.¹⁷ The overwhelming majority of evangelical churches are associated with the Republican Party on both social and economic issues, providing

¹⁷ Evangelical churches are Protestant and "have typically sought more separation from the broader culture, emphasized missionary activity and individual conversion, and taught strict adherence to particular religious doctrines (Steensland et al 2000:294)."

clarity. Messages from evangelical leaders, the external informational environment, and church members ensure ubiquity (Hunter 1991; Hunter 2010).¹⁸ Strong stances on hot button conflicts like abortion and gay marriage offer a guarantee for potency that is only strengthened by a well-sorted political system (Hetherington 2009).¹⁹

Mainline Protestant and Catholic churches, on the other hand, fail to consistently transmit such potent, ubiquitous, and non-ambiguous political messages. Non-evangelical churches often favor one party on certain issues and another party on other issues, eliminating clarity in the direction of politics (Putnam and Campbell 2010). While some political messages are present in non-evangelical churches, they are far less ubiquitous. Similarly, many non-evangelical clergy discuss politics less overtly (Neiheisel and Djupe 2008; Olson and Cadge 2002). Messages in non-evangelical churches may lack potency if those churches concentrate on issues such as poverty and those issues lack the capacity to provoke response. Similarly, I expect the partisan sorting process to apply only in evangelical churches with predominately white membership. Though African American churches are of great political and social importance, the ambiguity of political messages within them complicates. Leaders of many African American churches take conservative

¹⁸ Environmental heuristics have been clear about evangelicals for some time; more than twice as many people could not offer an opinion about the general favorability of Lutherans or Presbyterians than those who had no such opinion about Baptists (Barna 1991).

¹⁹ Furthermore, evangelicals are more likely to embrace a culture of modifying religious behavior to meet personal preferences as shown by a tendency to "church shop" (Sherkat 2001; Smith and Sikkink 2003).

positions on certain social issues such as gay marriage (Sherkat et al. 2010) but favor candidates and economic policies from the Democratic Party (Brown 2009).

Although white Republican evangelicals should become more attached to their churches while white Democratic evangelicals become less attached, this theory does not suggest a general rule of religion sorting to the right. Because political preferences associated with churches are vary across context, involvement could decline among members of conservative parties in scenarios such as the social gospel movement in the progressive era. Though rare, the occasional liberal Catholic parish or mainline Protestant congregation may be sufficiently blatant in its political leanings to induce change.²⁰ Furthermore, the effects of political preferences on religious behavior were muted in the 1970s when party divisions were less contentious (Husser n.d.).

This essay joins only a few studies investigating political influence on religion (Campbell et al. 2011; Hout and Fischer 2002; Patrikios 2008). While I argue that politics has major effects among many people, considerable research finds several sets of additional explanations for religious dependent variables. The first set is that childhood familial socialization explains adult religious belonging and behavior (Bader and Desmond 2006; Bao et al. 1999; Dudley and Laurent 1989; Ellison and Sherkat 1990; Hunsberger 1984; Nelsen 1981; Ozorak 1989). The second set argues that the context of a person's religious experience is important and emphasizes church characteristics and religious market forces (Chaves 2006; Dyck and Starke 1999; Iannacconne 1994; Kelley 1977; Stern 1999). Finally, studies within the third set of explanations find that that

²⁰ However, the effects of party among members of these churches are difficult to detect because available data group these congregations into their larger religious tradition.

demographic variables such as sex, income, and region (Alston 1979; Batson et al. 1993; Hunt and Hunt 2000; Kalmijin 1998; Krause 2003; Shibley 1996).

Expectations and Research Design

The following analysis examines four testable expectations. The first two expectations focus on individual consequences by addressing social integration and satisfaction. Evangelical Protestant Republicans will be more likely than evangelical Protestant Democrats to be satisfied with and socially integrated in their church. The second two expectations focus on organizational consequences by addressing behavior relevant to church growth and investment. Evangelical Protestant Republicans will be more likely than evangelical Protestant Democrats to invest in their church and to share their religion with others.

I use eleven dependent variables from surveys by three organizations to address these expectations. The General Social Survey includes questions about church satisfaction and feeling criticized by fellow church members. The Baylor Religion Survey, conducted in 2005 and 2007 features questions related to donating money to churches, social integration and volunteering in churches, and witnessing to strangers. Finally, the Portraits of American Life Survey provides data on feeling appreciated in a church and letting others know about one's religion. Independent variables of primary interest are consistent across all models. These variables are party identification, a variable indicating if the respondent is a member of an evangelical Protestant

denomination, and their multiplicative interaction term.²¹ The interaction reflects the conditional effect of party among evangelicals (Kam and Franzese 2007). All independent variables are on a 0-1 scale to ease interpretation.

Members of evangelical Protestant churches and political messages associated with those churches typically favor the Republican Party. Consequently, models operate under the assumption that Democratic evangelicals have political preferences that are inconsistent with their church while Republican evangelicals have political preferences that are consistent with their church. This assumption will be violated by members of liberal evangelical churches (Olson 2011). Such rare violations will only reduce the magnitude of estimates without increasing the likelihood of rejecting a true null hypothesis.

I exclude non-Protestants and non-Catholics for three reasons. First, power is inadequate for almost every group that is not Protestant or Catholic. Second, Catholics and Protestants, arguably, have the most political influence in the United States and are of special interest to social science as a result. Third, limiting the sample facilitates intuitive comparisons of evangelicals with Catholics and non-evangelical Protestants in the reference category. Additionally, I restrict the sample to whites. Given that churches tend to be racially homogenous (Dougherty 2003), churches of evangelical Protestant minorities are unlikely to transmit Republican messages.

Unfortunately, panel survey data are not available for these dependent variables, eliminating a useful technique to address endogeneity.²² Party identification is at least as

²¹Supporting Information detail the coding of religious tradition and other variables, respectively.

stable as religious behavior.²³ Long-term partisan preferences are more difficult to identify and associate with unpleasant feelings than a conflicting political message coming from a church, a concrete source at a specific time. For many Americans, religious change should be easier than political change. Changing partisanship requires a fundamental change in beliefs while changing religious expression only requires a change in organizational commitment. Neglect of a church is a compromise that aids in resolving dissatisfaction while retaining political and religious connections.

Politics of Organizational Satisfaction with Churches

Preaching and worship services are central to many people's relationship with their church. Consequently, one's evaluations of preaching and worship are reflective of his or her overall church evaluation. I turn to two questions about church evaluation from the 2000 cross-sectional General Social Survey. The first question asks "Would you say your local church does an excellent, very good, fair, or poor job of preaching?" The second question asks "Would you say your local church does an excellent, very good, fair, or poor job of worship services?" Both questions are on a five-point scale that ranges from least supportive, "poor," to most supportive, "excellent." Mean responses are high

²² See Husser (n.d.) and Patrikios (2008) for panel data analysis of party and church attendance.

²³In the American National Election Study 2000-20004 Panel Survey, the correlation between 2000 and 2004 measures is 0.8494 for party and 0.7899 for church attendance frequency, a significant difference ($p < .001$) based on Fisher's-z transformation.

(3.82 for preaching and 3.95 for worship services) and over 90% of cases fall into the top three categories.

I employ the questions in two ordered probit models appearing in Table 1. Preaching evaluation is the dependent variable in Model 1, and worship service evaluation is the dependent variable in Model 2. Party identification with seven-values ranging from 0 (strong Democrat) to 1 (strong Republican), an evangelical Protestant dummy, and their multiplicative interaction term are independent variables of interest. Several other variables are included to better account for the relationship between church evaluation and partisanship. Prayer frequency controls for spirituality. I include age because older people are politically distinct and potentially more sensitive to church relationships (Krause 2003). Similarly, gender, education, and income have both political and religious consequences.

The main effect of party has a small and statistically insignificant coefficient in each model (Model 1 coef.: 0.0250; s.e.: 0.159; Model 2 coef.: -0.0752; s.e.: 0.160). In both models, non-evangelical strong Democrats and strong Republicans evaluate their churches very similarly. The evangelical dummy variable is also insignificant for preaching evaluation (coef.: -0.293; s.e.: 0.242) and worship service evaluation (coef.: -0.103; s.e.: 0.245); simply being an evangelical Protestant does not influence church evaluation when the value of party is zero. However, the interaction between evangelical and party is significant in both the model of preaching evaluation (coef.: 1.097; s.e.: 0.359) and the model of worship service evaluation (coef.: 0.623; s.e.: 0.358). Party has

major substantive effects on evangelical Protestants' church evaluations.²⁴ Strong Democratic evangelicals have a 17% and a 26% predicted probability of evaluating preaching and worship services as excellent, respectively. These probabilities rise dramatically to 57% and 46%, respectively, for strong Republicans. These differences are roughly equivalent to the effect of prayer frequency, a factor of facially valid relevance.²⁵

Results about church evaluation aid in a broader project of causal inference. Political preferences have a strong relationship with the evangelicals' church evaluations. Evangelicals who identify more closely with the Democratic Party tend to evaluate their church less favorably. An alternative argument is that those who favor their church's services are likely to integrate that church's political positions into their political identity. This alternative requires an improbably robust expectation of the impact of church evaluation to drive the bulk of party identification, a stable psychological attachment. More likely, the dominant driver of the relationship between church evaluation and partisanship is political rather than religious.

²⁴ All predicted values and probabilities in this essay were calculated in Stata using Long and Freese's (2006) *Spost* program. Dichotomous independent variables are set at their modes and non-dichotomous variables are set at their means.

²⁵ Party is unlikely acting as a proxy for spirituality. The prayer frequency of white evangelical Republicans and Republican-leaning independents is indistinguishable ($p = 0.68$) from that of white evangelical Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (American National Election Study 2000-2004 Panel).

Table 1: Church Evaluation as a Function of Party and Other Variables

	<u>Model 1</u> Preaching Evaluation Param. Est. (Std. Error)	<u>Model 2</u> Worship Service Evaluation Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party	0.0250 (0.159)	-0.0752 (0.160)
Evangelical	-0.293 (0.242)	-0.103 (0.245)
Party * Evangelical	1.097** (0.359)	0.623* (0.358)
Age	-0.0823 (0.276)	-0.641* (0.279)
Female	0.0392 (0.0956)	-0.0110 (0.0964)
Education	0.180 (0.179)	0.0580 (0.181)
Income	-0.217 (0.215)	0.102 (0.217)
South	-0.0360 (0.105)	0.102 (0.105)
Prayer Frequency	0.622** (0.206)	0.866*** (0.207)
Biblical Literalism	0.555*** (0.179)	0.621*** (0.180)
Cut 1	-1.287*** (0.260)	-1.541*** (0.272)
Cut 2	-0.594** (0.238)	-0.800*** (0.239)
Cut 3	0.578** (0.232)	0.399* (0.233)
Cut 4	1.492*** (0.238)	1.345*** (0.238)
Observations	540	542
Pseudo R ²	0.041	0.043

Source: General Social Survey, 2000.

DV: Evaluation of how well local church conducts preaching and worship. 5pt (1- Poor; 5 – Excellent) Ordered Probit. Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001 - all one-tailed.

The Polarization of Friends in Church

The Portraits of American Life Survey asked respondents to name two people who they were particularly close to who also attended their church. Overall, 81% of white evangelical Protestants were able to name two people close to them in their church. However, only 64% of white Democratic evangelicals could name two people, 14% less than white Republican evangelicals ($t = 2.608$). I turn to the 2005 Baylor Religion Survey to provide a multivariate test of this partisan friendship gap. Table 2 reports estimates from an ordered probit model of friends in church. The dependent variable question asked “How many of your friends attend your place of worship?” The five response options ranged from (1) none to (5) almost all. As in prior models, the independent variables of central concern are party, the evangelical dummy, and their multiplicative interaction term. Age, female, education, residency in the South, income, biblical literalism, and prayer frequency are controls.

The main effect of party is insignificant (coef. -0.0193 ; std. error 0.161) reflecting party’s lack of effect on friendship patterns in Catholic and non-evangelical Protestant churches. However, the interaction term is significant in the expected direction (coef. 0.699 ; std. error 0.262). Party has a major effect on friendship patterns in evangelical churches. A strong Republican evangelical has a 15.4% predicted probability of having most of her friends in her church, three times the 4.8% predicted probability for strong Democratic evangelicals. Similarly, strong Republican evangelicals have a 13.1% chance of having none of their friends in their church, significant less than the 32.9% probability for strong Democratic evangelicals. Overall, the effect of party among evangelical

friendship patterns is equivalent to the difference between an 18 year old and a 65 year old and about three times the magnitude of the South dummy.²⁶

Table 2: Friends in Church as a Function of Party and Other Variables

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Party	-0.0193	(0.161)
Evangelical	-0.624***	(0.187)
Party * Evangelical	0.699**	(0.262)
Age	1.695***	(0.252)
Female	0.0345	(0.0826)
Education	0.123	(0.184)
South	0.218**	(0.0856)
Income	-0.487**	(0.178)
Biblical Literalism	0.659***	(0.140)
Prayer Frequency	0.168	(0.148)
Cut 1	0.191	(0.250)
Cut 2	1.759***	(0.257)
Cut 3	2.273***	(0.260)
Cut 4	3.507***	(0.278)
Observations	795	
Pseudo R-squared	0.060	

Source: Baylor Religion Survey, 2005.

Ordered Probit; Sample limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. DV: How many of your friends attend your place of worship? 5pt: (1- none; 5- all)

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001-all one-tailed

²⁶ See Supporting Information for analysis suggesting these findings are unlikely to be a product of Republicans having more concentrated friends in organizations in general.

Politicized Appreciation and Criticism in Churches

In general, it is rare for a person to feel criticized by members of his or her church. The 1998 General Social Survey included a question that read, “How often are the people in your congregation critical of you and the things you do?” Three-fourths of respondents said they never felt criticized. However, a simple comparison of means shows Democratic evangelicals reporting criticism almost twice as frequently as Republican evangelicals (31% vs. 17%; $p < .05$). Model 1 in Table 3 is a logistic regression using this criticism question as its dependent variable (0 – criticism; 1 – no criticism). Once again, variables of interest are party, the evangelical dummy, and their interaction. Covariates include education, age, sex, and residency in the South. As expected, party is insignificant in Model 1 (coef.: -0.206; s.e.: .349) while the estimate for interaction of party and the evangelical dummy is significant (coef.: 1.767; s.e.: 0.735). A strong Republican evangelical has a 10.9% predicted probability of feeling criticized, less than one-third of the 36.9% probability of strong Democrats. This statistically difference is equivalent to a 70 year increase in age.

In addition to criticism, feelings of appreciation are indicative of member’s cohesiveness in a group. The dependent variable in Model 2 of Table 3 was asked of the respondents in the Portraits of American Life Survey who said they volunteered in their church at least one hour each month and read, “How often do you feel you are appreciated by the leaders or people of your congregation for the work and activities that you do at your congregation?” Model 2’s right-hand side is identical to that of Model 1. Paralleling its relationships with criticism, the main effect of party is insignificant for

Table 3: Criticism and Appreciation in Church as a Function of Party

	<u>Model 1</u> Feeling Criticized Param. Est. (Std. Error)	<u>Model 2</u> Feeling Appreciated Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party	-0.206 (0.349)	-0.0148 (0.226)
Evangelical	-0.833* (0.460)	-0.347 (0.251)
Party * Evangelical	1.767** (0.735)	0.712* (0.357)
Education	0.0631 (0.336)	0.251 (0.228)
Female	0.0614 (0.203)	0.102 (0.131)
Age	2.028*** (0.598)	0.789* (0.375)
South	-0.0914 (0.211)	0.0130 (0.134)
Constant /Cut 1	0.315 (0.397)	-1.012*** (0.304)
Cut 2	-	-0.118 (0.296)
Cut 3	-	0.619* (0.298)
Cut 4	-	1.147*** (0.300)
Observations	597	291
Pseudo R ²	0.027	0.015

Model 1: General Social Survey, 1998.

DV: How often R feel criticized by church members.

2pt: 0- very often, fairly often, or once in a while, 1- never.

Model 2: Source: Portraits of American Life Survey, 2006.

DV: How often do you feel you are appreciated by the leaders or people of your congregation for the work and activities that you do at your congregation?

5pt: (1 - Not at all; 5 - All the time)

Logit in Model 1. Ordered Probit in Model 2. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

Samples limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. Model 2 sample also limited to church volunteers. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001 -all one-tailed

feeling appreciated (coef.: 0.0148; s.e.: 0.226), but the multiplicative interaction term is significant (coef.: 0.712; s.e.: 0.357). Strong Democratic evangelical Protestants' probability of always feeling appreciated is 19.2%, less than half of similar strong Republicans' 43.1% probability. This difference is twice that between an 18 year old and a 65 year old.

The Politics of Investment in Churches

Compromised satisfaction and social integration should induce a process of neglect. Symptomatic of neglect is an unwillingness to invest many personal resources into one's church through donations of money or through volunteering. Table 4 presents multivariate tests of the effect of party on church donations of time and money. The dependent variable in Model 1 is a respondent's annual monetary donations to a church reflected by 12 categories ranging from donations under \$500 to more than \$10,000. The five-category dependent variable in Model 2 is the number of hours a respondent volunteers his or her church in a typical month.²⁷ Right-hand side variables are identical in both models. As in prior models, the independent variables of central concern are party, the evangelical dummy, and their interaction. Gender, education, age, income, residency in the South, pray frequency, and biblical literalism are present as covariates. Model 1 is based on a question from the 2007 wave of the Baylor Religion Survey while Model 2 is based on a question from the 2005 wave.

²⁷ Self-reports of religious behavior are prone to measurement error (Hadaway et al 1998; Sherkat 2007), but I have no expectation that such error is correlated with party.

OLS estimates from Model 1 show that party is important for monetary church donations of evangelical Protestants, but not for non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics in the reference category. Though the main effect of party is insignificant (coef.: 0.226; s.e. 0.376), the interaction between party and the evangelical dummy variable is significant in the expected direction (coef.: 2.155; s.e. 0.630). The maximum effect of party among evangelicals' church donation is 2.38 units on the 12-point scale an effect equivalent to the difference in monetary donations between a person from a household earning \$10,000 to \$20,000 and another from a household with \$150,000 or more in annual income.

Party's effect on donations of time to churches is consistent with its effect on donations of money. The main effect of party is not significant in the ordered probit estimates of Model 2 (coef.: -0.0783; s.e. 0.137). However, the interaction is significant (coef.: 0.442; s.e. 0.261). Evangelical strong Republican have a 24% combined predicted probability of volunteering 3-4 hours, 5-10 hours, or 11 or more hours each month, almost twice the 14% probability of strong Democrats to volunteer at one of these three levels. The substantive effect of party for evangelicals is almost identical to that of education, a factor well-recognized as promoting volunteering (McPherson and Rotolo 1996; Brady et al 1999; Wilson 2000).

Table 4: Church Donations and Volunteering as a Function of Party and Other Variables

	<u>Model 1</u> Donations Param. Est. (Std. Error)	<u>Model 2</u> Volunteering Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party	0.226 (0.376)	-0.0783 (0.137)
Evangelical	-0.420 (0.449)	-0.167 (0.194)
Party * Evangelical	2.155*** (0.630)	0.442* (0.261)
Female	-0.244 (0.189)	0.00346 (0.0807)
Education	1.411*** (0.424)	0.378* (0.189)
Age	1.432** (0.597)	0.0649 (0.257)
Income	2.771*** (0.405)	0.184 (0.175)
South	0.259 (0.198)	-0.0197 (0.0866)
Prayer Frequency	1.787*** (0.348)	1.122*** (0.145)
Biblical Literalism	1.159*** (0.318)	0.137*** (0.0349)
Constant/ Cut 1	-2.833*** (0.592)	1.925*** (0.279)
Cut 2		2.517*** (0.282)
Cut 3		2.999*** (0.285)
Cut 4		3.637*** (0.293)
Observations	703	1,022
Adj. / Pseudo R ²	0.2526	0.061

Model 1: Source: Baylor Religion Survey, 2006. Wave 2, 2007.

DV: During the last year, approximately how much money did you and other family members in your household contribute to your current place of worship?

12pt: 1- Under \$500; 12- \$10,00 or more

Model 2: Source: Baylor Religion Survey, 2005.

DV: On average about how many hours per month do you volunteer in your church

5pt: 1: None, 5: 11+ hours.

OLS in Model 1. Ordered Probit in Model 2. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

Samples limited to Protestant and Catholic whites. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001 -all one-tailed

The Politics of Transmitting One's Faith

The alignment of political preference with one's church should also motivate a person to share his or her faith with others. Transmission of belief is deeply embedded in many religions. However, proselytizing is costly as sharing one's religion could lead to social scorn. People at odds with the politics in their church should feel less desire to bear these costs and subsequently be less likely to encourage others to adopt their religion. The analysis below considers two forms of religious transmission. The first form is sharing one's faith with others. The second form is intergenerational transmission.

The Polarization of Proselytizing

Table 5 present estimates from ordered probit models of two dependent variables related to sharing the faith. The dependent variable in Model 1 is based on a five-category question in the 2007 Baylor Religion survey that reads, "How often did you participate in the following religious or faith-based activities in the last month? Witnessing/sharing your faith with strangers." The dependent variable in Model 2 is based on a three-point question in the Portraits of American Life Survey that reads "How do you feel about letting others outside of your closer friends and family know that you are a member of the religion you stated earlier?" Taken together the questions capture both active efforts and passive behavior to share one's faith. Again, the independent variables of central concern are party, the evangelical dummy, and their interaction. Control variables are age sex, education, residency in the South, and income.

Table 5: Sharing Religion as a Function of Party and Other Variables

	<u>Model 1</u> Witnessing to Strangers Param. Est. (Std. Error)	<u>Model 2</u> Tell About Religion Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Party	-0.147 (0.206)	0.586*** (0.173)
Evangelical	0.263 (0.212)	0.584*** (0.172)
Party * Evangelical	0.554* (0.307)	0.444* (0.258)
Age	0.470 (0.288)	1.290*** (0.278)
Female	0.212* (0.0954)	0.214* (0.0947)
Education	-0.679*** (0.216)	-0.0813 (0.184)
South	0.177* (0.0979)	0.0585 (0.0985)
Income	-0.519** (0.200)	-0.0960 (0.213)
Cut 1	0.553* (0.276)	1.520*** (0.232)
Cut 2	1.509*** (0.281)	1.864*** (0.234)
Cut 3	1.930*** (0.287)	- -
Observations	856	764
Pseudo R-squared	0.076	0.102

Model 1: Source - Baylor Religion Survey, 2007.

DV: How often did you participate in the following religious or faith-based activities in the last month? Witnessing/sharing your faith with strangers;

4pt: 1 –Not at all; 4 – Five or more times INTERVAL

Model 2: Source – Portraits of American Life Survey, 2006.

DV: How do you feel about letting others outside of your closer friends and family know that you are a member of the religion you stated earlier?

3pt: 1 - Don't care if people know or not; 3 - Definitely want people to know

Ordered Probit regression; Samples limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001-all one-tailed

The main effect of party on witnessing to strangers is insignificant in Model 1 (coef.: -0.147; std. error: 0.206), but the interaction is statistically and substantively significant (coef.: 0.554; std. error: 0.307). A strong Republican evangelical has a 43.6% predicted probability of witnessing to strangers at least once per month, significantly more than the 28.5% probability of a strong Democrat. This maximum difference in extreme partisans is not significant for non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics. Consistent with observations by Shibley (1996), Southerners are more likely than non-Southerners to witness to strangers (coef.: 0.177; std. error: 0.0979). However, the effect of party among evangelicals on witnessing is over twice the magnitude of residency in the South.

As shown in Model 2, Republicans are generally more comfortable letting others outside of their close and friends and family know their religion. Unlike its value in other models, the main effect of party is significant (coef.: 0.586; std. error: 0.173). Consistent with prior estimates, the effect of party is conditional on being an evangelical Protestant (coef.: 0.444; std. error: 0.258). An evangelical strong Democrat has a 31% probability of definitely wanting others to know about his or her religion, less than half of the statistically distinct 69% probability for evangelical strong Republicans. Party has a less extreme but still significant effect among non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics with strong Republicans having a 29% predicted probability of definitely wanting others to know about their religion, 14 points higher than their Democratic counterparts. Consistent with their definition, evangelicals are more likely than Catholics and non-evangelical Protestants to desire others to know about their religion (coef.: 0.584; std. error: 0.172). However, the effect of party is greater than that of being an evangelical.

Politicized Transmission of Religion from Parent to Child

Parents play a tremendous role in encouraging children to be like them along several dimensions – political (Jennings and Niemi 1968), educational (Trusty and Pirtle 1998), economic (Mulligan 2007), and religious (Bader and Desmond 2006). Parental socialization, rather than politics, has long been recognized as a primary factor influencing religious belonging, behaving, and believing. However, parental transmission of religion is conditioned by a variety of factors (Bader and Desmond 2006). Parents whose satisfaction with their church is compromised by politics should place less emphasis on their children adopting their religion. This emphasis takes the direct form of desiring a child to have the same religion and the indirect form of desiring a child's spouse to have the same religion.

The Baylor Religion Survey asked two similar questions about intentions of intergenerational transmission. Both began by asking, "How important are the following things to you?" One question completed the prompt with, "That your children have the same religion as you?" The other finished, "That your children marry someone with the same religion as you?" Sixty percent of white Christians responded that it was very important or somewhat important for their children (actual or hypothetical) to share their religion while 48% of these respondents placed similar importance on the religion of their children's spouses. However, Democrats were much less likely to emphasize transmission. Two-thirds of white Christian Democrats said it was not very important or not at all important for the child to have the same religion as them, right at twice the

percentage of Republicans indicting the same. This partisan difference is consistent with estimates from ordered probit models appearing in Table 6.

The dependent variables in Table 6 are importance of children or children's spouse sharing the religion of the respondent. Model 1 reflects importance for the respondent's children. Model 2 is importance for respondent's children's spouse. Both dependent variables are measured with five-categories that are ordered from not-important (1) to very important (5). Again, the independent variables of central concern are party, evangelical, and their interaction. Control variables include age, sex, education, income, residency in the South, prayer frequency, and biblical literalism.

Among Catholics, evangelical Protestants, and mainline Protestants in the sample, Republicans are more likely to value their children sharing their religion. The main effect of party is significant in both Model 1 (coef.: 0.460; s.e.: 0.146) and in Model 2 (coef.: 0.477; s.e.: 0.146). Party has even greater effects among evangelicals, as shown by the positive and significant interaction in Model 1 (coef.: 0.467; s.e.: 0.241) and in Model 2 (coef.: 0.881; s.e.: 0.241). A strong Democrat evangelical has a 12% probability of thinking it is very important for their child to share their religion, less than one-third of the 40% probability of a strong Republican to think the same. This partisan gap in "very important" responses is still statistically distinct among non-evangelical Protestants and Catholics, but at 13.6% it is just under than half the difference between strong partisan evangelicals.

The effect of party on importance of a child's spouse sharing the respondent religion is similar. Non-evangelical Protestant and Catholic strong Republicans have a 15.4% probability of answering very important, twice the 6.7% probability for strong

Table 6: Intergenerational Religious Transmission as Function of Party and Other Variables

	<u>Model 1</u>	<u>Model 2</u>
	Child	Child's Spouse
	Param. Est (Std. Error)	Param. Est (Std. Error)
Party	0.460*** (0.146)	0.477*** (0.146)
Evangelical	-0.179 (0.163)	-0.254 (0.163)
Party * Evangelical	0.467* (0.241)	0.881*** (0.241)
Age	-1.048*** (0.240)	-0.468* (0.237)
Female	-0.0471 (0.0762)	-0.0523 (0.0758)
Education	0.323* (0.169)	0.425** (0.170)
South	-0.0951 (0.0808)	0.0008 (0.0801)
Income	0.0567 (0.165)	-0.204 (0.164)
Biblical Literalism	1.234*** (0.123)	1.028*** (0.122)
Prayer Frequency	0.867*** (0.129)	1.047*** (0.129)
Cut 1	-0.114 (0.226)	0.427* (0.225)
Cut 2	0.729*** (0.227)	1.440*** (0.227)
Cut 3	0.917*** (0.227)	1.631*** (0.228)
Cut 4	1.962*** (0.233)	2.669*** (0.237)
Observations	936	933
Pseudo R-squared	0.128	0.144

Source: Baylor Religion Survey, 2007.

DV: How important are the following things to you? That your [children/children's spouse] have the same religion as you. 5pt - (0 - Not important; 5 - Very Important).

Ordered Probit regression; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001-all one-tailed

Democrats. Evangelical Protestant strong Republicans have a 34.7% probability of answering very important, over eight times the 4.0% probability for their strong Democratic counterparts. To add context to the magnitude of these effects, party has somewhat greater impact than prayer frequency on respondents' emphasis that their child and child's spouse share their religion.

Conclusion

Findings suggest that political orientation affects religious expression. At least for many Americans, religion is more than just a cause of political behavior. Political preferences influence satisfaction with a church, social integration in a church, investments of time and money into a church, and efforts to transmit the beliefs of that church. The empirical investigation here focuses on how politics can change churches by altering behavior of individual members. Future research on this question could address responses of voice and exit, examine the behavior of religious leaders, treat congregations as the unit of analysis, gather more detailed information about individual churches, study this process in other temporal or national contexts, or use panel data to assuage potential concerns about causal dynamics.²⁸

This essay's findings challenge the commonly held understanding that an involvement in a church affects political preferences but politics does not affect relationships with churches, advising scholars of religion and politics to be wary of

²⁸See Supporting Information for a county level analysis of denominational growth suggesting these individual level findings have aggregate implications.

treating churches as exogenous to the political process. They suggest that principles of the separation of church and state need not require direct government intervention to be violated; the use of religion in political advocacy can influence religion in ways that some might deem adverse. By contracting the portion of Democrats in churches (Putnam 2001; Putnam and Campbell), the politicization of churches denies those Democrats a civic resource and threatens to diminish bridging social capital for members of both parties. This threat would be amplified if the theory tested here among churches applies to other forms of non-political voluntary associations such as local chambers of commerce or civic leagues.

While reaffirming the importance of party identification (Bartels 2000), findings suggest that political polarization can bleed into non-political aspects of everyday life such as behavior within society's sacred and private institutions. This raises concerns that polarization becomes self-perpetuating when it interacts with social group dynamics. The loss of Democrats in evangelical churches eliminates moderating voices within churches and Republican social networks (Levine 2005). Similarly, Democrats who become less involved in evangelical churches may move further toward the left. This creates a cycle with broad consequences. Due to asymmetrical generational replacement, contemporary sets of evangelicals may be replaced by increasingly Republican evangelicals. Swaying evangelicals should become increasingly difficult for Democratic campaigns. Democrats, in turn, may come to feel more negatively about theologically conservative Christians. The resulting partisan stratification along a secular-theistic divide could cause suboptimal policy outcomes as people underestimate the reconcilability of group conflict.

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Supporting Information

Coding of Protestant denominations is generally consistent with Layman and Green (2006) and Steensland et al (2000).

Evangelical Protestants

Seventh-Day Adventist, American Baptist Association, Baptist Bible Fellowship, Baptist General Conference, Baptist Missionary Association of America, Conservative Baptist Association of America, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, National Association of Free Will Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Reformed Baptist, Southern Baptist Convention, Mennonite Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical Free Church, Congregational Christian, Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), Church of the Nazarene, Free Methodist Church, Salvation Army, Wesleyan Church, Church of God of Findlay, Ohio, Plymouth Brethren, Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America, Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Congregational Methodist, Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Church of God (Huntsville, Al.), International Church of the Four Square Gospel, Pentecostal Church of God, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God of the Apostolic Faith, Church of God of Prophecy, Apostolic Pentecostal, Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America, Evangelical Presbyterian, Christian Reformed Church.

Note: Several small denominations are not represented in the data or the codebook does not fully distinguish the small denomination from a larger denominational label. For example, the ANES does not have a special code for Church of God of Findlay.

Non-Evangelical

Other Protestant denominations and non-denominational Protestants are coded as non-evangelical Protestant. Given the importance of not conflating political preferences with religious tradition for the purposes of this paper, I break with this coding scheme in the case of ambiguous Protestants, which I code as non-evangelical. Layman and Green (2006) details in Appendix A: “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as fundamentalist, evangelical, or charismatic/spirit-filled were coded as evangelical Protestants.” and “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as liberal were coded as mainline Protestants.” While some non-denominational churches should ideally be classified as evangelical, it is difficult to distinguish them from those that are not. Placing members of evangelical non-denominational churches in the reference category should only make results harder to find.

Supporting Information continued

The findings are unlikely to be a product of Republicans having more concentrated friends in organizations in general. The Baylor Religion Survey also asks “Thinking of your close friends, how many belong to the same charitable organizations as you?” Table B presents a replication of the model in Table 2 substituting this volunteer organization question as the dependent variable. Estimates do not show similar effects of party on friend in friendship in other organizations. Evangelical Republicans are more likely than evangelical Democrats to have concentrated friend groups in their church, a generally politicized organization, but not in the many other social organization that they may be members of that do not emphasize politics as stringently.

Table C: Friends in Charitable Organizations as a Function of Party and Other Variables

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Party	-0.168	(0.152)
Evangelical	-0.115	(0.167)
Party * Evangelical	0.137	(0.244)
Age	0.999***	(0.243)
Female	-0.0414	(0.0772)
Education	0.724***	(0.175)
South	-0.114	(0.0821)
Income	-0.0345	(0.169)
Biblical Literalism	0.225*	(0.127)
Prayer Frequency	0.621***	(0.135)
Cut 1	1.206***	(0.236)
Cut 2	2.366***	(0.243)
Cut 3	2.714***	(0.246)
Cut 4	4.094***	(0.297)
Observations	950	
Pseudo R-squared	0.032	

Source: Baylor Religion Survey, 2005.

Ordered Probit; Sample limited to Protestant and Catholics whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. DV: belong to the same charitable organizations as you. (1- none; 5 – all)

* p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001-all one-tailed

Supporting Information continued

Previous analysis contends that evangelical Republicans are more likely than evangelical Democrats to be satisfied with their church, be socially integrated into their church, invest in their church, and attempt to transmit their faith. Consequently, evangelical churches should be more likely to grow in geographic areas with higher proportions of Republicans. If so, the individual level findings above would be strengthened.

County-level data allows a test of this hypothesis. The Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies conducted a county-level enumeration of churches and their members in 1990 and in 2000 (ASARB 1991; ASARB 2001).²⁹ I merged these data with county-level political and demographic collected by Gomez et. al (2007) to create a panel dataset with county as the unit of analysis.

Bivariate analysis suggests that the individual level findings presented above have aggregate consequences. The decline between 1990 and 2000 in the percentage of a county's population belonging to a Southern Baptist Church, a bellwether evangelical denomination, was particularly sharp in Democratic trending counties. In 1990, the mean Southern Baptist Convention attendance rate in all US counties was 14.3 percent. This declined to 12.8% in 2000. Democratic trending counties –those below the mean in 1988 to 1992 GOP presidential vote share change– declined 1.68%, a decline statistically distinct ($t = 4.16$) and 36% greater than the 1.24% decline in more Republican trending counties.

Table C presents a multivariate OLS model of county-level Southern Baptist Church adherence rate in 2000, calculated by dividing the number of SBC church

²⁹ See Jones et al (2002) for more information.

members by the county population. I include a lagged dependent variable of SBC adherence rate in 1990 to account for dynamism (Keele and Kelly 2006). The independent variable of primary interest is a county's trend in Republican presidential vote share measured by subtracting 1992 county GOP vote share by 1988 GOP vote share. I include several other variables on the right hand side that could be associated with both a county's voting pattern and its Southern Baptist Church adherence rate including county income level, unemployment rate, farms per capita, percent black , percent high school graduate. Each of these control variables reflects values for 1992, a year approximate to that of the lagged dependent variable. I employ robust standard errors clustered on the state.

Generally, adherence rates are very stable- the lagged dependent variable explains considerable variation. However, counties that were moving toward the Republican Party in 1990 were more favorable to SBC church growth in 2000.³⁰ GOP presidential vote share trend is positive and significant (coef.: 0.0551; std. error: 0.0271), as expected. The substantive impact of trending toward the GOP is also significant. A county that moved the maximum observed amount away from the Republican Party between 1988 and 1992 had a simulated 2000 percentage of SBC membership at 11.76 percent. However, a county the moved the maximum observed amount toward the Republican Party between 1988 and 1992 had a predicted 2000 percentage of SBC membership at 13.90 percent. This 2.13% impact is statistically significant and over twice as large as the impact of a 50% difference in percentage black in a county.

³⁰ All counties in the United States are present in the data, but a model restricted to counties with at least one SBC church in 1990 yields a slightly larger coefficient.

Table D: County-Level Southern Baptist Church Adherence Rate in 2000

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
SBC Adherence Rate, 1990	0.900***	(0.0143)
GOP President Vote Share (1992 minus 1988)	0.0551*	(0.0271)
Presidential Turnout 1992	0.0358**	(0.0120)
Percent Black 1992	0.0168	(0.0101)
Percent High School 1992	0.0106	(0.0112)
Farms per capita 1992	0.00705	(0.0123)
Unemployment 1992	0.0153	(0.0219)
Income 1992	-0.0400**	(0.0163)
Constant	-0.0102	(0.0117)
Observations	3,101	
Adj. R ²	0.9763	

Sources ASARB 1991; ASARB 2001; Gomez et. al 2007

Dependent variable is SBC Adherence Rate in 2000 (SBC adherents / population).

OLS regression. * p<0.05 ** p<0.01 *** p<0.001 - one-tailed

Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB). 1990. *Churches and Church Membership in the United States, 1990*. Distributed by the Association of Religion Data Archives (www.theARDA.com).

Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies (ASARB). 2000. *Religious Congregations and Membership Study, 2000 (Counties File)*. Distributed by the Association of Religion Data Archives (www.theARDA.com).

Gomez, Brad T., Hansford, Thomas G. and Krause, George A. 2007. "The Republicans Should Pray for Rain: Weather, Turnout, and Voting in U.S. Presidential Elections." *Journal of Politics*, 69 (3): 649–663

Jones, Dale E., Sherry Doty, Clifford Grammich, James E. Horsch, Richard Houseal, Mac Lynn, John P. Marcum, Kenneth M. Sanchagrin and Richard H. Taylor. 2002. *Religious Congregations and Membership in the United States 2000: An Enumeration by Region, State and County Based on Data Reported for 149 Religious Bodies*. Nashville, TN: Glenmary Research Center.

CHAPTER III

Social Groups and the Self-Intensifying Nature of Polarization

Abstract:

Scholarly debate on the existence and consequences of polarization in the United States maintains a primary focus on issue opinions. This study contends that attitudes about groups of people are also important but underappreciated in this dialogue. Feelings about groups across lines of political difference are a cause, effect, and direct embodiment of polarization. A divisive political environment encourages citizens to link subordinate social groups with superordinate political coalitions, thereby increasing the political relevance of social groups. Specifically, attitudes about liberals and conservatives influence attitudes about certain lightning-rod social groups. Simultaneously, views about social out-groups influence attitudes about liberals and conservatives more broadly. Analyses of feelings toward an important social group, Christian fundamentalists, suggest that polarization is a self-intensifying process with the potential to damage the social fabric of American life.

"I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the 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.'"

–Jerry Falwell speaking on September 13, 2001

“The evil that he did will live after him. This is not just because of the wickedness that he actually preached, but because of the hole that he made in the "wall of separation" that ought to divide religion from politics.”

-Christopher Hitchens writing after the death of Jerry Falwell

Fiorina and others have described mass polarization as an overemphasized, even mythical, phenomenon rooted in misinterpretation rather than substantive difference. However, sound evidence from other scholars (e.g. Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; Hetherington and Weiler 2009) suggest otherwise. Why might it seem like the United States is divided on issues if most citizens “are ambivalent and uncertain, and consequently reluctant to make firm commitments to parties, politicians, or policies (Fiorina 2006)”? This essay makes the case that many Americans are ideologically polarized in feelings about some social groups and that this form of polarization is at least a partial explanation for deeper political divisions.

Scholars have long recognized social groups as one of the principal factors influencing political behavior (e.g. Berelson et. al 1954; Campbell et al. 1960). Being part of a social group encourages a person to behave in a way consistent with the group’s political interests. Social groups influence political cognitions, ideology, and policy preferences (Lau 1986; Hamill, Lodge, and Blake 1985; Brady and Sniderman 1985; Sears et al. 1980). Kinder (2003) makes a compelling case that group-orientations remain

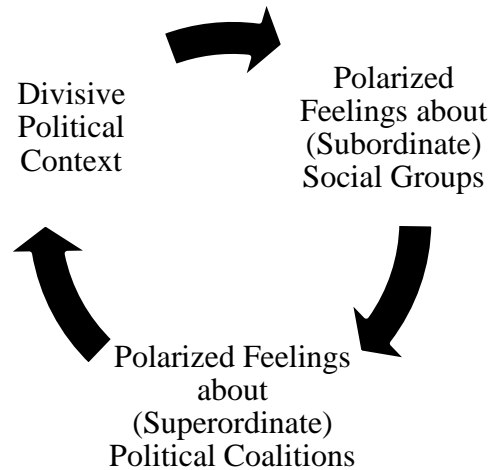
vital to understanding American politics. I argue that the heightened political divisiveness of contemporary politics has only strengthened the importance of social groups.

In a well-sorted electorate, many social groups that form for non-political reasons are increasingly likely to play major political roles. When groups become involved in politics, the public responds by linking social groups to larger political coalitions, potentially altering group preferences (Miller et al. 1991). Because polarization has led more social groups to be associated with these coalitions, political polarization increases the political relevance of social groups. Feelings about some social groups, distinct from group membership as traditionally-emphasized, have become an important factor in American political behavior. Not only are social group perceptions more important because of polarization, but feelings toward social groups function like issue opinions as manifestations of polarization itself. Feelings toward social groups should rank alongside ideology and partisanship as key components in research on the existence and consequences of polarization.

I maintain that the current American political environment encourages polarization in preferences toward social groups. These polarized preferences in turn exacerbate polarization more broadly. As illustrated in Figure 1, the political relevance of social groups is central to a multi-step process that generates self-intensifying polarization. Mass political polarization makes it easier for citizens to link social groups with broader political coalitions. People react to some social groups much as they react to coalitions. Those who are in agreement with the coalition respond favorably to the group while those who disagree with the coalition respond negatively. As a group becomes

increasingly associated with the larger political divide, several subsequent processes activate preferences about that group to influence attitudes members of the coalition.

Figure 1: The Self-Intensifying Nature of Polarization



Through a variety of sources, I show an evolution in opinion towards a major social group associated with partisan conflict, Christian fundamentalists. I then show that ideology is a major cause of attitude change toward this group. Politicized attitudes toward Christian fundamentalists subsequently influence attitudes toward a larger political group, conservatives, but do so asymmetrically as liberals react more extremely than conservatives. Instead of being insulated from or only symptomatic of broader political conflict, feelings toward social groups have a major effect on polarization by moving synchronously to cause cyclical expansions and contractions of political conflict.

How Polarization Links Subordinate Groups with Superordinate Groups

In a divisive political context within a complex society, political actors exist at varying levels of abstraction. Individuals are members of small groups and large groups.

Small groups often take political stands that are in line or in direct sequence with large groups. As a result, people can draw connections between subordinate groups and superordinate groups. Social groups, being relatively small, are subordinate groups while broader political coalitions are superordinate groups. Intense political conflict leads social groups to journey deeper into the political fray, making it easier for people to link social groups with broader coalitions. This linking increases the political relevance of social groups by influencing attitudes about members of both superordinate and subordinate groups in a bidirectional process.

First, considerations of superordinate groups structure people's thoughts about subordinate groups. Subordinate social groups grow to become defined by superordinate broad political coalitions. Those who support a political coalition should increase support for a linked social group while those who oppose a political coalition should decrease support for a linked social group. Second, and in turn, considerations of subordinate groups structure thinking about superordinate groups. Either appealing or unappealing aspects of the social group define the coalition, its members, and its organizational manifestations.

When politics are contentious, political elites, the media, and groups themselves accentuate the political role of social groups. If a competitive political environment creates vanishing national margins of success with elections decided by only a few percentage points, even relatively small sets of people can appear decisive. Political elites from all sides become ever more concerned with targeting social groups that can provide them with valuable conglomerations of potential supporters (Hillygus and Shields 2008). These elites are incentivized to do two things that make social groups divisive. First, they

employ group-centric appeals that directly engage a group's preferences. Second, they make appeals to groups of voters that are specifically designed to contrast with features of another group that some members of the targeted group are prone to dislike. For example, anti-welfare appeals often communicate negative information about blacks to white voters (Gilens 1999; Hancock 2004). Similarly, social groups themselves increase political activity when polarized politics engenders threat and activates group-consciousness. The resulting context of groups falling into well-sorted coalitions lends itself to the media strengthening this pattern by relaying convenient, if oversimplified, stories framed in the light of group conflict.

This increasing political divisiveness causes social groups and ideological camps to enter into increasingly symbiotic relationships. A person's ideology, defined by Converse (1964) as "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence," influences whether the political positions associated with a group is consistent with a person's preexisting preferences. Liberals should come to view members of groups associated with conservative preferences negatively while they come to view members of liberal associated groups positively. The inverse should hold for conservatives. This causes ideology to transfer attitudes about the superordinate group to attitudes about the linked subordinate group.

Transferring attitudes about the social group- the subordinate group- to attitudes about the broader coalition- the superordinate group- relies on attitudes toward the subordinate group itself. In the contemporary American case, political coalitions are complex. People can think of political coalitions as sets of individuals or organizations

asking for their attachment. This means that feelings about social groups should also influence feelings about liberals and conservatives.

Other studies have established a tendency for in-groups to respond to threat more strongly than out-groups (Cairns et al. 2006; Hewstone et al. 2002). I also expect an uneven influence of subordinate feelings on superordinate feelings, but in a different direction. Members of a political coalition should respond more strongly to a social group if that social group is an outgroup. Conservatives should think of liberals in terms of liberal groups while not thinking of themselves in terms of conservatives groups. A similar asymmetry should hold for liberals. Two processes support this imbalance. First, outgroup members likely perceive more homogeneity in social group members than do members of the social group's coalition. Second, a group's status can be clearer from afar. Members of a coalition supported by a social group who are not members of the social group itself should view themselves as allies with the group rather than members of the group itself, denying the social group members clear ingroup status. However, those within a coalition that is threatened by the social group can make a clearer outgroup distinction. This means that people tend to offer greater punishment to those who help them directly than they offer rewards to those who aid their friends.

Why People Link Social Groups with Political Coalitions: Information Processing and Social Identity

What mechanisms create this linkage between subordinate and superordinate groups? Specifically, why do people connect social groups with political coalitions? I argue that two coinciding psychological mechanisms create political dynamism between

coalitions and feelings toward groups. The first mechanism is information processing. The second mechanism is social identity.

By creating an environment in which social groups become associated with political information, political conflict should influence how people process additional information regarding social groups and broader political coalitions. This happens for three reasons. First, people are cognitively limited and, therefore, process and retrieve information using schema, “organized prior knowledge, abstracted from experience with specific instances” (Fiske and Linville, 1980, p. 543; also see Conover 1984). By using a similar schema when thinking of social groups and broader coalitions, a person considers both in the same manner, gains consistency in understanding the world, and, importantly, moves new information about the group and the coalition in tandem, creating cognitive links between both.

The second information processing reason that people link subordinate and superordinate groups is that linkages foster balance in a person’s likes and dislikes. By aligning feelings about a social group in a partisan conflict with feelings about an ideological division, a person maintains consistency in likes and dislikes (Heider 1958). People tend to like groups that are supportive of their political allies while disliking groups that are sympathetic towards their political opponents (Aronson and Cope 1968; Hummon and Dorien 2003). Those who support the social group should see the broader movement it aligns with as a mutual friend worthy of reward for sharing a common rival, inducing positive preferences about the coalition. Meanwhile, those who are opposed to the social group could feel threatened by a friend to their enemy, inducing negative

preferences about the broader movement. Such a balance avoids dissonance and promotes consistency.

By advocating values and positions inconsistent with a person's support for a coalition, the group introduces considerations that are psychologically unpleasant or dissonant (Festinger 1957). Much like an individual devaluing the credibility of a conflicting information source, lowering preferences about the group or the coalition itself helps the individual reconcile this dissonance. A social group's political positions should have a contrasting effect among those who agree with the group. If a group's political machinations provide an affirming narrative that the social group should produce consonance rather than dissonance within an individual. By embracing the message valuing the credibility of the source, individuals embrace an affirming narrative that provides consistency in understanding of the world (Jost et al. 2004; Jost et al. 2008). As a result, linking groups and broader coalition provides consistency within an individual's preferences that can lead to improved feelings about the group or the coalition.

Finally, the third information processing explanation happens unconsciously. Groups taking positions in line with a coalition make it easy for a person to align connections about social groups and coalitions in the same direction. These connections can be positive or negative, depending on that persons underlying pool of considerations about the position. This means that new information about both the subordinate and superordinate group carries the same valence, that new information is affectively congruent. An information processing bias emerges (Lodge and Taber 2005), making it easier for supporters of a social group to connect the positive aspects of the social group with the supporters of the coalition. Conversely, people have more difficulty connecting

negative information about one level of social organization with positive aspects of another. This unconscious relative ease of using congruent information makes it natural for a person to organize new information about social groups in the same direction as new information about coalitions, thereby creating links between multiple levels of social organization.

In addition to the mechanics of political information processing, social identities influence the connection of social groups and broader political coalition within a divisive political context. Social identities are important (Tajfel 1978). By offering individuals a way to recognize “collective awareness” of a group's existence (Turner 1987), groups inform an important basis of social identity. Most Americans are members of an ingroup defined by liberal or conservative political coalitions. Those who are not supporters of that coalition serve as members of an outgroup and are, consequently, treated differently (Brewer 1979).

When a social group's policies or candidates align with a coalition's preferences, that person should see the social group as an ally in a political struggle and respond with more positive feelings toward members of the social group. However, when those policies or candidates oppose a coalition's preferences, that person should see the group as an enemy in a political struggle and respond with more negative feelings. A polarizing process forms that is based on the interdependent nesting of social group and coalitional group identities. Supporters of one side of a political divide move toward a social group, mutual ingroup members. Meanwhile, followers of the other coalition move away from the social group, perceiving that social groups' members as part of an outgroup.

In a political landscape defined by sharp dichotomies, conflict intensity, such as brought about by polarization, increases the differentiation between outgroups and ingroups (Brewer 1999; Levin and Sidanius 1999). High intergroup conflict encourages outgroup negativity and ingroup favoritism (Hewstone et al. 2002). Polarization can create the impression of competition for material or ideological resources, reinforcing group consciousness (see Blumer 1958, Bobo and Hutchings 1996, and Esses et al. 1998 for a treatment of resource competition influences on immigration and racial attitudes). If a divisive context inspires threat, people should increase their preference for intragroup homogeneity (Huddy 2001). Additionally, if polarization weakens other cross-group ties in society, people are left with fewer reasons to feel more positive about outgroups (Paolini et al. 2004; Wright et al. 1997).

While membership is distinct from attachment and may have additional consequences, the political relevance of feelings toward a social group is independent of social group membership. Psychological attachment, not just objective membership, leads to social identification (Lau 1989). Social group membership might moderate, but not extinguish, the effects of social group-coalition linkage. Furthermore, group involvement itself may be compromised if a person's political positions cause adequate internal conflict.

Which Social Groups Link with Political Coalitions?

Many social groups participate in political conflict. However, only some have sufficient characteristics for feelings toward its members to be polarized by the broader conflict and for preferences about it to change other group attitudes. The same factors

that sketch the contours of partisan polarization also encourage linked preferences. First, the group should take clear positions on issues, making themselves seem significantly different than others. Second, the positions taken by the group should be salient or at least visible to many people. Third, the positions should touch issues that are “broad and deep” with the “capacity to provoke resistance” (Layman 2001). Fourth, positions taken by the group should seem irreconcilable with positions held by members of the other superordinate group. Fifth, the composition of the group should seem homogeneous in political goals, bolstering entitativity and fostering differentiating stereotypes (Turner et al. 1987). Sixth, a group should appear politically effective enough to induce intergroup threat, which promotes negative outgroup attitudes (Riek et al. 2006).

Expectations and Research Design

This theory lends itself to two generalized expectations regarding polarization and the connection between social groups and political coalitions. First, I expect attitudes about superordinate political coalitions to influence attitudes toward some subordinate social groups. Second and simultaneously, I expect attitudes toward social group to influence attitudes about members of the superordinate political coalitions. However, the influence of feelings toward social group members on feelings about coalition members should be asymmetrical. Those who view the coalition as an outgroup should react more negatively than members of the coalition itself react positively.

Systematic tests of these expectations involving the entire myriad of idiosyncratic social groups operating within American society would be unwieldy. Therefore, the

research design is a case study focused on one particularly important social group, Christian fundamentalists. I begin by establishing that attitudes toward this group are polarized. Liberals and conservatives have grown increasingly disparate over the last two decades. Then, I apply the two generalized expectations to Christian fundamentalists to test three specific hypotheses.

H1: The Influence of Superordinate Groups on Subordinate Groups

Negative feelings about conservatives cause negative feelings about Christian fundamentalists while positive feelings about conservatives cause positive feelings about Christian fundamentalists.

H2: The Influence of Subordinate Groups on Superordinate Groups

Negative feelings about Christian fundamentalists cause negative feelings about conservatives while positive feelings about Christian fundamentalists cause positive feelings about conservatives.

H3: The Asymmetric Influence of Subordinate Groups on Superordinate Outgroups

The effect of feelings about Christian fundamentalists should be greater for liberals than for conservatives.

I rely on panel and cross sectional surveys from the American National Election study to test these hypotheses. I begin by using the 1948-2008 cumulative file to establish that preferences about Christian fundamentalists have polarized over time. Next, I use structural equations and the 2000-2004 panel surveys to isolate feelings towards conservatives as the driving force behind this polarization. I continue with these panel surveys to find that preferences about Christian fundamentalists drive preferences about conservatives, but primarily among liberals. I then supplement observational results with experimental analyses using the panel dataset.

Christian Fundamentalists: The Test Group

Christian fundamentalists provide an exemplary case to study how polarization of subordinate groups linking with superordinate coalitions. Those who identify as Christian fundamentalists have been a consistent force in American politics (Wilcox and Larson 2005), serving as a lightning rod to inspire loyalty among conservatives and hostility among liberals (Bolce and De Maio 1999). Christian fundamentalists often promote outcomes such as abortion restriction or creationism in classrooms that are quite contrary to most liberals' policy goals. Similarly, Christian fundamentalists cause electoral threat to liberals by supporting conservative candidates. As argued by Hunter (1991), elites attach a religious-secular divide to many issues. This divide influences voting patterns (Campbell et al. 2011) while allowing disparate conservative groups to find common ground with Christian fundamentalists. For instance, despite distinctive positions on issues like capital punishment and creationism, conservative Catholic elites tend to be supportive of the Christian Right (Bendyna et al. 2001). Popular media only make differences in perceptions seem bigger (Bolce and De Maio 2007; Haskell 2007; Kerr 2003). Left-leaning publications have increasingly linked religious groups with the Republican Party while depicting religious groups in a negative light (Pieper 2011). And, the popular perception of religious beliefs as deeply-seated and unwavering makes differences feel irreconcilable.

Ample evidence from surveys clearly supports a view of polarizing preferences about Christian fundamentalists. Figure 2 depicts pairwise correlations between various

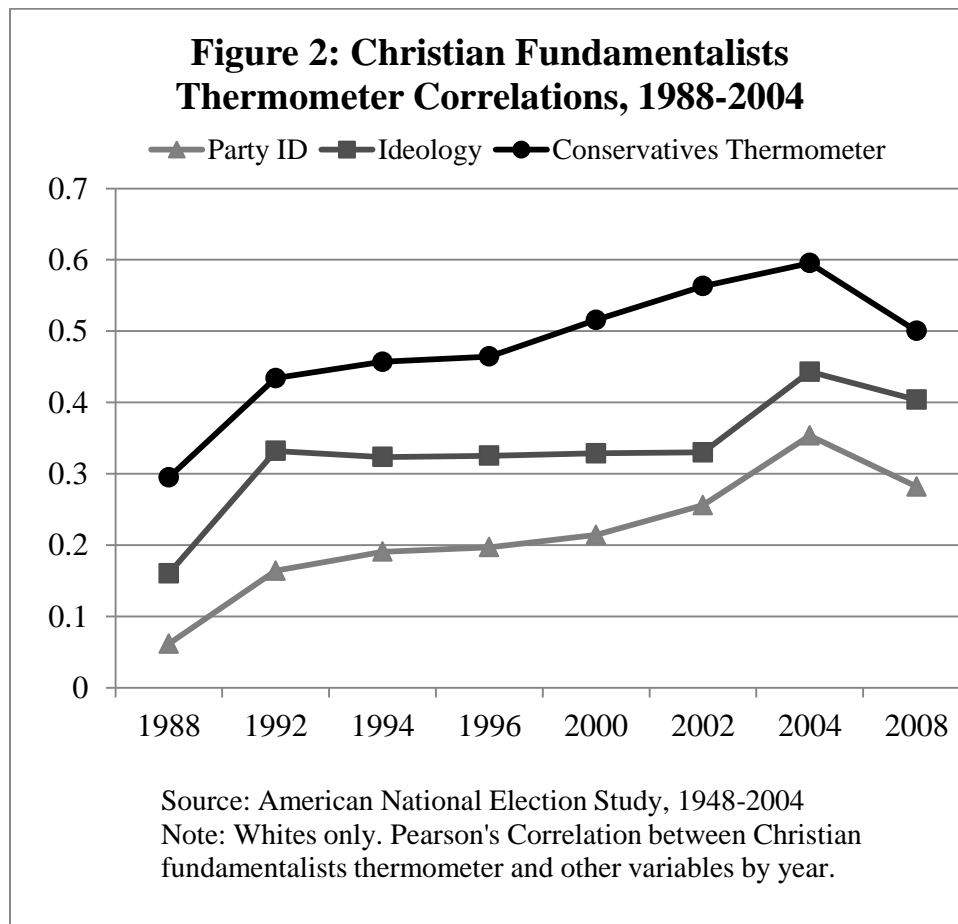
political variables and the Christian fundamentalist thermometer over time.³¹ The trend lines portray a clear, strengthening relationship between feelings toward Christian fundamentalists and perceptions of the right. Among all variables, white American's feelings toward Christian fundamentalists were the least tied to politics in 1988, the first year the American National Election Study asked the question. Following a spike in the 1992 election cycle, the correlation between Christian fundamentalist preferences and political variables plateaued throughout the Clinton administration. The 2000 election marked the beginning a second resurgence in the politicization of preferences, a resurgence that peaked in 2004 only to ebb slightly once George W. Bush was off the ballot in 2008. Ideology shows a particularly strong correlation with the thermometer over time. In 1988, the correlation between ideology and the thermometer was 0.16. It doubled to 0.33 by 1992, and it once again increased in 2004 to 0.44.³²

The emergent gap between liberals and conservatives in attitudes toward Christian fundamentalists is also apparent in simple univariate analysis. Figure 3 shows overlapping histograms comparing liberals' and conservatives' distributions of preferences about Protestants, Catholics, and Christian fundamentalists in 1988 and

³¹The relationship between ideology and preferences about Christian fundamentalists is confounded among non-whites. Subsequent analyses avoid this complication to underlying assumptions by limiting samples to whites. See Supporting Information B for further discussion.

³²Offering context to the magnitude of this correlation, the correlation between party and ideology has ranged from 0.27 in 1972 to 0.54 in 2004 (ANES 1948-2008).

2004.³³ Among both liberals and conservatives in 1988, the modal response to the 100-point Christian fundamentalist thermometer was 50, a neutral response that was consistent with preferences about many groups. By 2004, conservatives had shifted toward more positive feelings while liberals reported more negative feelings. Fifty-seven percent of conservatives provided better than neutral evaluations of Christian fundamentalists, but only 11 percent liberals evaluated the group positively. A bimodal distribution with little overlap emerged, approaching even stringent standards of polarization established by Fiorina (2006).

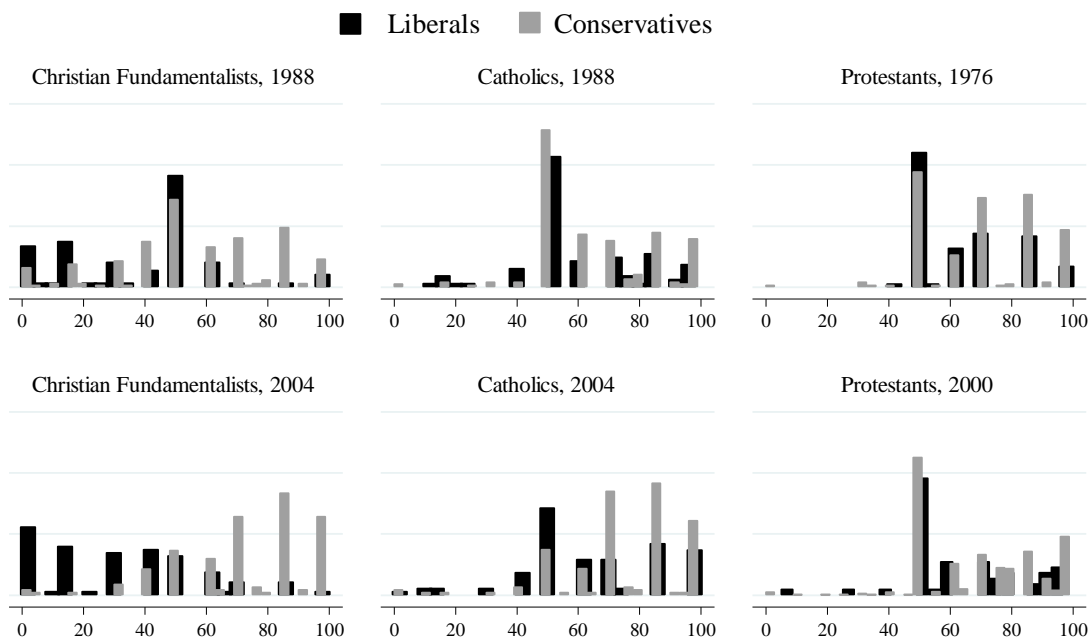


³³ The Protestant thermometer is not available in 1988, 2004, or 2008 surveys. Therefore, I use values from 1976 and 2000 surveys for this group.

To put the 2004 difference between liberals and conservatives on Christian fundamentalist preferences into perspective, liberals and conservatives are more polarized in their opinions about Christian fundamentalists than citizens in “red” and “blue” states are polarized in their opinions about policy issues. Overlap coefficients measure the common area between two distributions and range from 0, implying complete separation of distributions, to 1, implying maximum overlap (Inman and Bradley 1985). The 2004 distributions of conservative and liberal evaluations of Christian fundamentalists have an overlap coefficient of 0.55. In comparison, Levendusky and Pope (2011) find a 0.77 overlap coefficient during 2006 between citizen social issues preferences in New York, a solidly blue state, and Utah, a solidly red state. The ideological divide appears confined to feelings about Christian fundamentalists rather than feelings about Christians in general. The overlap coefficient is 0.82 for the Catholic thermometer and 0.92 for the Protestant thermometer.³⁴

³⁴ I calculated the above overlap coefficient using Goldstein’s Stata package (1994) using 2004 NES data. Liberal-leaning and conservative-leaning moderates are included, variances are treated as unequal, and the distributions are limited to whites.

Figure 3: Feeling Thermometers Responses: Liberals vs. Conservatives



Source: American National Election Studies, 1948-2008. Overlapping Histograms. Whites Only.

The ideological divide over Christian fundamentalists is not a general pattern applicable to all religious groups. Questions asking about Catholics and Protestants in general show no such change. Both conservatives and liberals remained warm to both religious traditions in earlier and later surveys, discrediting the existence of a liberal tendency to decrease in preferences about religious groups in general or a conservative tendency to increase.³⁵ Rather, the tendency is for movement of preferences about the politically salient religious groups.

³⁵ Consistent with prior research (McDermott 2007), Figure 2 also shows that Catholics have become more popular overtime, especially among conservatives.

However, sorting could be explained by a change in the characteristics of liberals and conservatives rather than a fundamental change in the relationship between ideology and group preferences. Models from 1988 to 2008 American National Election Study surveys appear in Table 1 and account for this possibility by controlling for variables that could influence both ideology and group preferences. The independent variables of interest are liberal and conservative dummy variables. True moderates serve as the reference category for comparison. Controls include age, education, gender, income, residency in the South, church attendance, and biblical literalism. Figure 4 plots those models' coefficients for ideology dummy variables by year.

Ideology has always had some role over the last two decades in preferences about Christian fundamentalists. However, the politicization of Christian fundamentalists has come in several waves over the last two decades. As indicated by Model 1 in Table 1, conservatives had more positive feelings about the group than liberals prior to the watershed 1992 election, but ideology differences were subtle. Even in 1988, liberals were more negative and conservatives were more positive than moderates in the reference category, though the conservative dummy failed to achieve statistical significance. However, the effect of ideology grew tremendously. By 1992, the estimate for the conservative dummy had tripled from 1.921 to 7.254, gaining statistical significance. Meanwhile, the liberal dummy maintained significance at -3.016. The sequence of change is notable throughout this period. Conservatives reacted to the rise of politically active Christian fundamentalists before liberals, first showing a major change during the 1992 election. Though, liberals' reaction may have been slower than conservatives, it was still pronounced. The liberal coefficient shifted away from Christian fundamentalists

between 1992 and 1996, taking a lead over the absolute value of the conservative coefficient that it would maintain through 2008.³⁶

Table 1: Feeling toward Christian Fundamentalists as Function of Ideology and Other Variables

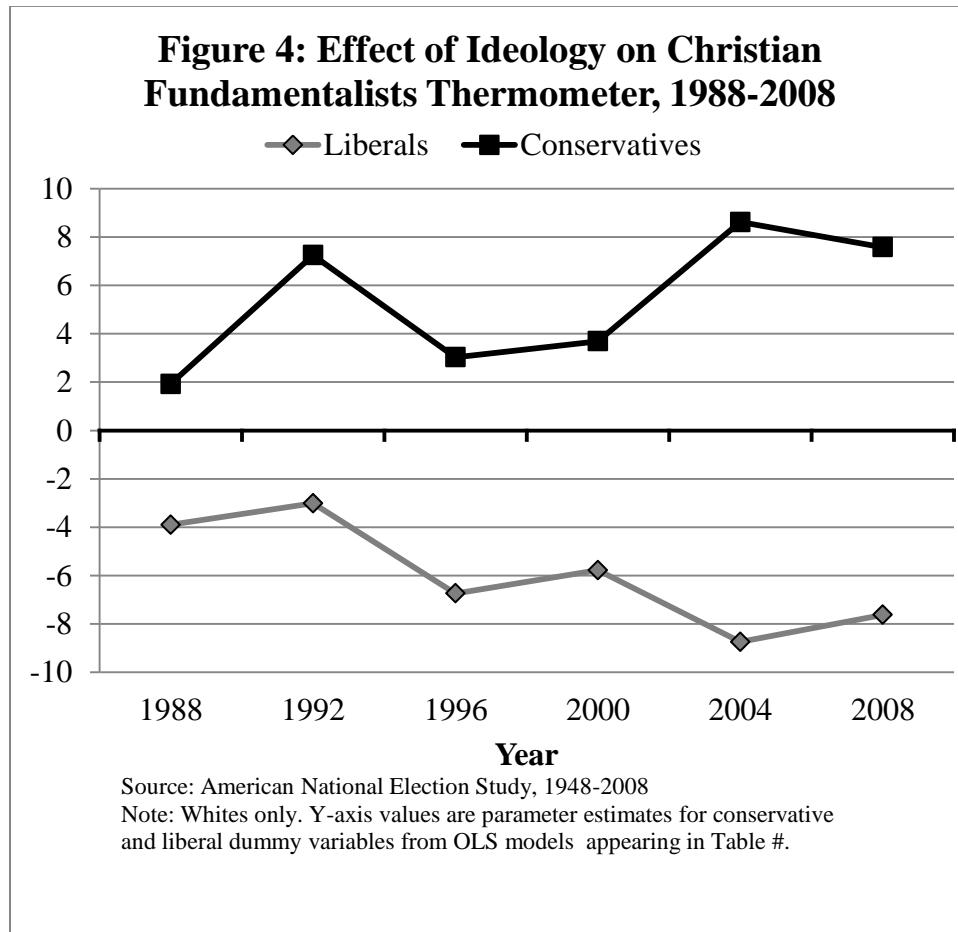
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Year:	1988	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008
Liberal	-3.900* (1.961)	-3.016* (1.433)	-6.741*** (1.730)	-5.784* (2.715)	-8.745*** (2.157)	-7.629*** (1.793)
Conservative	1.921 (1.474)	7.254*** (1.231)	3.026* (1.447)	3.692 (2.343)	8.619*** (1.855)	7.585*** (1.574)
Church Attendance Frequency	10.79*** (1.885)	9.192*** (1.391)	8.019*** (1.737)	6.232* (2.819)	8.662*** (2.271)	7.820*** (1.884)
Biblical Literalism	23.43*** (2.324)	22.09*** (1.827)	25.93*** (2.130)	23.35*** (3.585)	26.50*** (2.828)	15.43*** (2.175)
Age	-9.153* (3.963)	-12.87*** (3.082)	-6.540* (3.700)	-4.696 (6.380)	-6.697 (4.638)	-1.274 (3.867)
South	3.637** (1.489)	3.384** (1.223)	1.638 (1.336)	-0.482 (2.249)	3.018* (1.788)	3.871** (1.339)
Income	-4.098 (2.698)	-7.544*** (2.107)	-7.061** (2.462)	5.803 (4.052)	1.976 (2.845)	-6.155** (2.636)
Female	-0.501 (1.330)	-0.905 (1.051)	-0.873 (1.235)	-0.871 (2.083)	1.847 (1.576)	4.656*** (1.313)
Education	-9.075*** (2.623)	-11.96*** (2.114)	-5.907** (2.500)	-12.48** (4.160)	-13.43*** (3.149)	-11.84*** (2.793)
Constant	38.62*** (3.352)	48.21*** (2.462)	42.39*** (3.017)	39.63*** (5.032)	42.67*** (3.446)	46.40*** (2.926)
Observations	1067	1340	960	395	636	885
Adjusted R-squared	0.218	0.317	0.320	0.253	0.392	0.295

Source: American National Election Study 1948-2008

Dependent variable is feeling toward Christian Fundamentalists (0 - 100). Reference category consists of moderates. OLS; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 (one-tailed). Parameter estimates with standard errors in parentheses.

³⁶ Throughout this essay, people who refused to answer or did not know their answer to the ideology questions are coded as true moderates. Estimates are not significantly altered by this effort to preserve cases.

As with other indicators of polarization (Jacobson 2006), the George W. Bush administration accompanied historically extreme levels of ideological division about Christian fundamentalist. Ideology played its greatest role on attitudes toward the group during George W. Bush's reelection when the liberal coefficient reached -8.745 and the conservative reach 8.619. Perhaps due to the absence of a presidential candidate associated with Christian fundamentalists on a personal level, the effects of the ideology dummies subsided slightly in 2008. While the effects of ideology have ebbed and flowed over the last twenty years, the general trend is stable regardless of changing demographics of the various coalitions. Attitudes toward Christian fundamentalists have become divided along ideological lines.



In 2011, the Southern Baptist Convention recognized a crisis of long term membership- new baptisms were at historic lows while membership was in decline (Smietana 2012). The largest Protestant denomination in the United States, the affiliation of “America's Pastor” Billy Graham, and a standard bearer for America's unique role as the most religious developed country convened a group to address this looming threat. The primary function of this assembly was to drop "Southern" from their name, fretting that a regional tie hampered their future. However, the problem was likely political polarization.³⁷ Billy Graham was no longer the most salient Baptist. Politically active leaders like Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell had become the archetypes of Christian fundamentalists for most Americans. These leaders were much more politically active and divisive, evinced by evaluations of Falwell and Robertson being correlated with political preferences much more strongly than were evaluations of Graham or Oral Roberts.³⁸ As a result, opinions toward their group had polarized alongside broader ideological groupings. Conservatives liked Christian fundamentalists more, but liberals liked them less.

³⁷ For an argument that polarization led to political preferences affecting church attendance and other religious behavior, see Husser (n.d.) and Husser (n.d.).

³⁸ See Supporting Information C for more extensive analysis based on data from a 2006 Newsweek survey.

The Effect of Superordinate Group Preferences on Subordinate Group Preferences

Cross-sectional surveys show a major sorting of preferences about Christian fundamentalists along ideological lines. I turn to the American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel to investigate whether superordinate group feelings explain these changes in subordinate group preferences. I conduct two tests of these causal dynamic. The first test is a multivariate analysis of lagged ideology's influence on contemporaneous Christian fundamentalist preferences. Respondents who are liberal in 2000 should feel negatively towards Christian fundamentalists in 2004 while respondents who are conservatives should have positively towards Christian fundamentalists in 2004. The second test relies on randomized ordering of feeling thermometers to enhance internal validity by analyzing the effect of group primes.

Table 2 reports the multivariate analysis of Christian fundamentalist preferences. Because theory suggests endogeneity, I employ two-stage least squares. Feelings toward conservatives, measured in 2000, serve as both the instrumented variable and the independent variable of central concern.³⁹ Also on the right hand side of the model are 2000 measures of party, education, and income. By including a lagged measure of the dependent variable, the model accounts for respondent's baseline preferences and better reflects change over time within individuals (Kelly and Keele 2006).

³⁹ Supporting Information D provides first-stage estimates for instrumentl variable models, all of which have an F-score greater than 10. Traditional OLS estimates, consistent with analysis of thermometers by other scholars (e.g. Berinsky and Mendelberg 2005), are reported in Supporting Information E.

Table 2: Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists in 2004 as a function of Feelings about Conservatives in 2000

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Thermometer: Conservatives 00	33.54*	(19.53)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists 00	50.22***	(8.693)
Party 00	6.948	(4.931)
Education 00	-10.04***	(3.055)
Income 00	-10.24	(6.456)
Constant	12.33*	(5.674)
Observations	463	
Adjusted R-squared	0.470	

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Christian Fundamentalists Thermometer.

Two-stage least squares; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, one-tailed

Consistent with expectations, feelings about conservatives, members of the superordinate coalition, influence feelings about Christian fundamentalists, members of the subordinate social group. The estimate of the lagged and instrumented Christian fundamentalist thermometer is positive and significant (coef.: 50.22; std. error.: 8.693). This implies a major substantively important effect. Even though education often leads to less attachment to fundamentalists (Shields 2005), feelings toward conservatives are considerably more influential than education (coef: -10.04; std. error: 3.055) on feelings toward Christian fundamentalists.

The Effect of Subordinate Group Preferences on Superordinate Group Preferences

As attitudes toward the social group become informed by political preferences, they should come to influence attitudes toward supporters of their associated political

movements, at least for those who consider the social group's coalition to be threatening. To test the effects of feelings toward Christian fundamentalists on feelings of conservatives, I again turn to the 2000-2004 American National Election Study Panel Survey. Table 3 reports two-stage least squares models of the conservative feeling thermometer. The dependent variable is the 2004 conservative thermometer ranging from 0 (least positive) to 100 (most positive). The independent variable of primary concern is the Christian fundamentalist feeling thermometer. I also included party, income, education, and a lagged dependent variable on the right hand side. All independent variables are on a 0-1 interval and are from the 2000 wave of the panel. Because I expect the effects of feelings toward social groups to be conditional on ideology, I include a full sample model and two split sample model reflecting only conservatives or only liberals.

Estimates follow expectations in all models reported in Table 3. The main effect of the Christian fundamentalist thermometer is significant in the full sample of Model 1 (coef: 37.02; std. error: 10.21). However, the effect of group preferences on preferences about conservatives is moderated by ideology and largely driven by liberals. The effect of the Christian fundamentalist thermometer is substantively and statistically significant (coef: 28.57; std. error: 13.15) for liberals. Among liberals, positive feelings toward Christian fundamentalists in 2000 are associated with positive feelings toward conservatives in 2004, even when feelings toward conservatives in 2000 are held constant. On the other hand, the effect of Christian fundamentalist preferences is not significant for conservatives. As shown in Model 3, the Christian fundamentalist thermometer is in the expected direction but insignificant among conservatives (coef: 17.26; std. error: 11.01). This supports Hypothesis 3 which anticipates that liberals think

of conservatives in terms of Christian fundamentalists while conservatives are much less likely to think of themselves according to feelings about the social group.

Table 3: Feelings toward Conservatives in 2004 as a Function of Feelings toward Christian Fundamentalists in 2000

	Model 1 <u>All</u>	Model 2 <u>Liberals</u>	Model 3 <u>Conservatives</u>
	Param. Est (Std. Error)	Param. Est (Std. Error)	Param. Est (Std. Error)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists ₀₀	37.02*** (10.21)	69.97** (29.77)	17.26 (11.01)
Thermometer: Conservatives 00	22.20** (8.248)	-5.256 (27.19)	27.66*** (8.074)
Party 00	19.12*** (2.572)	14.94* (6.750)	12.56*** (3.355)
Education 00	0.437 (2.840)	1.383 (6.161)	-0.197 (3.442)
Income00	0.620 (5.502)	-6.091 (13.45)	3.256 (6.161)
Constant	18.23*** (3.398)	17.49** (6.057)	31.18*** (5.011)
Observations	460	141	273
Adjusted R-squared	0.401	0.304	0.229

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Conservative Thermometer. Two-stage least squares; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. * p<0.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, one-tailed

Experimental Evidence for Self-Intensifying Polarization

The American National Election Study Panel provides an additional opportunity to test the causal relationship underlying the self-intensifying nature of polarization through two survey experiments, one testing the effects of superordinate political coalitions on subordinate social groups and the other testing the inverse. The 2004 wave

of the 2000-2004 panel randomized presentation order of thermometer questions about a variety of groups such as big business, feminists, Southerners, and conservatives. Consequently, some survey respondents received a question asking them to rate how warmly they felt toward conservatives and liberals prior to their rating of Christian fundamentalists. Similarly, some people received a question about Christian fundamentalists prior to answering a question about conservatives.

By asking a question about some groups before others, researchers made considerations about groups more accessible to respondents. As a result, some respondents were primed to evaluate Christian fundamentalists in light of previous evaluations toward liberals and conservatives, overtly political groups. These respondents compose a treatment group for the first experiment. Those who were asked the liberals thermometer after the Christian fundamentalist thermometer were not similarly primed when evaluating Christian fundamentalists, making them members of a control group for the first experiment. The second experiment follows similar logic. The treatment group consists of those individuals who were primed to consider a subordinate social group, Christian fundamentalists, prior to their evaluation of conservatives, the superordinate social group. Similarly, those who were asked about Christian fundamentalists after their evaluation of conservatives compose a control group.

That these experiments are embedded within a panel survey is particularly useful as it creates the opportunity to test effects of the political coalition or social group prime with information about a subject's prior evaluations, potentially revealing conditional relationships. The political prime should cause those who had positive preferences about Christian fundamentalists in 2000 to have even more positive feelings about the Christian

fundamentalists in 2004. Conversely, the political prime should cause even more negative preferences about Christian fundamentalist in 2004 for those who reported negative preferences in 2000. Those with relatively neutral preferences about Christian fundamentalists should not respond differently regardless of the political prime.

Table 4 presents OLS estimates for the first experiment. The dependent variable is feelings toward Christian fundamentalists, measured in 2004. The independent variables are the political prime, a 2000 measure of the dependent variable, and the interaction of the two. The political prime is coded zero if a respondent did not receive a thermometer question about liberals or conservatives before the Christian fundamentalist question, one if a respondent receive either the liberals or conservatives thermometer before, and two if the respondent received both the liberals and conservatives thermometers before the dependent variable. As with prior analysis, the sample is restricted to whites.

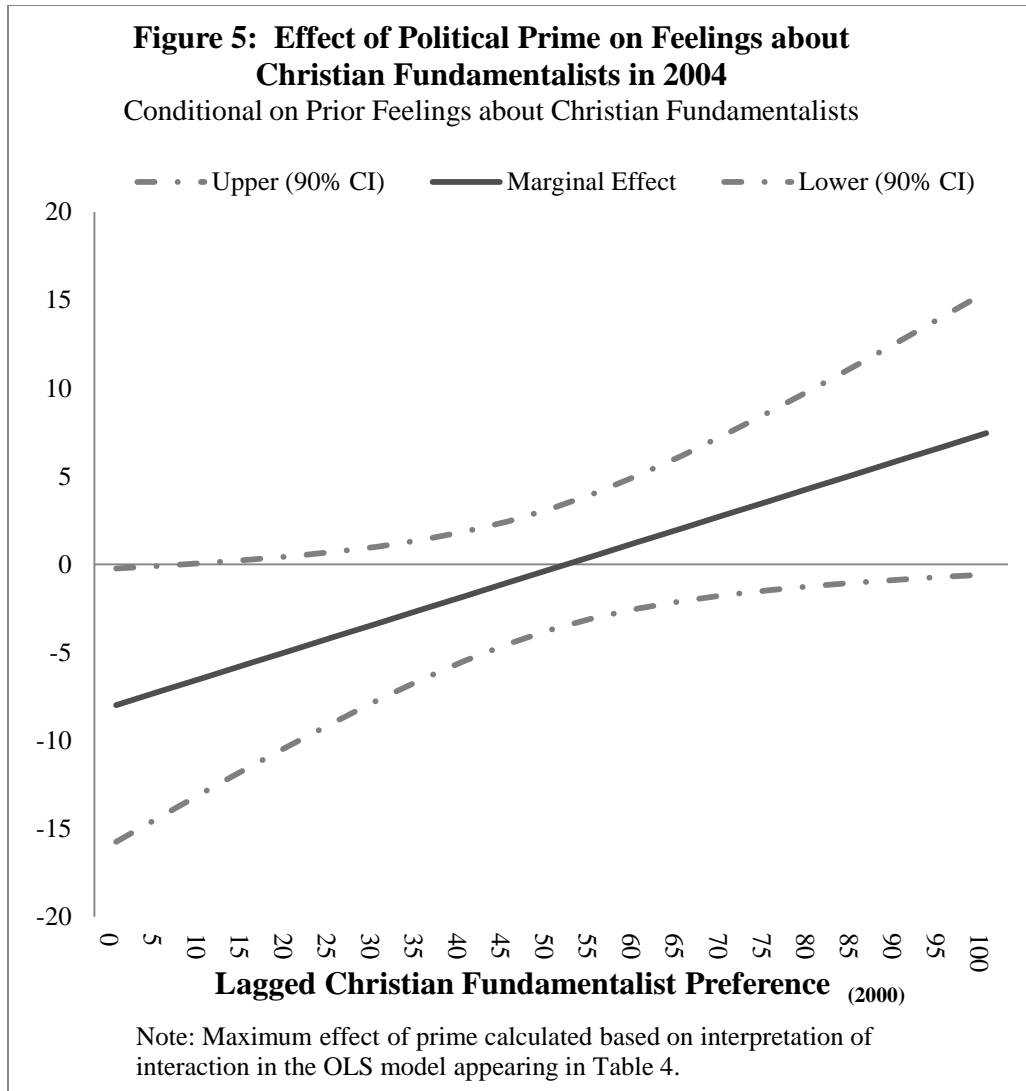
Table 4: The Effect of Political Prime on Feelings about Christian Fundamentalists

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists ₂₀₀₀	57.43***	(5.996)
Political Prime	-3.993*	(2.358)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists ₂₀₀₀ * Political Prime	7.716*	(4.319)
Constant	24.62***	(3.196)
Observations	554	
Adjusted R-squared	0.379	

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Christian Fundamentalist Thermometer. OLS regression; Sample limited to whites. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 one-tailed.

Ordering effects are significant in the expected direction. Estimates are significant for the political prime (coef.: -3.993; std. err: 2.358), the lagged dependent variable (coef.: 57.43; std. err: 5.996), and their interaction (coef.: 7.716; std. err: 4.319). Figure 5 graphs the effect of receiving both the liberal and conservatives thermometer prime conditional on lagged feelings toward Christian fundamentalists. Though confidence intervals imply that effects border traditional levels of significance, the basic pattern is clear. Those exposed to the political prime who liked Christian fundamentalists already like them even more while those who disliked the group members came to dislike them even more. The effect of the political prime was -7.97 points for those rated Christian fundamentalists at the minimum zero in 2000. However, the prime led to a 7.45 point increase for those who rated Christian fundamentalists at the maximum 100 in 2000. The total effect of the political prime is roughly equivalent to the difference between Protestants and Catholics on Christian fundamentalist preferences. Such a substantively important effect from the minor manipulation of question ordering is strong evidence supporting the theoretical mechanism that perceptions of superordinate political coalitions influences perceptions of social groups.



Having shown experimental evidence of the effect of superordinate considerations on subordinate group perceptions, I conduct a parallel experiment testing the effect of subordinate considerations on feelings about superordinate groups. This second experiment appears in Table 5 as an OLS model of feelings about conservatives in 2004. Equivalent to the first experiment, the independent variables are the subordinate group prime, the dependent variable lagged to 2000, and their interaction. Those who received

the prime were coded as one while those who did not were coded as zero. The sample is constrained to white.

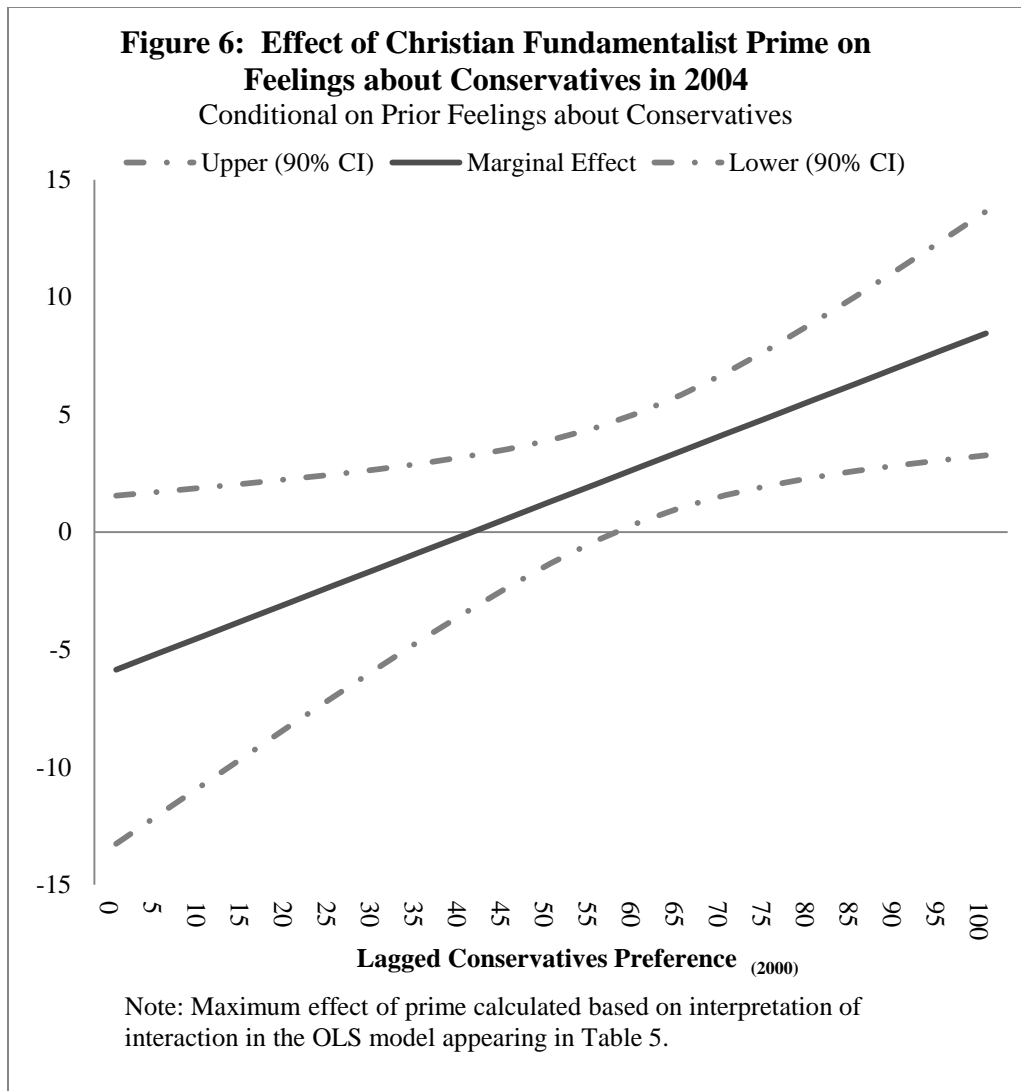
Table 5: The Effect of Christian Fundamentalist Prime on Feelings about Conservatives

	<u>Param. Est.</u>	<u>Std. Error</u>
Thermometer Conservatives ₂₀₀₀	53.62***	(4.641)
Christian Fundamentalist Prime	-5.853	(4.505)
Prime * Therm: Conservatives ₂₀₀₀	14.31*	(7.094)
Constant	26.52***	(2.963)
Observations	621	
Adjusted R-squared	0.322	

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Conservatives Thermometer. OLS regression; Sample limited to whites. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001 one-tailed. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

As with estimates of attitudes toward Christian fundamentalists, the effect of the prime is conditional on the lagged dependent variable. This conditional relationship is depicted by marginal effects of the prime plotted in Figure 6 below. Those who had positive feelings about conservatives in 2000 were bolstered as much as 8.46 points in their feelings when exposed to a prime about Christian fundamentalists, a linked subordinate group. Those who had negative feelings about conservatives in 2000 were hampered in the feelings, falling 5.85 thermometer points. The prime had no discernible effect among those who were neutral toward conservatives. Taken together, these experiment results provide additional confidence in the observational findings presented above.



Conclusion

As polarization increased over the last two decades, political ideology became a major cause of preferences about a politically important social group, Christian fundamentalists. Liberals sorted away from the group while conservatives sorted toward them. The group emerged as a political lightning rod, inspiring appreciation among conservatives and threat among liberals. Group preferences, in turn, influenced attitudes

towards conservatives. Though empirical analysis here focuses on this single group, preferences about other social groups on the front-lines of political conflict are likely both a cause and effect of polarization.

These perceptions of groups are a potential non-policy dimension of coalition formation. Consequently, strengthening understanding of the political sources and consequences of social group preferences sheds light on the significant question asking if and how groups collaborate to influence political coalitions (Bawn et al. 2012).

Political sorting is often considered to be a top-down process. Congressional elites converged within their parties and provided the mass public with consistent, identifiable cues (Abramowitz and Saunders 2008). However, when elites clarify ideological distinctions in regard to social groups they introduce an environment in which average citizens evaluate some groups through a political lens. Political preferences then inform feelings about social groups. These now-politically charged feelings, in turn, influence views of political coalition supporters, causing further sorting of the political environment. Once social groups take divisive positions on hot-button issues in a well-sorted environment, a ground-up process of polarization is initiated, introducing a feedback loop between broad political divisions and social group preferences.

Consistent with elite polarization, such a cycle may be beneficial for democracy. Party attachments to social groups may aid those group's policy advocacy efforts. Charged social group preferences clarify party distinctions, which could promote responsible party government (APSA 1950). Similarly, these polarized preferences about social groups might increase opinion consistency and participation (Hetherington 2008; Levendusky 2010).

However, the polarization of group preferences also has troubling normative consequences. Grand divisions such as those between the secular and the religious reinforce themselves. Individual political actors become increasingly unable to control of conflict escalation. Political difference grows ever more likely to rouse feelings of irreconcilability, potentially harming intergroup relations and damaging social capital. Such an environment may reduce prospects of compromise and optimal policy outcomes (Knack 2002; Sinclair 2000). If so, the feedback loop between social group preferences and polarization should be viewed as a vicious cycle of political sorting. Normative consequences aside, my results support a growing body of research suggesting that political divisions are entrenched within the social fabric of American life and are unlikely to disappear anytime soon (e.g. Alford et al. 2011; Gimpel and Schuknect 2004; Husser n.d.). Several questions remain about when the cycle linking subordinate groups with superordinate coalitions begins, what exogenous shocks initiate that linking, whether political or group elites are responsible, whether subordinate groups begin the cycle as a cause or an effect, and what conditions lead to depolarization.

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Supporting Information A: Protestant Denomination Coding

Coding of Protestant denominations is generally consistent with Layman and Green (2006) and Steensland et al (2000).

Evangelical Protestants

Seventh-Day Adventist, American Baptist Association, Baptist Bible Fellowship, Baptist General Conference, Baptist Missionary Association of America, Conservative Baptist Association of America, General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, National Association of Free Will Baptists, Primitive Baptists, Reformed Baptist, Southern Baptist Convention, Mennonite Church, Evangelical Covenant Church, Evangelical Free Church, Congregational Christian, Brethren in Christ, Mennonite Brethren, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Church of God (Anderson, Ind.), Church of the Nazarene, Free Methodist Church, Salvation Army, Wesleyan Church, Church of God of Findlay, Ohio, Plymouth Brethren, Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America, Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, Congregational Methodist, Assemblies of God, Church of God (Cleveland, Tenn.), Church of God (Huntsville, Al.), International Church of the Four Square Gospel, Pentecostal Church of God, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Church of God of the Apostolic Faith, Church of God of Prophecy, Apostolic Pentecostal, Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Presbyterian Church in America, Evangelical Presbyterian, Christian Reformed Church.

Note: Several small denominations are not represented in the data or the codebook does not fully distinguish the small denomination from a larger denominational label. For example, the ANES does not have a special code for Church of God of Findlay.

Non-Evangelical

Other Protestant denominations and non-denominational Protestants are coded as non-evangelical Protestant. Given the importance of not conflating political preferences with religious tradition for the purposes of this paper, I break with this coding scheme in the case of ambiguous Protestants, which I code as non-evangelical. Layman and Green (2006) details in Supporting Information A: “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as fundamentalist, evangelical, or charismatic/spirit-filled were coded as evangelical Protestants.” and “Non-black individuals who identified themselves as liberal were coded as mainline Protestants.” While some non-denominational churches should ideally be classified as evangelical, it is difficult to distinguish them from those that are not. Placing members of evangelical non-denominational churches in the reference category should only make results harder to find.

Supporting Information B: Why Samples are Limited to White

s

The complex role of race in the American religious experience complicates this story for non-whites. The threatening nature of religious and political discord is muddied for many non-whites because of divergence between conservative social policy preferences and liberal economic preferences (Sherkat et al. 2010). Both African-Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be Christian fundamentalists than are whites. The 33.4 percent of whites who take a literal view of the bible is significantly less than the 65.6 percent of African Americans ($t = 13.37$) and the 49.6 percent of Hispanics ($t = 6.12$) who hold a literal view (ANES 2008). Correspondingly, the mean fundamentalist thermometer was 68.7 and 61.2 among African Americans and Hispanics, respectively, but only 53.8 among whites. However, African Americans and Hispanics also tend to be more liberal than whites. Consequently, the relationship between ideology and preferences about Christian fundamentalists is confounded among non-whites. Subsequent analyses avoid this complication to underlying assumptions by limiting samples to whites.

Supporting Information C: Religious Leaders and Political Preferences

I argue that the archetype for a Christian fundamentalist shifted from Billy Graham to more politically active leaders Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. This shift meant that people increasingly thought of Christian fundamentalists as a political group. A November 2006 Newsweek telephone survey conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates International asked questions about several Christian fundamentalist leaders along with political questions, providing data to evaluate the relationship between attitudes about these leaders with several political variables. Table 1C presents correlations between a respondent's favorability toward a leader and various political views. Unfortunately, people were only asked to evaluate the religious leaders if they identified as an evangelical or born-again Christians. Nonetheless, results are suggestive of a broader trend. Evaluations of Billy Graham and Oral Roberts, less politically active Christian fundamentalists, have a generally weaker relationship to political variables than evaluations of their more political counterparts, Falwell and Robertson.

Table 1C: Correlations between Religious Leader Evaluations and Political Variables

	<u>Billy Graham</u>	<u>Oral Roberts</u>	<u>Pat Robertson</u>	<u>Jerry Falwell</u>
Bush Approval	0.12	0.25	0.35	0.49
Democratic Party Threat	0.10	0.10	0.21	0.29
Republican Party Threat	0.06	0.01	0.13	0.15
Religion's Influence on Politics	0.09	0.20	0.33	0.30
Christian Right's Influence on Politics	0.20	0.19	0.38	0.37
Christian Right's Influence on Bush Administration	0.16	0.23	0.39	0.27

Source: Newsweek Poll, 11/2006. Pairwise correlation coefficients. Sample restricted to whites. Ns range from 192 to 252.

Newsweek. 2006. "Newsweek Poll # 2006-NW08: Congressional Elections / Politics / Religion." Data obtained through Roper Center for Public Opinion Research.

Leader Evaluation: "We'd like your overall opinion of some different people. If I read a name you don't recognize, please say so. Would you say your overall opinion of [name] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly unfavorable, or very unfavorable?" (0- very unfavorable; 0.3333 - mostly unfavorable; 0.6666 - mostly favorable; 1 - very favorable).

Bush Approval: "Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?" (0 - Disapprove; 1 - Approve).

Democratic Party Threat: "Which of the following groups, if any, do you think is a serious threat to the moral and religious values of people like you? Do you think the Democratic Party is a serious threat, or not?" (0 - no; 1 - yes)

Republican Party Threat: "Which of the following groups, if any, do you think is a serious threat to the moral and religious values of people like you? Do you think the Republican Party is a serious threat, or not?" (0 - yes; 1 - no; *Note: Reversed from above*)

Religion's Influence on Politics: "Do you believe that religion plays too big a role in American political and cultural life today, too small a role, or is it about right?" (0- Too big a role; 0.5 - About right ; 1- Too small a role)

Christian Right's Influence on Politics: "Now I have a few questions about the conservative Christian political movement sometimes known as 'the religious right.' Do you think the religious right has had too much influence, too little influence, or about the right amount of influence on American politics over the past 25 years?" (0- Too big a role; 0.5 - About right ; 1- Too small a role)

Christian Right's Influence on Bush Administration: "How much influence do you think the religious right or Christian conservative movement has had on the policies of the Bush administration -- too much, too little, or about the right amount?" (0- Too big a role; 0.5 - About right ; 1- Too small a role)

Supporting Information D: First Stage Models

Table D1: First-Stage Estimates for Table 2

	Param. Est.	(Std. Err.)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists 00	0.350***	(0.031)
Party 00	0.207***	(0.023)
Education 00	0.024	(0.024)
Income 00	0.109*	(0.049)
Female	-0.008	(0.014)
South 00	0.020	(0.015)
Thermometer: Military 00	0.002***	(0.000)
Thermometer: Labor 00	0.000	(0.000)
Thermometer: Women's Movement 00	0.000	(0.000)
Constant	0.084*	(0.040)
Observations	463	
Adjusted R-squared	0.498	
F	52	

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2000 Conservatives Thermometer. Sample limited to whites.

Independent variables range from 0 to 1. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Supporting Information D: First Stage Models (cont.)

Table D2: First Stage Estimates for 2SLS Models appearing in Table 3

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
	<u>All</u>	<u>Liberals</u>	<u>Conservatives</u>
	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)	Param. Est. (Std. Error)
Thermometer: Conservatives ₂₀₀₀	0.575*** (0.052)	0.784*** (0.081)	0.470*** (0.073)
Party ₂₀₀₀	-0.071** (0.028)	-0.048 (0.061)	-0.057 (0.042)
Education ₂₀₀₀	-0.047 (0.032)	-0.051 (0.051)	-0.039 (0.047)
Income ₂₀₀₀	-0.053 (0.060)	-0.150 (0.114)	-0.010 (0.079)
Age ₂₀₀₀	-0.202*** (0.058)	-0.111 (0.092)	-0.268*** (0.083)
Church Attendance ₂₀₀₀	0.004 (0.006)	0.001 (0.011)	0.003 (0.009)
Biblical Literalism ₂₀₀₀	0.145*** (0.033)	0.146** (0.053)	0.141*** (0.046)
Prayer Frequency ₂₀₀₀	0.051 (0.034)	0.012 (0.053)	0.087* (0.050)
Evangelical ₂₀₀₀	0.032 (0.024)	0.020 (0.045)	0.020 (0.032)
Authoritarianism ₂₀₀₀	0.070* (0.033)	0.056 (0.052)	0.072 (0.047)
Constant	0.161*** (0.047)	0.063 (0.070)	0.221*** (0.079)
F	32.4	18.27	10.94
N	460	141	273
Adj. R2	0.406	0.552	0.268

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2000 Christian Fundamentalist Thermometer. Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1. * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Supporting Information E: OLS Models

Table A: Feelings towards Christian Fundamentalists in 2004 as a function of Feelings toward Conservatives in 2000

	Param. Est.	(Std. Error)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists 00	55.54***	(4.335)
Thermometer: Conservatives 00	17.79***	(5.708)
Party 00	10.58***	(2.800)
Education 00	-9.623***	(2.988)
Income 00	-8.546	(5.985)
Constant	16.53***	(3.196)
Observations	477	
Adjusted R-squared	0.475	

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Christian Fundamentalists Thermometer.

OLS; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, one-tailed

Supporting Information E: OLS Models (cont.)

Table B: Feelings towards Conservatives in 2004 as a function of Feelings toward Christian Fundamentalists in 2000

	Model 1 All	Model 2 Liberals	Model 3 Conservatives
	Param. Est (Std. Error)	Param. Est (Std. Error)	Param. Est (Std. Error)
Thermometer: Christian Fundamentalists 00	17.69*** (3.883)	27.58*** (8.538)	11.05** (4.528)
Thermometer: Conservatives 00	33.62*** (5.139)	32.48** (10.73)	30.29*** (6.245)
Party 00	18.82*** (2.506)	9.929 (6.092)	11.57*** (3.392)
Education 00	-3.333 (2.663)	-5.266 (4.976)	-1.677 (3.471)
Income00	0.867 (5.376)	-14.04 (11.95)	5.348 (6.260)
Constant	22.59*** (2.857)	22.16*** (5.137)	33.38*** (4.279)
Observations	487	154	284
Adjusted R-squared	0.410	0.377	0.215

Source: American National Election Study, 2000-2004 Panel

Dependent variable is 2004 Conservative Thermometer.

OLS; Sample limited to whites. Independent variables range from 0 to 1.

* p<0.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, one-tailed