

Toward a More Complete Explanation of Religion and the Culture War: The Effects of Secularism and Religiosity on Political Attitudes and Behavior

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Previous research examining the effect of religious differences on political attitudes and behavior has focused on variables measuring denominational differences as well as personal religiosity. While these variables enhance our understanding of the role that religion plays in structuring political positions, the omission of a measure of secularism, attitudes about the proper role of religion in politics, provides an incomplete account. In this paper, a measure of secularism is developed and tested as a predictor of policy attitudes, partisanship, ideology, and vote choice. The findings show that secularism exerts a statistically significant effect even after controlling for personal religiosity. The implications of this research suggest that including a measure of secularism adds to our understanding of the effect of religion in contemporary American politics.

I would like to thank Jose Aleman, Jeff Cohen, and Costas Panagopoulos for very helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper. In addition, I would like to thank Fordham University, especially Nancy Busch, Vice-President for Research, for providing financial support that allowed for Fordham's participation in the 2008 CCES and for providing a faculty fellowship that gave me release time to work on this project.

Students of American politics have been engaged in a spirited debate regarding whether or not the US is in the midst of a “culture war” (Abramowitz 2006; Abramowitz and Saunders 2005, 2008; DiMaggio, Bryson and Evans 1997; Fiorina, Abrams and Pope 2006, 2008; Fiorina and Levendusky 2006; Jacobson 2000, 2006). The sociologist, James Hunter (1991) was among the first to use the term “culture war” to describe what he saw as a battle waged between those who ascribed to religious orthodoxy and those who were more secular. Other writers characterize the battle in similar terms seeing it as conflict over religious beliefs and behaviors fought between “religious traditionalists” (individuals with orthodox religious beliefs and high levels of religious commitment) and a coalition of “religious modernists” (individuals who are less committed to traditional religious beliefs and practices) and “seculars,” or nonreligious people (Layman, Carsey and Horowitz 2006; Layman and Green 2006).

To date, the literature exploring the role of religion in fueling a culture war has conceived of religion as a single dimension reflecting individual religious beliefs and practices. Those at one end of this continuum are deeply religious; those at the other end are labeled “seculars”. Numerous studies have demonstrated that personal religiosity is related to a host of political attitudes and behavior including issue positions, party identification, ideology, and vote choice. Those who are religious are self-declared conservatives, who identify with the Republican Party and hold conservative positions on moral/cultural issues that reflect their religious beliefs. Seculars, or those who are not religious, have the opposite belief pattern – they are liberal, Democrats who support abortion, funding for stem cell research, the legalization of gay marriage while opposing school prayer and the teaching of creationism in public schools. In this paper I seek to

build upon this work by arguing that the effect of religion on political attitudes and behavior cannot be fully explained by the use of a single dimension. Personal religiosity is surely important but it does not capture the totality of religion's impact. What is missing from studies that seek to understand how religion affects political conflict is the role of beliefs regarding the proper role of religion in the political process. This second dimension, labeled secularism, reflects differences in opinions about whether politics should be free of the influence of organized religion. Secularism as it is used in this paper does not focus on the individual's personal religious beliefs but instead reflects differences in individual's beliefs about whether or not organized religious entities should stay out of democratic politics. Individuals who prefer a secular society argue for an exclusion of religion from the political process while non-seculars prefer, or at least accept, that religious organizations have a right to engage in political activity including those that may be highly partisan. Although the second dimension may be related to the first in that deeply religious individuals may be more supportive of a political role for religion than are individuals who are not personally religious, the two dimensions are both conceptually and empirically distinct. Some deeply religious individuals may nevertheless be opposed to religion playing an active role in democratic politics while some individuals who are not religious may not have any problem with religious organizations playing a more active political role.

In this study, I will develop and test an argument that the effect of religion on the culture war is multi-dimensional. Specifically, I will test the hypothesis that in models explaining different political attitudes and behavior, a second dimension reflecting beliefs about the role of religion in politics significantly increases our explanatory power even

after controlling for personal religiosity. In the remainder of the paper I proceed as follows. In the next section, I will more fully explore the literature on personal religiosity and develop the argument that secularism is distinct from religiosity. Then the evidence showing that there are two distinct dimensions, one reflecting personal piety and the other reflecting attitudes about a secular society, will be presented. Following the effect of the different dimensions of religion on issue positions (abortion, gay marriage, school prayer, stem cell funding and the teaching of creationism), party identification, ideological self-placement and vote choice in the 2008 presidential and congressional elections will be examined. Finally, the paper will conclude with a discussion of how conceiving of religion as multi-dimensional affects our understanding of the role of religious differences plays in fueling a culture war in contemporary American politics.

Religion and Political Conflict

Religious conflict in America is not a new development. Since colonial times, battles over religion have periodically occurred.¹ Traditionally, religious conflict has been denominational, pitting members of one religious faith against members of a different faith, for example Protestants against Catholics. Denominational battles have not disappeared. As recently as in 2008 concerns over Mitt Romney's Mormonism affected his bid for the Republican presidential nomination. Given this history, survey researchers during the 1950s and 1960s wishing to examine the impact of religious differences frequently used independent variables measuring denominational differences to explain political variables (Berelson, Lazarsfeld and McPhee 1954; Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes 1960). Researchers interested in the impact of religious

¹ The literature examining the role of religion in American political history is quite voluminous. For a set of recent essays on the subject see the various chapters in Noll and Harlow (2007).

differences on attitudes and behaviors, continue to employ denominational measures in their work (Green 2007; Kellstedt, Green, Smidt and Guth 2007; Layman 2001; Leege, Wald, Krueger and Mueller 2002; Olson 2007; Smidt 2007; Wald and Calhoun –Brown 2007). In particular, those seeking to focus on denominational differences to help explain the role of religion in fueling a culture war have used denominational measures, contrasting the attitudes of those who identify with different religious traditions with those who either declare themselves to be atheists, agnostics or without nominal religious identification (Green 2007; Layman 2001; Leege, Wald, Krueger and Mueller 2002).

Some researchers analyzing the effect of religion on contemporary American politics argue that the traditional denominational battles have been replaced by conflict between the religious and the non-religious, the secular and the non-secular (Layman 2001; Layman and Green 2006; Leege, Wald, Krueger and Mueller 2002; Olson and Green 2006). As Olson and Green (2006) describe it, religious differences within specific religions now have more political significance than do differences among religious traditions. That is not to say that denominational differences have disappeared. But, scholars have come to recognize that devout members of several different religions including conservative Catholics and Evangelicals have come together to fight what they see as the increasing secularization of American society. While some religious traditions impart liberal values to its members (Olson 2007), there is a common assumption that the culture war reflects a battle between conservatives, many of whom are religious, and liberals who shun religion. Even the website of an organization that identifies itself as the Secular Coalition for America (2009) sees itself as the national lobby representing the interests of atheists, humanists, agnostics, freethinkers and other nontheistic Americans.

Given the understanding that the battle over religion taking place in American politics is between those who are religious and those who are not, several studies have utilized indicators of personal religiosity as a key explanatory variable in models of partisanship and vote choice. Since many surveys ask questions about the respondent's religious practices and beliefs including the frequency of church attendance and the frequency of prayer, researchers have been able to examine the effect that religiosity has on political beliefs. Olson and Green (2006) talk about a "religion gap" to denote the differences in attitudes and behavior of those who are frequent church attendees and those who are not. Using both indicators of denominational differences and measures of religious practices and beliefs, researchers have created a variable based on whether the individual claimed an affiliation with some organized religion as well as the individual's assessment of the importance of religion in their life, and variables measuring the frequency of church attendance, prayer and bible reading (Bolce and De Maio 2007; Green 2007; Layman 2001; Layman and Green 2006). Those who indicate that religion is important, attend religious services, read the bible and pray are deemed to be on one side of the culture war while those without religious affiliation, for whom religion is not important and do not attend religious services, pray or read the bible are on the other.

While available evidence clearly indicates that feelings of individual religiosity exert a significant effect on a number of different political attitudes and behavior (Layman and Green 2006; Wald and Calhoun –Brown 2007) couching the conflict over religion solely in terms of personal religiosity touches on only one aspect of what may be important for understanding the current state of religious based polarization. What is frequently missing in analyses of political attitudes and behavior is a measure of an

individual's evaluation of the role of religion in the political process. As an attitudinal variable, secularism focuses on how an individual evaluates the efforts by organized religious leaders and politicians to influence political debate in the name of religious values and symbols. For some, opposition to religious leaders pushing for a specific policy agenda based on religious principles is motivated by a belief in the separation of church and state. For one group, whom we can label the secularists, the Constitution's separation of church and state means that religion should play no role in the political process.² To be sure, individuals may be influenced by their personal religious beliefs but organized religion should stay out of the political process. The clergy should not use their position to influence the beliefs of parishioners, politicians should keep their religious beliefs to themselves and the state should not endorse any religious tradition. Others, identified as anti-secularists, clearly disagree. They see politics as a natural extension of religion and thus have no problem with religious organizations trying to influence political outcomes.

Some researchers in their examination of attitudinal and behavioral differences across religious groups include a category labeled "secular" in their construction of distinct ethno-denominational categories but this is frequently a label assigned to individuals who indicated that they were atheist, agnostic or did not claim a religious identification. As such, this measure does not tap into attitudes about the role of religion in politics. While empirical researchers have examined the impact of personal religiosity, the effect of attitudes regarding the civic role of religion has largely gone unstudied. To be sure, scholars have examined public opinion on church state relations but by and large

² The term separation of church and state does not appear in the Constitution. The First Amendment contains two clauses focused on religion; the establishment clause and the free exercise clause that together are seen as requiring the separation of church and state. For a discussion of these clauses see Jelen (2000).

the focus of this work is to explain such attitudes and as such these researchers have not employed them as independent variables to explain political behavior (Jelen and Wilcox 1995). For example, Wald and Calhoun-Brown (2007) cite a 2001 Pew study showing that large numbers of Americans are opposed to the clergy using their positions to try and influence politics. Similarly, a Pew report issued before the 2008 elections indicated that Americans were quite wary of church involvement in partisan politics (Pew 2008).

While researchers examining the connection of religion and politics are aware that Americans differ in their assessment of the role of religion in politics they have not included measures of secularism in their analysis of political behavior. One exception to this generalization is a study of voting in the 2004 presidential election that did include variables measuring attitudes of civic religion and found that they were significantly related to presidential vote choice (Guth, Kellstedt, Smidt and Green 2006).

The omission of secularism from explanatory models of political behavior is apt to lead to incomplete assessments of how religious differences affect contemporary American political behavior. No doubt, personal religiosity and secularism are likely to be correlated but they measure different aspects of religious beliefs. To be sure, many individuals who are not religious on measures will score high on secularism. After all, an individual who professes no religious beliefs or affiliations is likely to be made uneasy by an attempt to legislate societal morality based on principles from a particular religious tradition. Yet, some deeply religious people may be opposed to religion playing a role in the public square. They may think that it is wrong for any one religion to try and impose itself on individuals who do not share religious beliefs. For example, some Catholics who claim to be personally against abortion oppose government efforts to limit abortions

because they are opposed to legislating in the name of church values. For others, there may be a fear of organized religion exerting its political muscle out of concern that one religion will use its strength to legislate against the teachings and beliefs of another religion. To the extent that there are a sizeable number of people who score high on both religiosity and secularism, only including measures of personal religiosity into the analysis may produce an incomplete understanding of the impact that religion has in fueling a culture war.

Constructing Measures of Religiosity and Secularism

One problem researchers face in trying to estimate the effect that secularism has on political behavior is the lack of appropriate measures of secularism included in the American National Election Study (ANES), which is a frequently used source to study the impact of religious differences on political attitudes (Layman 2001). The ANES survey does not include a single measure of attitudes about the role of religion in the political process. Even when the ANES in the 1990s expanded the battery of questions asked about religious orientations it did not include any item evaluating the role of organized religion in the political process. Thus, scholars utilizing the ANES have little choice but to ignore the effect of secularism in their analysis. In this paper, I make use of a set of questions asked in one of the modules of the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) that allow us to develop a measure of secularism separate from that of personal religiosity and to explore the impact that each has as explanations of policy attitudes, partisanship, ideology and vote choice.

The 2008 CCES involved an internet survey reflecting a national stratified sample of more than 32,000 voting age Americans conducted by Polimetrix, Inc. on behalf of

researchers at 30 colleges and universities

(<http://www.polimetrix.com/news/060908.html>). Each individual in the survey was asked a set of common questions. In addition, each team participating in the CCES purchased a survey of 1000 individuals who in addition to the common questions were asked a battery of specific questions designed by the specific team.³ In this analysis, I make use of one of the modules in which respondents were asked questions about both their personal religious practices and beliefs and their attitudes about the role of religion in politics. In addition, the questionnaire contained several policy questions focusing on prominent cultural issues, measures of partisanship, ideology and vote choice.

A measure of secularism focuses on attitudes reflecting assessments of the role of religion in politics. Because it is concerned with the social aspect of religion it is different from measures of personal religiosity frequently used in studies of religion and politics. As part of CCES, respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their views of the role of religion in politics. Specifically, respondents were asked:

- 1) Whether churches should stay out of politics,
- 2) Whether clergy should discuss political candidates or issues from the pulpit,
- 3) Whether religious groups have gone too far in trying to impose their religious values on the country.

Each of these questions asks respondents to evaluate a particular social function of religion in the political process. The exact wordings of the questions used to construct the indices of secularism for each of the surveys are listed in appendix A.

³ The CCES data is weighted to produce a nationally representative sample of US adults. For a discussion of the 2008 CCES including issues related to sampling and the use of sample weights see Ansolabehere (2009).

Table 1 provides the frequency distribution of the percentage of respondents answering each of the four questions by providing a response indicating a secular position. For all three questions, a majority of respondents in the survey preferred a greater separation of religion and politics. Fifty-four percent preferred that clergy stay out of politics, 63 percent preferred that clergy not discuss candidates or issues from the pulpit and almost 60 percent that that religious groups had gone too far in trying to impose their religious values on the country.

[Table 1 Here]

In addition to asking individuals questions about the interface of religion and politics, questions were asked about the individual's person's religiosity. The battery of questions is similar to what is frequently asked in Pew surveys on religion (The specific questions are also posted in Appendix A). The frequency responses to each of the questions measuring personal religiosity are shown in table 2. Consistent with the responses of other surveys measuring personal religiosity, respondents in the 2008 CCES tended to score high on religiosity. A majority of respondents answered each of the four questions in a way that indicated that they had a personal commitment to religion. More than 70 percent of respondents gave a pro-religion response to three of the four questions asked in the 2008 CCES survey (the exception being church attendance). More than three-fourths claimed a religious identification, more than 70 percent indicated that they turned to prayer at least several times a month and that religion was either a very or somewhat important aspect of their life. Only on the question of the frequency of church attendance did the ranks of the religious drop as a slight majority indicated that at minimum they attended services at least a few times a year.

[Table 2 Here]

As suspected, an examination of the correlations between the measures of religiosity and secularism indicates that the measures are correlated. The strength of relationship between measures of secularism and religiosity varies across the individual questions. The average strength of the correlation between the measures of religiosity and the measures of secularism was .24. While the strength of this correlation indicates overlap it also substantiates the argument that they are different from one another. Being personally religious does not necessarily equate with supporting a political role for organized religion. Looking at those individuals who answered that they attended church at least on a weekly basis, 38 percent indicated that churches should stay out of politics, 52 percent were opposed to the clergy discussing politics from the pulpit, and 41 percent indicated that they thought that religious organizations had pushed too far. These results are similar to those found when looking at individuals who frequently pray or indicate that religion is an important part of their life.

To further test the hypothesis that these variables comprise two distinct dimensions about religion, a principal component analysis with a varimax rotation was estimated. The results of the principal component analysis confirm that attitudes about the role of religion in politics are empirically distinct from that of personal religiosity. The diagnostics from the component analysis indicate that the eight questions produced two distinct factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1.0. The first component had an eigenvalue of 3.34 while the second produced a eigenvalue of 1.38. Combined these two components explained 67 percent of the total variance in the included questions. More importantly, the rotated component loadings presented in table 3 shows that the first

component is dominated by measures of personal religiosity although the question of whether religious organizations have pushed too far is also correlated with this first component although not to the same degree as are the measures of personal religiosity. Examining the component loadings for each of the four indicators of personal religiosity indicates that the loadings for the four items on the first component ranged from 0.74 to 0.91. In contrast, the question of whether religious organizations have pushed too far produced a component loading of .36. Examining the component loadings for the second component shows that this component only reflects questions tapping respondent's assessment about religious activity in the political process. The component loadings for the three measures of secularism range from .53 to almost .85. Given the results of the principal component analysis, the evidence supports the assertion that measures of personal religiosity are different from attitudes about the role of religion in the political process. The results show that there are two and not one religion dimension that may affect political attitudes and behavior. In studies employing only measures of personal religiosity to measure an individual's orientation toward religion and politics, such individuals would be expected to side with the conservatives in any culture war. Using only measures of personal religiosity ignores that a percentage of people who are personally religious are opposed to the insertion of religion into the political process. For this group, religiosity and secularism may pull an individual in opposite directions and the effect of religion on political attitudes and behavior may be more complex than is typically presented.

[Table 3 Here]

In the remainder of this paper, the first component of the principal component analysis is used as a measure of personal religiosity while secularism is measured using the second component from this principle component analysis. The next step is to analyze the effect that each has on political attitudes and behavior. The analysis proceeds by first exploring the effect of these two dimensions of religion on a series of policy positions on moral/cultural issues. After that, the impact of religiosity and secularism on partisan identification, political ideology and vote choice in the 2008 presidential election will be estimated.

Impact of Secularism and Religiosity on Policy Preferences

To examine the effects of secularism and religiosity on policy preferences an ordered logit analysis was estimated using the measures of secularism and religiosity as the primary independent variables. The dependent variables in each of the equations measures respondent's policy position on a set of salient cultural/moral policy questions – abortion, gay marriage, school prayer, teaching creationism and funding for stem cell research. In addition, to the two variables of interest, measures of gender, income, education, age and race were included as control variables. Ordered logit was selected as the estimation technique because in each case the dependent variables were measured as ordinal level variables with three or more categories (Long and Freese 2001). The results of the ordered logit showing the effect of secularism and religiosity are shown in table 4.

[Table 4 Here]

Consistent with previous research showing that personal religiosity exerted a statistically significant effect the results reported in table 4 show that the more religious the person the greater the likelihood of opposing legalized abortion, supporting a gay

marriage amendment to the constitution, favoring school prayer in public schools, supporting the teaching of creationism in public schools and opposing funding for stem cell research.⁴ The column marked Marginal Effect in table 4 indicates the marginal effect that a one standard deviation change in religiosity has on the dependent variable all other variables held constant (Long and Freese 2001).⁵ A value on Marginal Effect of .50 means that a one standard deviation increase in the independent variable increases the value of the dependent variable by .5 standard deviations. The magnitude of the marginal effects of religiosity ranged from a low of -.31 on the question of funding stem cell research to an impact of -.55 on the question of school prayer.

Table 4 also includes the estimated effect of secularism on each of the policy items. In each of the five equations, the coefficient for secularism showed that attitudes about the role of religion in politics exerted a statistically significant effect on policy attitudes even after controlling for personal religiosity. The results strongly support the expectation that secularism is an important independent dimension that increases our understanding of political attitudes in contemporary American politics. The sign of the secularism coefficient indicates that increases in secular beliefs produces more liberal attitudes on cultural/moral policies. Using the Marginal Effect statistic to compare the marginal effects of secularism with that of religiosity indicates that for four of the five policies, the estimated impact of secularism was slightly less than that of religiosity, in one case (attitudes about funding stem cell research) the impact of secularism was stronger.

⁴ The negative sign for the coefficients are simply the result of the way that the variables were coded.

⁵ The Stata code used to estimate Marginal Effect can be obtained at <http://www.indiana.edu/~jslsoc/spost.htm>

To examine the joint effect of religiosity and secularism on policy attitudes, the results from the logit analysis were used to generate the probability of favoring legalized abortion without any restrictions for different combinations of religiosity and secularism. In generating the predicted probabilities the values for the control variables were set to their mean value. The results presented in figure 1 clearly show that altering the values of religiosity affects the probability of supporting unrestricted legalized abortion. Equally as important, however, the results in figure 1 also show that the probability of supporting unrestricted abortion rises with increasing secularism in each of the three conditions of personal religiosity. For example, looking at the line marked high religiosity we can see that the probability of an individual with above average religiosity and high levels of secularism favoring legalized abortion increases to .40. In contrast, the probability that a religious individual whose secularism score was 1.6 standard deviations below the mean would always support legalized abortion was only .03. Thus, even for religious individuals their attitudes about the role of religion in politics affected their policy positions. Although not shown, the results for the other policy questions produce similar results.

[Figure 1 Here]

Impact of Secularism and Religiosity on Partisanship and Ideology

Because previous research found that measures of religiosity played a significant role effecting party identification and political ideology ordered logit models employing measures of party identification and political ideology as dependent variables were estimated. The independent variables were the same as in the prior analysis. Once again

the primary focus is on the impact of religiosity and secularism. The results are reported in table 5.

[Table 5 Here]

The results obtained from the ordered logit model provide support for the findings of prior research showing religiosity to be an important source of partisanship and ideological identification as those who with stronger religious orientations were significantly more likely to be Republican and conservative. As important, however, the research also shows that even after controlling for religiosity, attitudes about the role of religion in politics is significantly related to party identification and political ideology. The negative sign for the secularism coefficient indicates that more secular individuals were less likely to identify themselves either as Republicans or as conservatives. Using the Marginal Effect statistic to compare the estimated impact of a one standard deviation change in both religiosity and secularism on party identification and ideology, the results show that the impact of secularism on partisanship is approximately equal to that of religiosity while religiosity exerts a somewhat greater impact on political ideology. A one standard deviation increase in secularism lessens the likelihood of a Republican identification by .23 standard deviations. In contrast, increasing religiosity by the same magnitude changes the propensity of adopting a Republican identification by .25 standard deviations.

Once again, the results from the logit were used to generate predicted probabilities in this case of indentifying as a Democrat for different combinations of religiosity and secularism. Examining figure 2 shows the dramatic effects that secularism has on party identification. At each level of religiosity, Democratic partisanship rises

across the range of the secularism variable. Even for an individual with above average religiosity, maximum secularism results in a .5 probability of a Democratic identification.

[Figure 2 Here]

Impact of Secularism and Religiosity on Vote Choice

The final analysis looks at the effect that religiosity and secularism had on voting in the 2008 elections. Two different binary logit models were estimated one using presidential vote as the dependent variable the other using the House vote. In addition to the two variables of interest, age, education, income, gender, race and most importantly party identification and ideology were entered as controls. Having found that secularism and religiosity were both related to partisanship and ideology, the inclusion of party identification and ideology as control variables will allow us to determine if secularism and religiosity have a direct effect on vote choice. The results from the logit analysis are presented in table 6.

[Table 6 Here]

Estimating the impact that each of these variables had on presidential and House vote choice in the 2008 election, shows that secularism exerted a significant effect on how people voted but the measure of religiosity was not significantly related to how people voted after controlling for party identification, ideology and several demographic variables. These results do not mean that religiosity was unimportant to how people voted but rather all of the impact of religiosity was indirectly exerted through its impact on party identification and ideology. The results from the model that do not control for party identification and ideology confirm that absent these controls, more religious individuals were significantly more likely to vote for John McCain and a Republican

house candidate. It is important to note that secularism exerted a direct impact on vote choice even after controlling for party identification and ideology. In addition, the magnitude of the estimated impact of secularism nearly tripled without the controls for party and ideology.

Conclusions

Prior research on the role of religion in fueling the culture wars of contemporary American politics showed that both denominational differences as well as indicators of personal religiosity were significant predictors of policy attitudes, partisanship, ideological self placement and vote choice. The results, presented in this study based on an analysis of the 2008 CCES provide additional confirmation of these findings. But, as hypothesized at the outset of this paper, an explanation of the role that religious differences plays in influencing political attitudes and behavior that focuses solely on denominational and religiosity differences is incomplete. Such a focus omits the significant contributions made by attitudes about the role of religion in the political process. Analyses that fail to include a measure of secularism implicitly and erroneously assume that individuals are guided by their personal religiosity and that all deeply religious individuals support conservative policy positions, identify as conservative Republicans and vote Republican in presidential and congressional elections. For some individuals, the impact of deep feelings of religiosity is offset by beliefs that it is improper for religious leaders and organizations to play an active role in trying to influence outcomes in the democratic process. The inclusion of an attitudinal measure of the political role of religion, which we have labeled as secularism, provides a more complete understanding of how religion affects policy attitudes, ideology, partisanship,

and vote choice. Given the results of this study, surveys asking individuals about the religious identifications, beliefs and practices should also include questions asking respondents about what they believe is religion's proper role in the political process.

The findings reported in this study also have implications for estimates of the number of Americans opposed to the Christian Right's attempt to make policy more consistent with conservative, religious principles. To date, estimates of the size of the group often labeled as "seculars" have been based on variables reflecting denominational differences and personal religiosity. Given that there is a subset of respondents who personally have the characteristics of religious individuals but never the less believe that it is wrong for organized religion to get involved in democratic politics, the estimates of the size of the seculars in American society is probably too low. More realistic estimates of the ranks of the secular should include those who are opposed to the entrance of religious organizations in the political process regardless of their personal religiosity.

Table 1: Percentage with Secular Attitudes about the Role of Religion in Politics, 2008 CCES

	Percentage Giving Secular Responses
Churches Should Stay Out Of Politics (secular response is agree)	54.2%
Clergy Discuss Political Candidates/ Issues From The Pulpit (secular response is not discuss)	63.1%
Religious Groups Have Gone Too Far In Trying To Impose Their Religious Values On The Country (secular response is agree)	59.5%

Table 2: Percentage of Responses Scoring High on Personal Religiosity, 2008 CCES

	Percentage Giving Religious Response
Nominal Religious Identification (something other than Atheist, Agnostic, or Nothing)	78.7%
Frequency of Attending Religious Services - (at least a few times a year)	53.7%
Frequency of Prayer - (at least a few times a month)	71.7%
Religion Important Part of Life (Very or somewhat important)	70.0%

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix of a Principal Component Analysis

	Component	
	1	2
Importance of Religion	.904	-.183
Church Attendance	.799	-.249
Frequency of Prayer	.843	-.133
Nominal Religious Identification	-.746	.050
Churches Should Stay Out Of Politics	-.113	.846
Clergy Discuss Political Candidates/ Issues From The Pulpit	.006	-.857
Religious Groups Have Gone too Far	-.351	.531

Principal Component Analysis, Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization

Table 4: Effects of Religiosity and Secularism on Moral Policy Preferences

	Religiosity			Secularism			R ²
	b	se	Marginal Effects	b	se	Marginal Effects	
Abortion	-1.37^{***}	.13	-.55	.93^{***}	.09	.38	.20
Gay Marriage Amendment	-.98^{***}	.14	-.43	.72^{***}	.10	.32	.17
School Prayer	-1.15^{***}	.11	-.50	.49^{***}	.10	.22	.13
Teaching Creationism	-1.36^{***}	.09	-.53	1.01^{***}	.09	.40	.20
Restrict Funding Stem Cell Research	-.67^{***}	.08	-.31	.70^{***}	.09	.34	.08

*** - coefficient significant at .000

Ordered logit was used to estimate each of the equations
Equations include controls for income, gender, education, age, and race.

Dependent variables are scored with the most liberal response equal to the highest value

Table 5: Effects of Religiosity and Secularism on Party Identification and Ideology

	Religiosity			Secularism			R ²
	b	se	Marginal Effect	b	se	Marginal Effect	
Party Identification	.47^{***}	.11	.23	-.50^{***}	.07	-.25	.07
Political Ideology	.86^{***}	.09	.38	-.69^{***}	.08	-.32	.13

*** - coefficient significant at .000

Ordered logit was used to estimate the Party Identification and Ideology equations.

Equations include controls for income, gender, education age and race.

Party Identification scored sd =1, sr =7; ideology strong liberal =1, strong conservative =7

**Table 6: Effects of Religiosity and Secularism on Vote Choice in 2008
Presidential and House Elections**

With Controls for Party Identification and Ideology

	Religiosity			Secularism			R ²
	b	se	Marginal Effect	b	se	Marginal Effect	
Vote Choice – 2008 Presidential Election	-.29	.20	NA	.43**	.16	.17	.63
Vote Choice – 2008 House Election	-.17	.15	NA	.39**	.14	.13	.52

Without Controls for Party Identification and Ideology

	Religiosity			Secularism			R ²
	b	se	Marginal Effect	b	se	Marginal Effect	
Vote Choice – 2008 Presidential Election	-.88***	.12	-.31	.91***	.11	.36	.30
Vote Choice – 2008 House Election	-.76***	.12	-.32	.80***	.10	.39	.21

** - coefficient significant at .01, *** - coefficient significant at .000

binary logit was used to estimate the two Vote Choice equations

Equations include controls for income, gender age, education, and race

Vote Choice Presidential Election - vote for Obama = 1, vote for McCain = 0.

Vote Choice House Election - vote for Democratic Candidate = 1, vote for Republican Candidate = 0.

Figure 1: Probability of Supporting Legalized Abortion Without Restriction

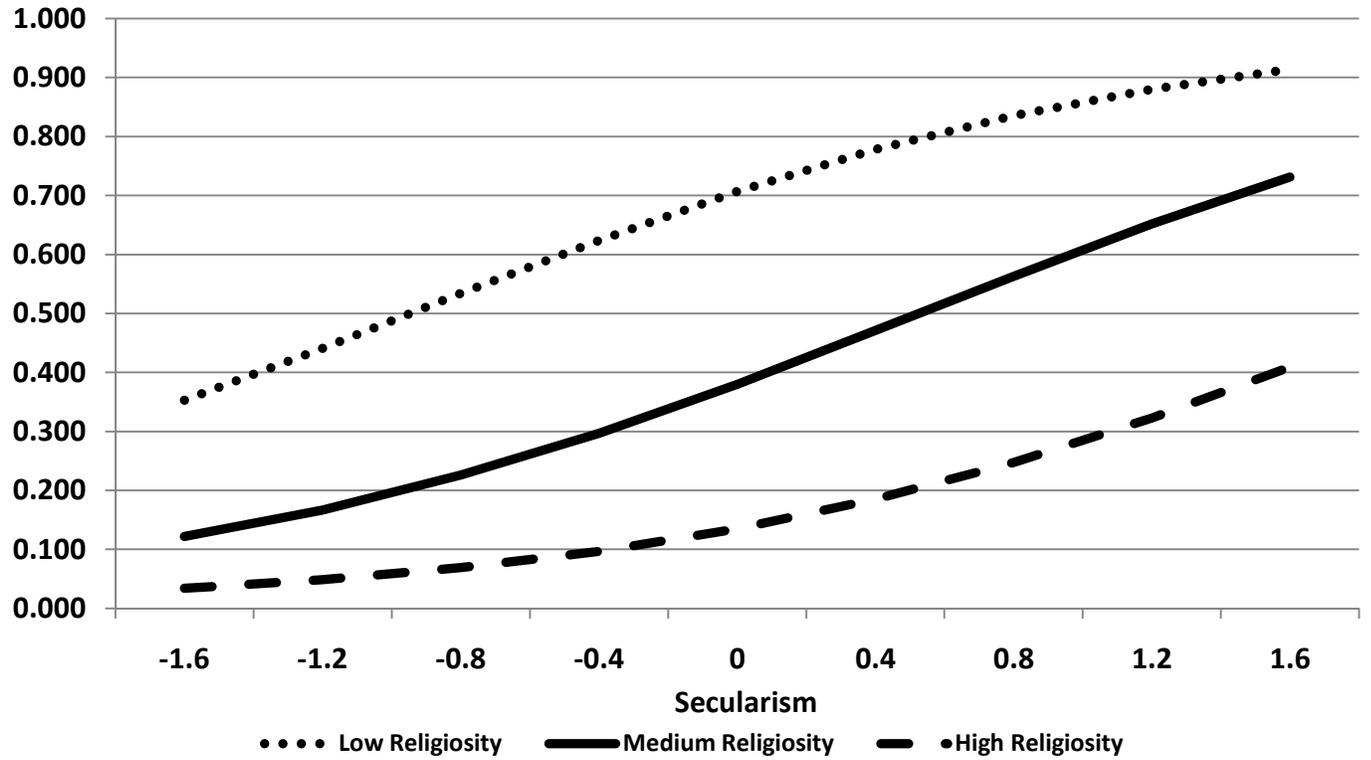
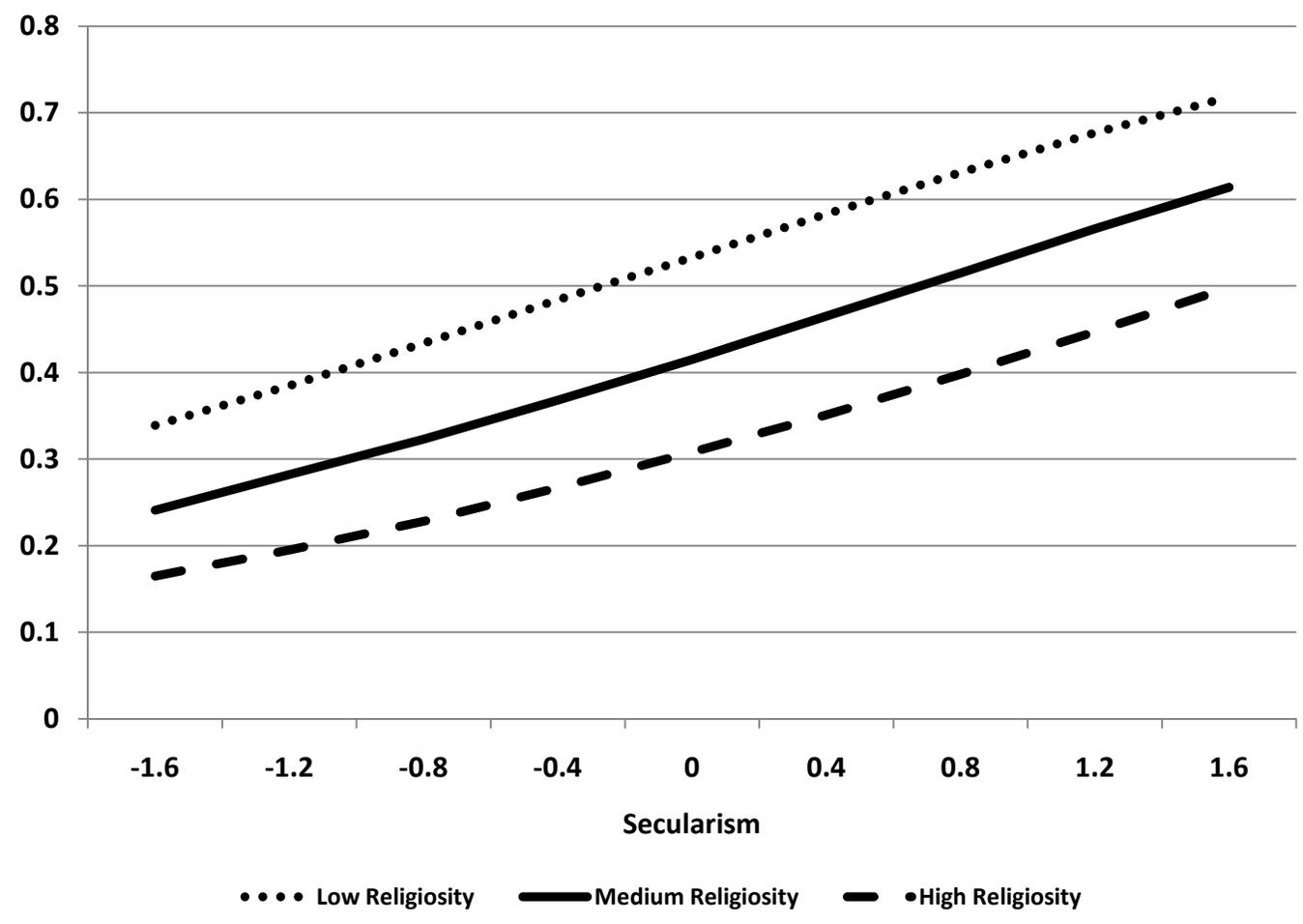


Figure 2: Probability of a Democratic Party Identification



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Appendix A

Questions Used to Construct Index of Secularism

1. In your opinion, should churches and other houses of worship keep out of political matters – or should they express their views on day-to-day social and political questions?
 1. Should keep out
 2. Don't know/refused (**VOL.**)
 3. Should express views
2. Do you think that some religious groups have gone too far in trying to impose their religious values on the country, or don't you think religious groups have gone too far?
 1. Yes, think that some religious groups have gone too far
 2. Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)
 3. No, don't think that religious groups have gone too far
3. Do you think it is ever right for clergy to discuss political candidates or issues from the pulpit?
 1. Yes
 2. Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)
 3. No

Questions Used to Construct Index of Religiosity

1. What is your religious preference — Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Mormon, or an orthodox church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church?
 - 1 Protestant (include Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Pentecostal, Jehovah's Witness, Church of Christ, etc.)
 - 2 Roman Catholic
 - 3 Jewish
 - 4 Mormon (include Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)
 - 5 Orthodox Church (Greek or Russian)
 - 6 Islam/Muslim
 - 7 Other religion (VOL. -- SPECIFY)
 - 8 No religion, not a believer, atheist, agnostic (VOL.)
 - 9 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

2. Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services... more than once a week, once a week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, seldom, or never?
 - 1 More than once a week
 - 2 Once a week
 - 3 Once or twice a month
 - 4 A few times a year
 - 5 Seldom
 - 6 Never

3. How important would you say religion is in your own life – very important, fairly important, not very important, or not at all important? {7-05}

- 1 Very important
- 2 Fairly important
- 3 Not very important
- 4. Not at all important

4. People practice their religion in different ways. Outside of attending religious services, do you pray several times a day, once a day, a few times a week, once a week, a few times a month, seldom, or never?

- 1 Several times a day
- 2 Once a day
- 3 A few times a week
- 4 Once a week
- 5 A few times a month
- 6 Seldom
- 7 Never