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The macro polity and public opinion in religious context

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The Macro Polity and Public Opinion in Religious Context

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To Carrie Ella.

"I never considered a difference of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend."

Thomas Jefferson, in a letter to William Hamilton, April 22, 1800

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ABSTRACT

Does state religious context drive micro- and macro-partisanship, ideology, and public opinion? Little attention in scholarly research is devoted to studying religious context in the American states. Part of the reason context has not been a prominent consideration in the study of religion in American politics is measurement concerns. Leveraging recent advances in statistical modeling and data science techniques, this study creates a new measure of religious affiliation, by state, over the past three decades. Compared to popular alternatives, the new measure can cover a much greater span of time, estimates the size of religious groups previously unaccounted for, and overcomes many sampling problems.

Conflict between evangelical Protestants and religiously unaffiliated populations has been a centerpiece of American politics over the past several decades. Using the new measure of religious affiliation, this study assesses the various ways competition between these two religious groups can influence political attitudes and public opinion, at both individual and aggregate levels of analysis. The evidence suggests religious diversity and secular-religious competition are important contextual elements shaping how Americans view politics, and the environment within which politics occurs.

PUBLIC ABSTRACT

How does religion influence politics in the United States? Religion and politics are intertwined because individual citizens often use their religious background to inform their political decisions. Scholars have studied how which religious group a person belongs to, how often they participate in religious activities, and how the strength of religious beliefs all shape political attitudes and opinions. Most research in this area, however, has been limited to examining religion of the individual, rather than religion of place. An overlooked aspect of the religion-politics link is the impact of the religious environment all around us, or the blending and mixing of religious groups in our communities.

The American religious landscape has changed quite a bit over the past several decades, and politics has changed with it. This study introduces a new way to measure religious affiliation of state populations, and examines its role in shaping how Americans view politics. The religious makeup of the state a person lives in has a direct effect on which party Americans prefer, Americans' leanings toward liberal or conservative ideologies, and on public opinion across a wide variety of issues. Both the overall religious diversity, and conflict between religious-conservative and secular-liberal groups play an important role in how people view politics, growing in importance over the past three decades.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction: Beyond the Culture Wars

Religion is a powerful force in human history, but its effects in American politics are only beginning to be understood. A primary mechanism through which religion influences politics is through context that is created via mixing and blending of different religious groups in different communities and geographical areas. Complex, contested and ever changing, religious diversity in American communities is contributing to changes in public policy, public opinion, ideology and partisanship. Beyond the culture wars, this mixing and blending of different religious groups is notable across the fifty American states over the past three decades. Some states, especially in the South, have large white evangelical Christian populations but the size of religious conservatives have been declining. In contrast, many Western states have large and growing numbers of religiously unaffiliated citizens, or religious 'Nones', and their populations have been rising over time. Many states with large Catholic populations are found in the Midwest and Northeastern states. Not only does the absolute size of religious populations vary across the states, but relative change in group size varies dramatically from state to state and over time.

Despite this variation, religious context has often been ignored as an important component of American politics, subnational politics, policy, and political culture, despite the very definition of culture including the religious components of a society. This study presents new population estimates of religious affiliation for the fifty states over time, used to develop a measure of secular-religious competition. It synthesizes a number of

political science literatures that contribute to our understanding of diversity and state context to provide a new approach to understanding state politics. Using religious diversity the study attempts to fill a gap in the religion and politics research at the intersection of context, behavior, and policy.

While not always homogeneous, religious groups do tend to have well-defined belief systems when it comes to politics. Unitarian Universalists are known to be socially liberal while Southern Baptists are not, for instance. Research characterized by this type of denominational-based group identity, combined with research on religious beliefs and behaviors, dominate much of the religion and politics literature. Differences among religious groups are evident in state politics. The existing literature tends to overlook the population dynamics of religious affiliation, and the mixing and blending of different religious groups within communities and states. What are scholars missing when a sizeable majority of the literature is concerned with religion focused solely on individual religious belonging, belief and behavior?

Members of differing religious groups routinely attempt to influence political processes and outcomes in the American states, just as any other interest group does. Naturally this leads to conflict between groups when their preferences do not align. Two groups in particular, evangelical Protestants and seculars (un-religious), are at the center of such conflicts. Over the past several decades much has been written on the culture wars in American politics, or the ongoing conflict between secular and religious forces in the political arena. What is the best way to understand how tension between evangelical Protestant and religiously unaffiliated populations influences American politics? An argument developed in this research is that the culture wars framework for understanding

how these two groups interact and behave politically needs updating. Secular-religious group conflict and competition is more complex and nuanced than the culture wars explanation provides.

The secular-religious competition approach reveals important geographic variation in the ways religious groups interact to influence politics. States can be grouped into one of three categories based on population estimates of group members: states where evangelical Protestants greatly outnumber religiously unaffiliated; states where religiously unaffiliated greatly outnumber evangelical Protestants; and states where neither group has a significant membership advantage measured as a proportion of the state's population. Based on these categories, many states today are contested, where there is somewhat of a balance between the two groups. This is important because when applied to the states, the culture wars framework expects a reaction from one group when the other is present in higher numbers. High levels of religiously unaffiliated people should spark a reaction from evangelical Protestants. However, the culture wars approach overlooks the possibility that politics is shaped more by areas where the two groups are balanced in terms of membership numbers, and focuses instead of those areas where one group is larger than the other, or those states that are evangelical- or unaffiliated-dominant. The culture wars framework does not capture the important nuance and non-static relationship between religion and American politics. In different areas, and in different time-periods, religious context varies in the effect it has on politics.

The faithful and faithless in America

Thomas Jefferson, one of the founding fathers and a former US president, was acutely aware of how powerful religious beliefs are. Jefferson was also acutely aware of the privileged status Christianity enjoys in the United States. He spent much of his political career trying to determine how to navigate the tricky areas of politics where religion enters the fray. During the late 1790s, amid heated political debates over the future of a nascent republic, Jefferson was famously reluctant to articulate his religious beliefs. As a result, he was often accused of being an atheist. His public image and reputation as an American politician suffered because of his inability to communicate and illustrate a connection with Christianity.

After the turn of the century, Jefferson recruited help from Richard Price and Joseph Priestly, a minister and scientist-clergyman respectively, to gather his thoughts in a way that would articulate his own personal beliefs. Famously, Jefferson compiled a series of extracts from the New Testament and publicly discussed his belief in a Supreme Being creator and sustainer, but did not believe this to be the Christian entity, and rejected the notion of a divine savior Jesus Christ. In correspondence, we can tell Jefferson held Christ in high regard, and admired the moral system and guidelines that can be gleaned from the story of his life, but did not believe Jesus to be God on earth.[1]

We can hear echoes of Jefferson's personal and public struggles with religion today. Jefferson knew the American public was largely religious and would not approve of faithless public leaders. In their national public opinion polls over the past several

[1] Thomas Jefferson's personal religious beliefs remain a subject of intense debate. However, the *Thomas Jefferson Foundation* (http://www.moticello.org) purports the background facts as presented to be true and reliable.

decades Gallup has asked Americans whether they would vote for members of various demographic groups. The least-favored group in these survey results has changed from year to year, but one group has consistently remained at the bottom of the list: atheists. Today, this trend has all but disappeared. In 1958 a mere 18% of Americans were willing to vote for an atheist for president. In 2015, a whopping 58% of Americans indicated willingness to support an atheist candidate. Socialists are now the least-favored group in the most recent surveys. Would Jefferson face the same struggles today?

Jefferson's story is a small, though powerful, anecdote of the ongoing evolution of the nation's view of the irreligious population. As atheism becomes more socially acceptable in American society, citizens have also become less hesitant to out themselves as irreligious to family, friends, and survey interviewers. Over the past twenty years or so, a remarkable trend has emerged. The proportion of the American population identifying as an atheist, agnostic, or otherwise detached from any religious identity is now the second-largest religious identification group in the country, behind only Catholics (Pew 2012, 2015). The rate of growth among the irreligious has been exponential. These changes to the American religious landscape, however, are largely understudied and overlooked.

New framework and new data for the study of religion and American politics

No research to my knowledge has examined the influence of religious diversity, affiliation or relative group strength in American states over time on politics and policy. Researchers routinely include control variables for aggregate state religious affiliation in their statistical models, but there is no systematic treatment of the subject or theoretical

development. Recognizing the limitations of the existing literature, there are two primary goals for this study. First, chapter 2 presents a new framework for understanding contemporary secular-religious competition and conflict, synthesizing prior work by Jonathan Fox's (2015) work on government treatment of religion cross-nationally, Putnam and Campbell's (2010) exploration of religious diversity in American politics, and Rodney Hero's (2000) examination of racial/ethnic diversity in the states. I argue secular-religious competition should replace the culture wars framework as the appropriate approach to explaining religious conflict in the 21st century America.

Second, I introduce a new dataset measuring state religious diversity, or the proportion of state populations affiliating with different religions over the past three decades. This study develops a new measure of religious affiliation for the fifty states over almost three decades using hundreds of nationally-representative surveys, multilevel statistical modeling, and post-stratification to create more accurate population estimates. The measure developed in this study offers the ability to dynamically (over time) account for the proportion of religiously unaffiliated for the first time, while also using substantially better sampling methods with more accuracy.

Part of the reason religious context is understudied is that existing statewide population measures are plagued by three problems: 1) non-random sampling, 2) reliability in terms of the meaning of concepts such as congregation membership, and 3) lack of dynamic time series data that does not require linear interpolation. Existing measures of religious affiliation in the states also make it difficult to measure relative sizes and strengths of religious groups. Additionally, one of the more popular measures, from the *Association of Religion Data Archives* (ARDA), does not provide a way to

account for the percent of the population in communities identifying as atheist, agnostic, or otherwise indicate no religious preference when asked, as they are based on church membership surveys. The problems plaguing existing measures, and a new approach to measure religious context, are discussed further in chapter 3.

Change in religious landscape over time

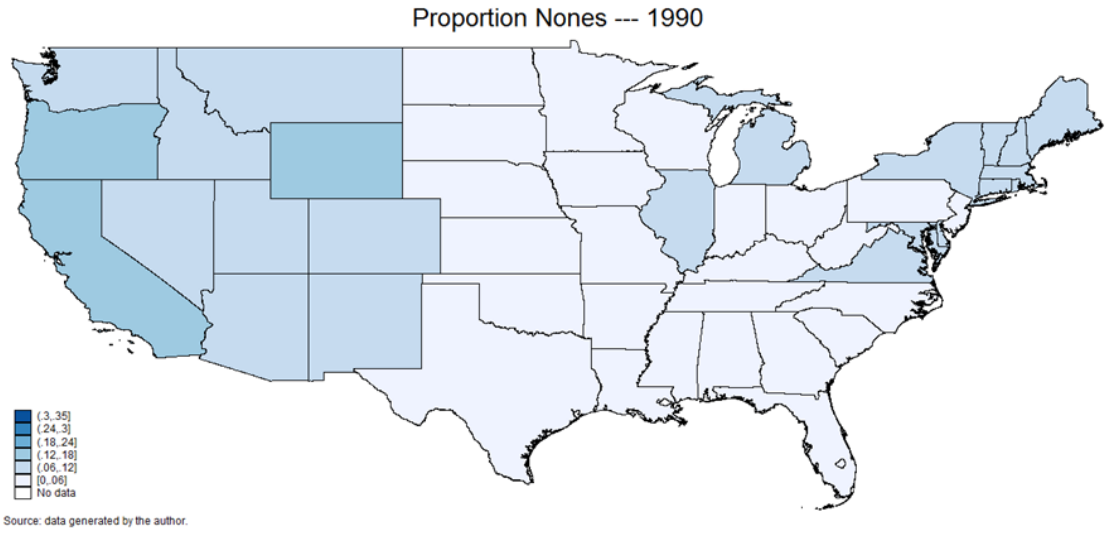
Prior to the new measure, it was very difficult to assess religious diversity or secular-religious competition in the American states over time, at least in an empirically rigorous manner. Data availability limited researchers. Measures of religious affiliation in the states either do not account for non-religious populations, does not provide observations over time, or both. The non-religious population is important as they are politically distinct from any other group, and routinely clash with religious conservatives in politics. Considering only evangelical Protestants and non-religious populations, the American religious landscape has changed drastically over the past several decades. This new measure captures the fluid nature of the American religious landscape without having to cast aside the rich variation in survey off-years that linear interpolation of decennial surveys requires of researchers.

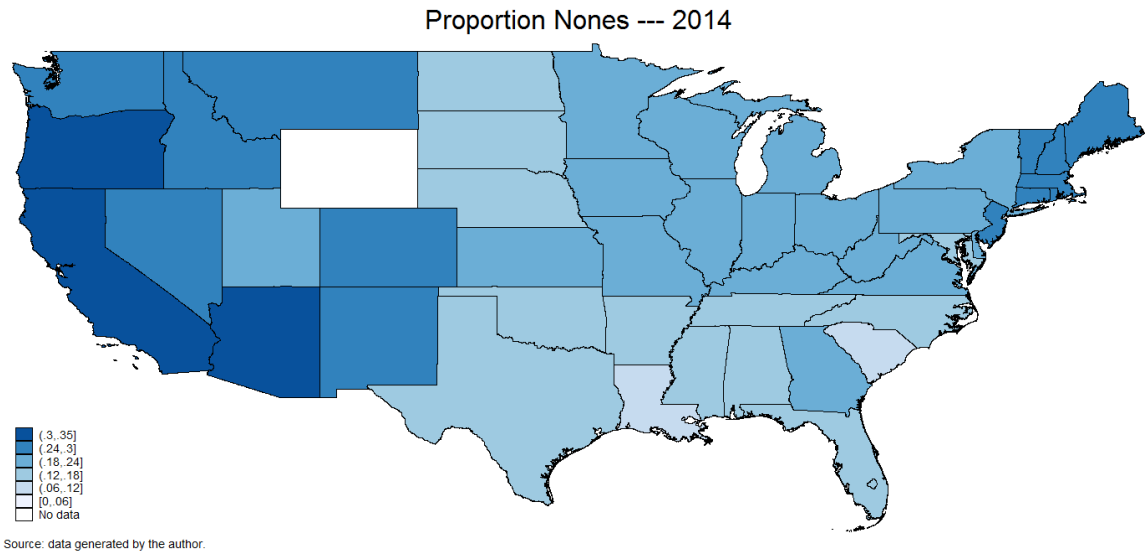
What has religious diversity looked like in the American states over the past few decades? Mapping some of the generated estimates reveals interesting state-by-state variation over time. The maps below suggest that measuring religious diversity accurately over time matters greatly, if religious context is thought to be an important determinant of political outcomes. Throughout the rest of this study, religious 'Nones' refers to those

members of the population identifying as an atheist, agnostic, or otherwise indicates they have no religious preference when asked by survey interviewers.

The new measure presented in chapter 3 estimates the percent of state populations that are religiously unaffiliated, or who respond to questions about their religious identity in such a way. It also estimates the proportion of a state identifying as an evangelical Protestant or as a Catholic. Nationally-representative surveys from a variety of organizations were gathered, and multilevel statistical models were estimated with post-stratification weighting to generate estimates over a thirty-year period in all fifty states. State proportions of religious 'Nones' have increased quite significantly since the early 1990s. This rise of the non-religious population is depicted in Figure 1.1. Nearly all states have experienced an uptick, though the most significant gains appear to be in Western, Northeastern, and many Midwestern states.

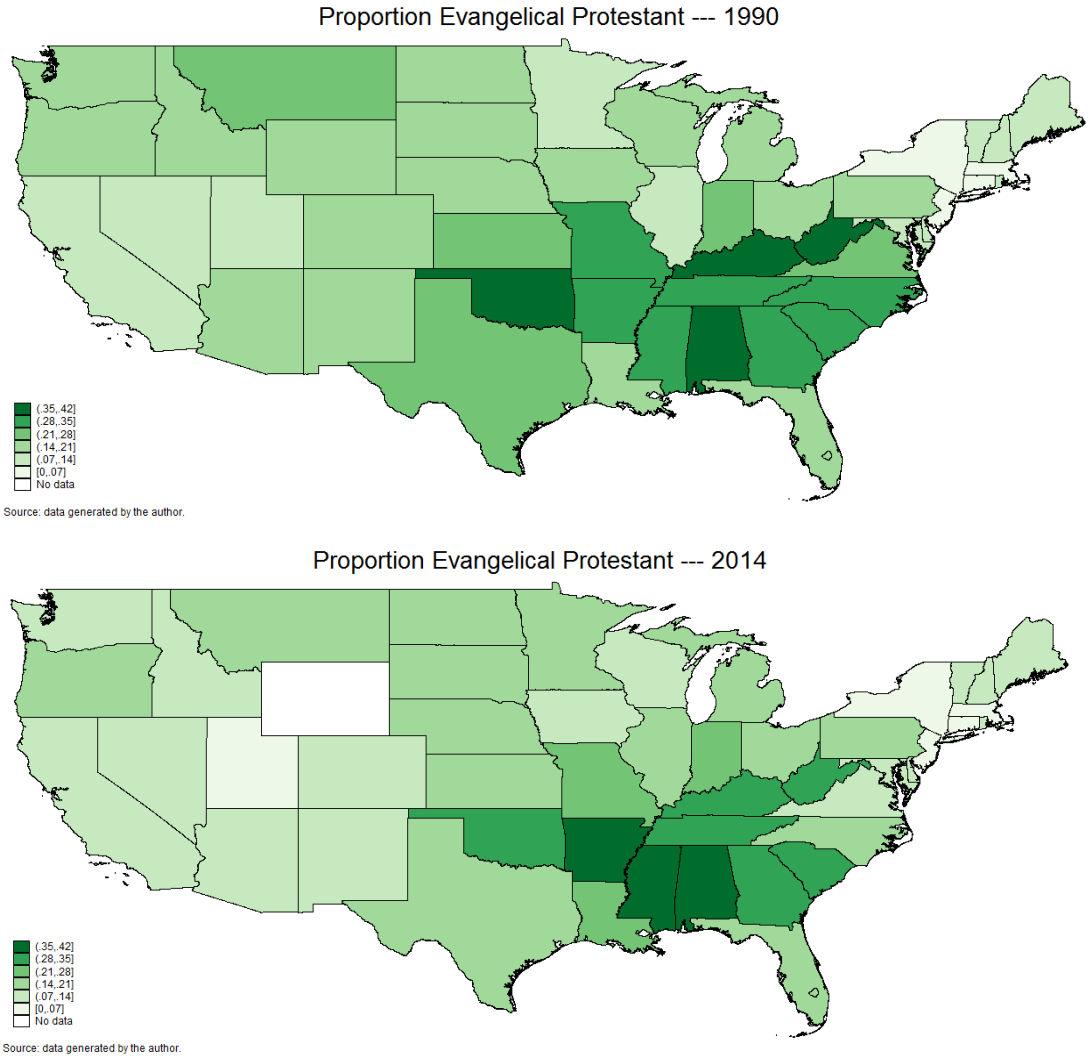
Figure 1.1: Proportion Religious 'Nones' 1990-2014





Population estimates of evangelical Protestants in the states do not appear to have nearly as much variation over time as estimates of religious 'Nones' do. Figure 1.2 depicts this, showing proportions of evangelical Protestants declining in many states while gaining membership numbers in the South. An unanswered question is whether this is a function of mobility and sorting, where evangelical Protestants seek residence in areas of social homophily, or whether declines in Western and some Midwestern states are due to people leaving religion altogether. Several other possibilities exist, as well. Overall, the proportion of state populations identifying as evangelical Protestant are declining in many states outside the South, or at best remaining static, while many Southern states witnessed significant increases. There is a general trend in the downward direction since the late 1980s when it comes to proportions of state populations identifying as evangelical Protestants.

Figure 1.2: Proportion Evangelical Protestant 1990-2014



The importance of evangelical Protestants and the non-religious in American politics

Why does change in the proportion of state populations identifying as a religious 'None' or evangelical Protestant matter? Because conflict between these two groups organizes politics in new ways. While political science focused on other topics, secular-religious competition in the United States changed and evolved. The 1970s and 1980s saw some of the fiercest clashes between liberal secular and conservative religious

ideologies, at all levels and in all branches of government. The 1990s and 2000s witnessed a shift toward explicit religious messaging in campaigns and the election of America's first evangelical Protestant president, George W. Bush, increasing polarization between the political parties and propelling the culture wars. Bush's 2004 re-election campaign cleverly activated issue voters through priming via statewide ballot initiatives in favor of same-sex marriage (Donovan, Tolbert and Smith 2008; Campbell and Monson 2008) and abortion restrictions (Kreitzer 2015). Today domestic and foreign policy is tied to religious messaging by ambitious politicians and pundits seeking to curry favor with certain religious groups. Religious affiliation has become a rallying flag of sorts, organizing politics for many Americans. Political conflict in the United States over the past three decades can be explained in terms of secular-religious competition.

Researchers already know quite a bit about these two groups. The conservative leanings and political intolerance of evangelical Protestants are well documented (Wilcox and Jelen 1990; Kellstedt and Green 1993; Green 1996; Layman 1997), as are patterns in their political participation (Campbell 2004); though both conservatism and participation can be conditioned by issue attitudes and religious particularism (Jelen 1993). States with relatively high levels of evangelical Protestants should be more ideologically conservative and Republican, though this connection may be mediated by the politically salient issues of the day. While Jelen (1993) suggests that the relationship between individual religious identity and political attitudes may not be static he does not directly measure religious context. Building on Jelen's (1993) argument and the descriptive data presented in chapter 3, later chapters show how religious diversity and secular-religious

competition have changed over time and across the states, and why that change is important to consider in any study of American politics.

Evangelical Protestants have a storied past, unique from any other religious group in America. The massive expansion of 'mega-churches' and televangelism during the late 1970s and early 1980s naturally lent itself to manipulation by political elites (Green 1996, ch. 2). Sprawling media empires, sophisticated communication networks, and streamlined fundraising operations combined to create a scenario ripe for exploitation by political entrepreneurs. Eventually, seasoned politicians (e.g. Jesse Helms, R-NC) began working directly with faith leaders (e.g. Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson) to create what would eventually become groups such as the Moral Majority, the Christian Voice, and others that could all be identified under one banner: the new Christian Right. This sizeable, and rather vocal, minority of Americans led much of the late 20th-century opposition to gay rights, pushed the integration of religion in public schools, ran anti-abortion campaigns, and opposed measures in Congress that would study and prevent domestic violence. This was largely done through complex (for the time) mailing and protest campaigns, in the name of preserving traditional social and moral values.

The second half of the secular-religious competition framework is, of course, seculars, or religious 'Nones'. While there is large literature on evangelical Protestants to develop theoretical expectations, such a literature is limited for religious unaffiliated populations. Qualitative approaches have focused on internal dynamics and influence on social life of members (Cimino and Smith 2007, 2011), psychological characteristics of people identifying this way (Hunsberger and Altemeyer 2006; Baker and Robbins 2012); and the historical development of the movement and identity (Hyman 2010; Ledrew

2012). Non-religious Americans tend to be more liberal on social and 'moral' issues, or the domestic political issues that generally do not involve economics or foreign policy (see Hunter 1992, 1994; Thomson 2010). Previous research into group political idiosyncrasies of religious 'Nones' is limited and few studies rely on quantitative empirical data.[2] Lee and Bullivant (2010) suggest the study of this group is a "long-term, collective blind spot in research," (26). Noting that the study of irreligious population and members of the new atheism movement remains embryonic, Kettell (2013) reviews a wide range of political themes salient for this group. Identity politics, issues surrounding diversity, and internal divisions over whether to engage with political strategy are a primary focus among groups representing non-religious citizens.

Scholars have also stressed that tension exists between atheist men and perspectives on gender equality (Stinson et al 2013). Other research shows irreligious Americans tend to have less confidence in American social and political institutions relative to religious Americans (Kasselstrand et al. 2017). While very little of this research speaks directly to political tendencies among the non-religious, the research also tends to be focused on specific identities within the larger umbrella of irreligion. Atheists, agnostics, and people who simply do not identify with any religion are very different in their approach to religion and spirituality, and distinguishing between them could influence inferences.

Religious unaffiliated populations remain relatively understudied in political science despite growing at an incredible rate as a proportion of the American population.

[2] This problem is beginning to correct itself, especially with the recent introduction of the peer-reviewed academic journal *Secularism & Nonreligion* aimed at studying the religiously unaffiliated populations across the world.

As illustrated by the maps above, this group is growing at an exponential rate, or at the very least a growing number of people are willing to identify as a religious 'None' to survey researchers, if not growing in absolute numbers. Pew shows this group has grown from roughly 5% of the population to well over 20% throughout the past fifteen years (Pew 2012, 2015). Whether this is due to absolute growth in membership or lessened stigmas surrounding a lack of a religious affiliation by the rest of the population is still open to debate. Regardless, the growth rate of religious 'Nones' now exceeds the growth rate of Latinos, which has cooled off in recent years after expanding drastically in the first decade of the 21st century (Krogstad 2016).

The rapidly increasing number of religious non-religious Americans has implications that have largely been unexamined, as scholars know much less about this religious grouping than the other major religious identities in American politics. The religious landscape of a state influences a person's vote choice, particularly in scenarios where the landscape is changing and growing numbers of out-group members are present; evangelical Protestants are more likely to vote Republican when larger numbers of the non-religious are present in their communities, for example (Campbell 2006). At least part of their growth can be attributed to the increasing 'religionization' of conservative politics in the Republican Party (Campbell, Layman, and Green 2017). Many Americans, particularly young Americans, are not identifying with any religion, and are moving away from the Republican Party due to the increasing tendency of that party to wed religion and politics. Chapter 4 explores regional patterns, where states with high levels of religiously unaffiliated individuals have higher levels of self-identified Democrats, and lower levels of self-identified Republicans. The overall liberalism among the public

across various issue areas also tends to be higher in areas with low levels of evangelical Protestants, and higher in areas with high levels of religious 'Nones'. Studies have thus far overlooked the importance of religious context; existing research on religion and politics has focused primarily on religion of the person and not the place.

Theoretical contribution

Older approaches to the study of religion and politics largely centered on or grew out of secularization theory, the notion that the world is slowly shedding its ties to religion as human civilization advances and technology spreads. Secularization theory has generally been short on empirical support. In contrast, the secular-religious competition perspective is powerful because it moves the study of religion and politics away from focusing on an inevitable decline of religion toward a study of secularism as a political ideology of separation of religion and state.

Competition in American state policy arenas can be conceptualized in a similar manner building on Fox's (2015) conceptual framework. Fox argues that the focus should be on the ideology of secularism in government. Rather than focusing in specific clashes in politics, or particular policy debates, Fox suggests that the best way to understand how religion and politics is intertwined in a modern world is to focus instead on how widespread the idea of keeping religion out of government policy is in whatever area is of interest. Instead of examining how groups react given different circumstances, scholars should instead examine how widespread is the ideal of a secular government. Each state is an individual battleground between two sides (secular and non-secular) seeking to influence the governmental agenda. Measuring the relative success and failure of each

side in the religious marketplace can be useful in understanding public opinion, political behavior, and policy in the states.

Growth in the idea of separation of religion and state, in contrast to growth in the idea of intertwining religion and politics, is a more appropriate way of describing secular-religious conflict in politics. Even in the United States, a secular democracy quite different than countries in the Middle East, the states vary significantly in the importance and influence of religious groups in politics and public policy. Secular and religious forces do not necessarily play a zero-sum game. Gains for one group do not necessarily mean losses for another, as both groups are operating in a pluralistic environment.

In advanced industrial democracies around the world, secular political ideology has gained traction while cultural defense movements sprout up in reaction. This battle between secular and religious ideology has shaped politics in the United States over the past several decades, from Roe v. Wade (1973) to the Tea Party movement of the past decade. Rather than inevitable decline in the importance of religion as proscribed by secularization theory, religion has enjoyed varying levels of success in its conflict with secular forces. If political power can be approximated by group size and strength of identity, Protestants held a hegemonic position relative to other religious identities for much of American history. As this status was challenged, beginning on a larger scale with counter-cultural movements in the 1960s and 1970s, Christian activist groups sprung to action. Exponential growth in membership and influence of the Christian Right and evangelical Protestants during the 1970s and 1980s has been chronicled elsewhere (see Green et al. 1996, chapter 2 for a good discussion on this historical development).

Landmark studies of state racial/ethnic diversity (Hero 2001) and political culture (Elazar 1973) describe how characteristics of the state itself shapes politics. This study pushes research of religion and politics towards group dynamics and religious context to explain broad patterns in American politics, such as partisanship, ideology, and public opinion. Secular-religious competition is distinct from other demographic factors that define communities. Religious institutions and group membership has significant impacts on social capital and civic society (Putnam 2001). Identifying with a religious group, or attending religious services, provides an additional pathway through which Americans can engage with politics. Akin to measures of state racial/ethnic diversity (Hero 2001), the argument is that religious context plays an important role in both individual-level political behavior and state-level patterns. Religious context may have varying effects on political behavior and state political outcomes in different times and regions. Overall distributions of partisan identification, ideological inclinations, and public opinion broadly, are possibly shaped by religious context, but in different ways given different time periods or areas of the country.

Summary

The primacy of religious context in American politics has been theorized about, but not yet empirically established. This is primarily due to the lack of reliable dynamic measures of state religious populations. This project alleviates problems arising from a dearth of data. The new measure shows significant change in religious context of the states over the past few decades. Not only have we seen dramatic changes in the overall American religious landscape, but researchers have lacked a strong theoretical framework

from which to study it. The purpose of this study is to present a new framework for explaining religious conflict in American politics, to pair it with substantial advances in statistics and data science, and to examine the nature of religious diversity and secular-religious competition in the American states.

This study accomplishes these goals in subsequent chapters. Chapter two spends time digging through what scholars already know about religion and American politics, and presents secular-religious competition as a new approach that could potentially perform better than the culture wars framework in explaining religious group conflict. Much of the literature in this area focuses on individual-level behaviors. Connections between each of the 'three Bs' (belonging, belief and behavior) and particular political behaviors are well documented. Political science has accomplished much in this area, but there is always room for improvement. In later parts of this chapter I explore state-level relationships, though the literature in this area is quite a bit quieter. State-level analyses are limited to connections between denominational adherence and either policy outcomes (such as the extensive morality policy literature) or election results. The two lines of research rarely meet, but occasionally they do. This is generally done using multi-level data, but not necessarily explicit modeling of multi-level processes. The new measures presented in this study are valuable anywhere religion enters an individual-level process, or where state-level processes are potentially correlated with religious context. As such, I identify major holes and gaps in religion and politics research that could be furthered using my measures. These major gaps and holes are where I hope to contribute to the field.

Chapter three presents new ways to measure religious adherence and operationalize religious context in the American states. It discusses popular methods of conceptualizing and operationalizing religious context in the American states. There are problems with each and reasons to be concerned about both validity and reliability. Chapter three then presents an original dataset and measures utilizing multi-level regression with post-stratification weighting (MRP). The MRP method is a viable solution to small state sampling issues and limited temporal coverage of surveys asking adherence questions. MRP has some limitations and future research can improve this measure further. The proposed method is unable to retain fine-grained congregational differences, such as those documented by Pew Research's *Religious Landscape Survey* or Trinity College's *Religious Identification Survey*, though I discuss this as an acceptable trade-off to improve validity and reliability of estimates of major denominational groupings.

Chapter four begins empirical testing of secular-religious competition theory, providing evidence of the influence religious context can have on various political characteristics of both states and individuals. This chapter largely focuses on updating our understanding of the connection between religion and politics. By modeling political phenomena as a function of both direct and indirect religious influences, chapter four provides a better understanding of the complicated ways religion and politics are related. Religious context and identity have powerful effects on American politics, but these effects are not static over time or across different regions of the country. The political influence of religion has grown over time, largely unimportant prior to the watershed presidential election of 2000 and increasing thereafter. In addition, chapter four highlights

how religious context influences political context in different ways in different regions of the country. The South, for instance, experiences a heightened level of religious influence in politics. Western states, on the other hand, tend to be less influenced by religious composition of their populations.

Chapter five introduces the importance of perceptions and psychological processes that can interfere with the mechanisms through which religious context operates. Perceptions of in-group and out-group influence and size play a role in the way religious context and identity interact to inform a person's politics. Perceptions of in-group influence matter much more than perceptions of out-group influence. That is, group members are concerned with the relative level of influence their own group can exercise politically, and are uninterested in the level of influence exercised by out-groups. Evangelical Protestants are concerned with influence the Christian right exercises in the political arena; religious 'Nones' are concerned with influence secular liberals exercise in the political arena. Neither group is concerned about perceptions of how the other group is doing in the religious and political marketplace. These effects hold even while also accounting for perceived levels of influence of out-groups (while controlling for perceived influence of the non-religious among evangelical Protestants, and perceived influence of evangelical Protestants among religious 'Nones').

Chapter six concludes with discussion of secular-religious competition as a counter-argument to the Hunter (1991, 1994) culture wars narrative, arguing instead that the culture wars are occurring primarily among the elite. There are political advantages of upholding the culture wars narrative, for both sides of the debate. Political scientists works in religion and American politics need to prioritize empirically tested theories, and

work to better refine our understanding of conflict between religious groups as a major determinant of state politics. Chapter six concludes with an assessment of future lines of inquiry and what work must still be done in this area.

Samuel Huntington idealistically described political science as a discipline entrusted with the protection of democracy and the responsibility to build a civically-aware populous. I attempt to present a compelling and powerful story based on the empirical evidence presented. There are important implications for political science, specifically for the study of religion and politics, and for those engaged in practical politics from election cycle to election cycle. Chapter two begins by discussing secular-religious competition as an improved approach to understanding the ways religion and politics are intertwined in America.

CHAPTER 2

Religious Diversity and Secular-Religious Competition in the American States

Partisan polarization reached historic levels during the 2016 presidential election between Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Donald Trump. Polarization among elected officials in Congress and in state legislatures is at an all-time high (Theriault 2008; Masket and Shor 2011; Sides and Hopkins 2015; McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal 2016; Poole and Rosenthal 1984). Elite party polarization is mirrored in the mass public (Layman and Carsey 2002a; 2002b) with polarized opinion of major domestic policy. It is fair to trace much of the 2016 political divisions to identity politics stemming from heated rhetoric and expansive distance between policy agendas of the two parties.

Even before the controversial election, animosity between partisans was at an all-time high. Significant numbers of both Democrats and Republicans view the opposing party as a threat to American democracy (Center for the People and Press 2016). American politics is characterized by deep divisions and growing ideological divides. While the causes and consequences of polarization is a growing field of concern, little attention is paid to the role religion might play. Part of the story of polarization in American politics is the role of divisiveness between religious groups.

Demographic groups tend to maintain predictable party loyalties. The young, racial and ethnic minorities, urban residents, and higher-educated voters were all predictably Democratic groups in 2016. The Republican Party coalition included the white working class, lower-educated, rural residents, older Americans, and business professionals. These groups were strong supporters of the candidates from their

respectable parties (Huang et al. 2016); but religion also played a prominent role in the 2016 election. More than 80% of white evangelical Christians voted for Trump in 2016 compared to less than 20% for Clinton. Among those who never attend religious services, 62% voted for Clinton compared to just a third for Trump (Huang et al. 2016). While much attention post-election is spent analyzing support for candidates among different groups, or how institutional design creates contentious politics, much less attention is paid to religious group dynamics.

Religious group conflict has varying levels of intensity. Conflict between Muslim and Hindu groups in India has a particularly bloody history, as does conflict between Protestants and Catholics in Ireland and Europe during the Protestant Reformation. A long period in the history of western civilization was characterized by religious wars against Islam in the name of Christianity. In the United States, religious conflict manifests itself somewhat differently than in other countries and, fortunately, has not yet devolved into outright armed conflict.[3]

Religious group conflict in American public life and politics is ubiquitous: witch trials in Salem, anti-Catholicism amongst Protestant colonial-era European immigrants, Protestant revival movements of the early 19th century rejecting rationalism and Enlightenment ideals, and similar revivals in the late 20th century reacting to American counter-culture of the 1960s and 1970s are all examples from American history. The

[3] See, however, Hunter's (1994) work titled *Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture War*, in which he predicts armed conflict between conservative religious and liberal secular groups in the United States. It should also be noted that news outlets routinely report on violent hate crimes involving motives that could be interpreted as religiously-motivated, in terms of the assailant being motivated by hatred toward a certain religious group. Additionally, reports by hate-group watchdog organizations, such as the Southern Poverty Law Center, suggest an uptick both in reported incidents and in the number of identifiable hate-groups (see Southern Poverty Law Center 2016; 2017).

specific characters and grievances change and fluctuate, but religious group conflict has been in the background of much of American political history.[4]

Today, and over the past several decades, American religious group conflict in the political arena is characterized by clashes between secular liberal and religious conservative forces. A common approach to understanding religious group dynamics in contemporary American politics is the culture wars framework (Hunter 1991; Thomson 2010; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005). Religious conservatives (i.e. evangelical Protestants) promote government policy consistent with Christian values, while secular or non-religious liberals advocate for separation of church and state, such as liberalization of drug, abortion, same-sex marriage, and education policy areas.

While there appears to be consensus as to *what* these groups fight over, there is far less consensus as to whether they fight at all. Some see religious conflict in nearly every area of government, while others argue the culture wars framework overexaggerates otherwise normal political conflict. Some suggest conflict on social wedge issues is a mechanism used by elites to encourage mobilization and participation. Debate over both extent and existence of the culture war is alive and well, though there is a recent trend toward declaring the culture wars over.

In their landmark study, Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope (2005) argue that despite political elites being highly polarized, mass opinions are much more moderate; most Americans hold ideologically-similar beliefs closer to the ideological middle than to either extreme. Rather than deep divisions along social and moral lines, they illustrate how Americans are most concerned with issues of security and national leadership.

[4] For a comprehensive history of religion among Americans, see Ahlstrom (2004).

Extensive public opinion surveys show moderation in opinion on wedge issues, such as drug policy, abortion, and same-sex marriage. They argue that the culture wars are a fabrication of political elites, a tool used for mobilization purposes.

Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope (2005), and other scholars studying religion and politics, rely heavily on individual-level public opinion data. There is reason to believe, however, that religious context and environment may matter as much as or more than individual religious preferences (Campbell 2006). Group dynamics, or how groups interact with and toward each other, are frequently discussed in many of these studies; but scholars interested in measuring the concept have been forced to work with insufficient data. In some of the seminal studies of religion and American politics, empirical measures of group dynamics are either missing or lacking, even though group dynamics are central to culture war theory. We need a way to study religious context in communities.

Beyond an empirical need for new data, religion and American politics has largely been understood through the lens of the culture wars narrative. An important limitation of the culture wars framework is that it presupposes religious conservatives and secular liberals are ideologically incompatible and locked in never-ending conflict. This leaves very little room for nuance and gray areas. Instead of a binary 'yes' or 'no' stance on the existence of the culture wars, we need to re-think how we approach religious group dynamics.

The religion and American politics literature has presented us with a question in a way that forces scholars to 'side' with one line of thinking or another: scholars are either culture war theorists sending dispatches from the front lines (Green 1996; Thomson

2010; Chapman and Ciment 2015), or have proclaimed the culture wars over, generally declaring secular liberals the victor (McConkey 2001; Rieder and Steinlight 2003; Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope 2005). This increasingly popular paradigm, in which scholars choose with whom to side, is detrimental to a deeper and fuller understanding of religion in American politics. Religious diversity is a more appropriate lens through which to view American politics.

Attempts to move away from the culture wars framework have begun to crop up in the political science literature. Putnam and Campbell (2010) take a step in this direction in their seminal study showing how religion can be both a unifying and dividing force in American politics. Like Fiorina, the study draws largely from individual-level survey data, but emphasizes the many idiosyncrasies of religious denomination and belonging. From their perspective, pluralism and diversity in religious preference promotes tolerance and understanding.

In a comparative (cross-national) study of religious conflict Fox (2015) develops the concept of secular-religious group competition, along with an empirical measure to assess it. Fox analyzes government policy toward religion throughout the world. He finds a movement away from what he calls political secularism, or the ideology that separation of church and state is preferable to theology. Governments are becoming more accommodating of religion in their policy, particularly among countries in the Middle East. His work presents a theoretical grounding for the study of religious group conflict, but does not look at how groups react and behave toward each other. As a comparative politics scholar, Fox also does not focus his attention on religious group dynamics in U.S. national or sub-national politics specifically.

My research builds on these important studies to develop a framework of secular-religious group competition and religious diversity in American subnational politics. This framework moves away from the culture wars approach and places emphasis instead on competition, diversity, and the blending and meshing of groups within certain areas. Two primary contributions of this work are a new empirical measure of religious context for the fifty American states, and a new theoretical framework for understanding religion and American politics. The framework developed in this study parallels other theoretical understandings of American politics such as Rodney Hero's (2000) work on racial diversity.

This chapter focuses on the theoretical contribution, or the secular-religious competition framework. The framework synthesizes three major approaches to the study of religion and politics. These three major approaches are (1) studies of religion of the individual; (2) studies of religious group political idiosyncrasies; and (3) religious context in place and space. Later parts of this chapter situate secular-religious competition framework within the major theoretical traditions in the study of American politics.

Key to secular-religious competition is the conceptualization of competition as a political resource, measurable in terms of the membership marketplace of a given American state. Another key component is time; as discussed above, temporal shifts have occurred in American religious group dynamics. This chapter also addresses both issues. Empirical chapters in this study examine how competition between secular and religious forces drives both aggregate-level political outcomes and individual-level political opinions and behavior. But first, I turn to how secular-religious competition framework might be useful in understanding conflict in the modern American political landscape.

The problem in brief: partisan polarization

By any account, the 2016 presidential election was characterized by anti-establishment feelings and preference for outsider candidates over professional politicians that could, in any way, be tied to business-as-usual in Washington, D.C. Support for independent candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in the Democrat Party primaries, and for businessman Donald Trump who never previously held elected office in the Republican Party primaries, illustrate this. Anti-establishment sentiment is also reflected in growing disdain for partisan labels as more and more Americans identify as independents (Pew Research Center 2016). Young Americans appear to be fleeing the parties at an alarming rate (Gallup 2017). Recent research points to the 'religionization' of the Republican Party as a factor in young people becoming less likely to both identify with the Republican Party and to identify as religious (Hout and Fischer 2002; Campbell, Green, and Layman 2017). Religious context is also connected to presidential vote choice among Americans (Campbell 2006). While we have reason to believe religious context influences individual behaviors, does religious context also influence the broader partisan landscape of American politics?

A 2014 nationally-representative sample gathered by the *Cooperative Congressional Election Study* (CCES) illustrates some of the divides along religious lines. Table 2.1 summarizes some of these data, showing clear differences in terms of public opinion across religious groups. Evangelical Protestants are much more likely to oppose abortion than Catholics or religious 'Nones'.[5] They are also more likely to oppose

[5] Religious 'Nones' is a broad category of people who identify as atheist, agnostic, or otherwise indicate no preference when asked about their religious identity.

same-sex marriage and to believe that the Iraq War was not a mistake, relative to the other two reference groups. Evangelical Protestants are more likely to be Republicans than Democrats, religious 'Nones' are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans, while Catholics are somewhat split between camps. Notably, religious 'Nones' are almost half (49%) self-identified independents, hesitant to cast their lot with either party. Few evangelical Protestants are liberals, few religious 'Nones' are conservatives, and most Catholics describe themselves as either moderate or somewhat conservative. To most observers of American politics, the patterns illustrated in Table 2.1 may not be all that surprising.

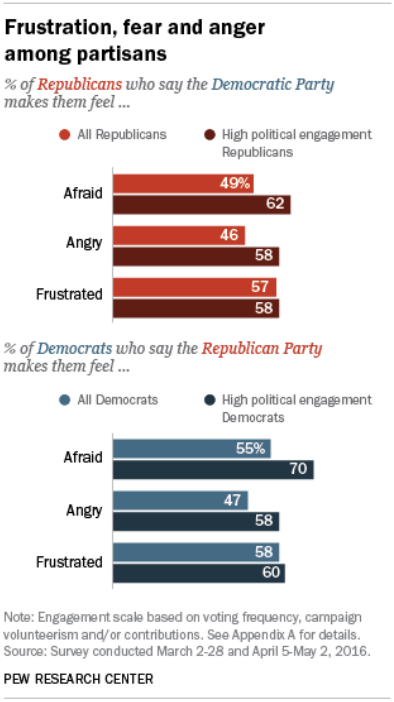
Table 2.1. Differences in Public Opinion Across Religious Groups

		Evangelical Protestants	Catholics	Religious 'Nones'
Abortion	Always permitted	31.6	55.8	75.4
Support for Same Sex Marriage	Support	24.8	59.2	76.1
	Oppose	75.2	40.8	23.9
Iraq War was a Mistake	Mistake	34.2	44.7	59.7
	Not a Mistake	45.2	38.7	22.3
	Not sure	20.7	16.7	18
Party Identification	Democrat	27.2	35.4	37.4
	Republican	39.4	28.8	13.6
	Independent	33.5	35.8	49.0
Ideology	Very Liberal	2.2	3.1	10.5
	Liberal	8.0	14.8	22.2
	Moderate	34.0	42.6	47.4
	Conservative	40.7	33.9	17.1
	Very Conservative	15.1	5.5	2.8

Source: 2014 Cooperative Comparative Election Study, N = 49,806

Divisions surrounding these specific religious groups have been part and parcel of American politics for quite some time. While these differences in opinions by religious identity have been relatively stable over the years, divisiveness across party identity has reached an unusually high level. Americans have rather intense emotions toward members of the opposition party. Figure 2.1 summarizes, by partisanship, feelings about people who identify with the other party. Republicans and Democrats report in high numbers feeling afraid, angry and frustrated. Emotional responses are complex, but the patterns shown here are somewhat disturbing if these types of feelings continue to spread.

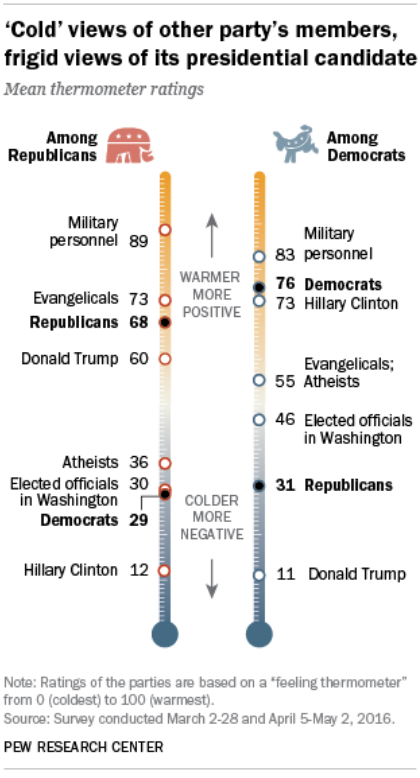
Figure 2.1: Emotional Reactions Among Partisans



To further illustrate this point, Figure 2.2 offers additional evidence from the same Pew Research Center survey. It shows outright frigid views toward opposition party

members, their elected officials, and Washington-insiders in general. Proponents of the culture war framework may find solace in Figure 2.2. Notably, Republicans have a very negative view of atheists and a positive view of evangelical Protestants, while Democrats have lukewarm feelings about both groups. Identifying with a certain party is associated with a tendency to dislike or favor certain religious groups. That Republicans have such negative views of atheists, and such positive views of evangelical Protestants, might be evidence enough for some that the culture war is alive and well. If it were not, why else would we see such a stark difference in partisan attitudes toward religious groups?

Figure 2.2: Various Feeling Thermometers Among Partisans



However, looking at Democrats, they have similar feelings toward both atheists and evangelical Protestants, which does not perfectly fit expectations within the culture war approach. Democrats should tend toward positive feelings about atheists and negative feelings about evangelical Protestants. The culture wars framework does not explain the difference in partisan approaches to the two religious groups. Perhaps even more important than the culture war framework's inability to explain Figure 2.2, is that opponents of the theory might point to it as evidence of the theory's demise. A new framework for understanding religious group conflict in American politics is necessary; questions arising from Figure 2.2 remain unanswered.

Three approaches to studying religion in American politics

Studies of religion and politics can loosely be categorized into three major research approaches. Published work in the field can be categorized by scope of analysis: (1) the religion of individuals, (2) idiosyncratic political characteristics of religious groups, or (2) the study of religious context. Each research tradition has a rich and robust history of contributions, though the latter category focused on geographical context is a much newer approach to the topic. Most academic studies of religion and politics over the past several decades can be sorted into one of these three categories.

Each research tradition (individual, group, and context) utilizes what is colloquially known as the three 'Bs'. While there is variance in the *subject* of scholarly research, operationalization of religion varies as well. Scholars use the three 'Bs' to discuss various pathways people connect with religion: belonging, beliefs and behaviors. 'Belonging' refers to the religious identity a person adopts. A person can belong to the

Catholic church, for example. 'Beliefs' are attitudes and opinions that are central to religious faith and orthodoxy, such as beliefs regarding heaven and hell, angels and demons, or the holy trinity in Christianity. Finally, 'behaviors' are general activities or experiences such as frequency of prayer or religious service attendance. These three concepts are used to measure religion in individuals, religion among groups of people identifying with a certain religion, or the religious characteristics of a geographic area such as a community, city or state. Each of the three major research traditions vary in which component or combination of components are utilized.

Research tradition 1: religion of individuals

Studies at the individual level of analysis have been concerned with correlates and determinants of religion, such as examining effects of religious identity on public opinion, voter turnout or vote choice in elections. Empirical studies in this area rely heavily on survey data to draw inferences. Researchers have made strong connections between religious affiliation, religiosity, and political behaviors/opinions (Baumgartner, Francia, and Morris 2008; Bolce and De Maio 2007, 2008; Campbell and Monson 2008; Driskell, Embry and Lyon 2008; Hill and Matsubayashi 2008; Jelen 1993; Kellstedt and Green 1993; Knoll 2009; Knuckey 2007; Layman 1997; Layman and Carmines 1997; Wilcox and Jelen 1990). Analysis of social networks illustrate how the religious characteristics of individuals' networks and civic behavior relate (Lewis, MacGregor and Putnam 2013; Merino 2013). A sizeable portion of the religion and politics scholarship resides in this category.

While individual-level religiosity measured with survey data is valuable, religion exerts an important contextual force in shaping politics and policy in the United States, and work conducted at this level of analysis commonly overlooks such context. What are scholars missing when a sizeable portion of the literature is focused solely on individual belonging, belief and behavior? With a few exceptions, most research in this category overlooks the mixing and blending of different religious groups within communities and states as an important mediating factor between an individuals' religious preferences and their political behavior.

Fiorina et al.'s (2006) work on mass public opinion is a prime example of an argument requiring assumptions about group dynamics, but which lacks strong empirical consideration of group dynamics. In their work, they operationalize the culture war as a measurably significant division between Americans regarding social wedge issues, such as abortion and same-sex marriage. Finding no measurably significant division between Americans on most social policy issues, Fiorina declares the culture war to be a myth and wedge issues political tools of manipulation used by elites to motivate voters. While important in understanding the overall distribution of public opinion, the empirical analysis cannot be used as justification for discarding popular narratives of social policy driving wedges between Americans in the 2004 presidential election.

Whether the culture war is a myth and wedge issues are tools of political elites is not a topic of interest to this study, however. While the authors can make claims about moderation in public opinion on social and other issues, they are not able to make claims about how groups interact and react to one another, given the evidence provided. In the end, religious context is more about group dynamics and relationships than individual

public opinion results. How groups perceive and interact with each other determines what the religious landscape looks like. This piece of the study of religion's place in American politics is mostly absent from studies at this level of analysis.

Research tradition 2: religious group characteristics

Another approach is to analyze political opinions, attitudes, and behaviors of religious groups. Research in this area focuses on how religious groups vary in their politics, such as the study of Mormon-Americans (Campbell, Green, and Monson 2014), participation habits among Muslim- and Latino-Americans (Jamal 2005; Kelly and Morgan 2008), or studies of political behaviors associated with denominational preferences (Carter 1993; Kellstedt and Green 1993; Jelen 1993; Bruce 1998; Adkins, et al. 2013; Wilcox and Robinson 2010). This category of research is centered on the idiosyncratic political characteristics of religious groups in the United States. Religious identity is often associated with a constellation of political preferences and attitudes. Researchers in this area are concerned with such constellations, among other things.

Pew Research Center, through their large-scale *Religious Landscape Survey*, provide data on respondents from a broad array of denominational preferences which include measures of partisanship, ideology, policy preferences, and other political attitudes. Pew routinely releases reports on their assessment of such political attitudes among members of religious groups, which are then used by scholars, in addition to a variety of other group-level reliable data. News media outlets also cover how certain groups react to political events (Yan 2015), or changes in population patterns of the

American religious landscape (Burke 2015; Johnson 2015). These types of analyses are commonplace in academic and popular accounts of American politics alike.

Generally, attention to religious context is from the perspective of one or another group, and rarely incorporates analyses of how unique combinations of religious groups can play a role. Examining American politics from the perspective of multiple groups is a valuable exercise, allowing a richer understanding of both political nuances of religious groups and how religious diversity and pluralism can affect political life in America. Putnam and Campbell (2010) do just that, offering a comprehensive examination of religious affiliation, beliefs, and behaviors. Religious diversity in America, they argue, provides a mechanism for people to reach outside of their social bubbles and engage with people of various faiths. Most Americans have an "Aunt Sally" or "Good Friend Al" with different religious identification, which makes it very difficult to expect or wish damnation, or some other negative outcome, upon them and other individuals who share their belief system.

In addition, Putnam and Campbell (2010) examine changes in social habits and attitudes. They describe an important mechanism for how religious diversity and pluralism drives politics, particularly when considering questions about contentious politics. The more people interact with and get to know members of other religious identities, the more tolerant and amicable they become toward that identity and people associated with it. Knowing and engaging with an evangelical Protestant, for instance, leads a person to warmer assessments of evangelical Protestants in terms of feeling thermometer measurements over time. Contact with out-group members can change assessments of that out-group, and lead to more tolerant and accepting opinions. As

social relationships and the religious landscape of the United States change over time, so too do group feelings toward each other.

Putnam and Campbell's (2010) work describes a religious landscape in America that is fluid and adaptable to change. A primary take away from their work is that religious pluralism and diversity are critical to the peaceful coexistence of a variety of faiths and beliefs. The blending and mixing of religious groups is key to peaceful continuation of the melting pot experiment in America. Fox (2015) describes how government policy toward religion is driven in large part by the religious landscape of each country. Homogeneous religiously-devout countries tend to have policy that treats religion in a different way than policy in heterogeneous religiously-diverse countries. The United States is no different in this sense, in that the unique distribution of religious identities across the country plays a role in shaping the social and political landscape. The general notion that religious context plays an important, and complex, role is just beginning to be explored in work by Fox (2015) and Putnam and Campbell (2010).

Putnam and Campbell (2010) do much of the heavy lifting in terms of theoretical development. They provide us with an approach to religious diversity that treats it as a complex social phenomenon with the attention it deserves. However, their work does not directly measure or operationalize religious context or diversity in a way that allows us to empirically assess how groups interact and react to one another. Their work does a very good job of describing the state of religious diversity, and presents us with several mechanisms through which we might expect religious diversity to influence politics. But measuring religious context and how it fluctuates over time is not a focus in their work.

They do not analyze how strength of religious 'Nones' relative to strength of evangelical Protestants in a geographic area influences our politics, for instance.

Research tradition 3: religious context

A more recent line of research into religious context begins to address some of the shortcomings in the individual- and group-level approaches described above, at least in terms of speaking to group dynamics. These studies incorporate the multiple components of religious context in explanations of social and political outcomes. A good example of this type of scholarship is the cross-national study of religious context's influence on beliefs about morality (Finke and Adamczyk 2008). Using multi-level modeling techniques, Finke and Adamczyk (2008) show how individual- and country-level religiosity have independent effects on a person's worldview. The importance of religious context in shaping American's political behaviors and attitudes has also been documented (Raymond and Norrander 1990; Jelen 1994; Layman 2001; Wilcox and Norrander 2002).

Similar to the Finke and Adamczyk (2008) research design, but centered instead on American rather than global attitudes, Campbell (2006) incorporates multiple levels of analysis to examine vote choice in the 2004 presidential election. He finds that religious context plays an important role in creating an environment within which we can understand political behaviors among members of different religious groups. Evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' react to greater numbers of the other in their communities. Evangelical Protestants have a higher likelihood of voting for the Republican candidate in areas where greater numbers of religious 'Nones' reside, relative to evangelical Protestants in other areas where there are fewer religious 'Nones'. This

religious threat mechanism is useful in understanding religious group dynamics in American politics.

This research tradition also looks at institutional outcomes beyond politics of the individual. During the 1980s and 1990s there was significant growth in interest surrounding social and morality politics among political scientists. This line of research grew out of holes in policy scholarship, as intense moral conflicts spread and questions arose over "the role that values, identity, and culture had in shaping policy disputes (Tatalovich and Daynes 1988, Tatalovich, Smith, and Bobix 1994, Haider-Markel and Meier 1996)," (Doan 2014). These types of studies emphasized the role of religious context in actual governmental policy, rather than opinion among individuals about governmental policy. Smith (2001) described the unique challenges presented by morality policy studies, such as questions over where morality policy fits into popular policy typology paradigms (such as Lowi's, 1972).

However classified, there remains one fundamental goal of morality politics: legitimating and spreading a set of values via government institutions. In other words, morality politics is the leveraging of government resources to regulate behavior and instigate change using power of law. Policy studies of morality policy issues are thus naturally included in this category of religious context studies. Studies linking religious context and state and global abortion policy are included (Norrander and Wilcox 1999; Minkenberg 2002; Kreitzer 2015; Budde and Heichel 2016). These types of studies stress the importance of religion in place and space as influential in a variety of political outcomes.

Very different from other forms of politics, morality politics exists in a region of public opinion where "values and common sense, rather than expertise, generally drive policymaking," (Doan 2014). Most people feel qualified to make judgments and political evaluations about morality policy, simply because having a certain set of values creates a space for people to engage in debate. In other words, morality politics are "easy issues" for the electorate (Carmines and Stimson 1980; Haider-Markel 2002). Religious identity and opinions in these areas are tightly interconnected as people feel qualified (Hunter 1991; Meier 1994, 1999; Tatalovich and Daynes 1998; Mooney and Lee 1999; Mooney 2000, 2001), thus making the distribution of religious identities important in understanding policy outcomes and public opinion.

Research in American politics has been slow to adopt an approach similar to the work of Campbell (2006) or Finke and Adamczyk (2008), incorporating multiple levels of analysis. Clergy have a history of inviting Americans to use faith over reason in decision-making, leading to debate over the role of religion in politics. Political scientists, however, "despite the historical and modern regularity of these debates… have been slow to consider belief-laden conflicts within the purview of political science research," (Doan 2014). American politics is heavily influenced by such debates, but scholars of American politics have only recently emphasized such conflict. Their work has resulted in theories of culture wars and secularization. Recently, though, scholars from the comparative politics subfield of political science have begun to leverage significant advances in cross-national data collection and new methodologies to measure and study religious context in greater detail.

Fox (2015) argues that globally there are more countries where governments are more accommodating to religion through policy, especially in the Middle East, than there are countries where religion is declining in importance via secular governments. Through cross-sectional time-series analyses of 111 different types of government religion policy in 177 countries from 1990-2008, Fox (2015) makes a resource-based argument: secular and religious forces compete over finite political resources. Government responds to competition with policy, and policy can be either positive, negative, or neutral in its treatment of or attitude toward religion.

Fox (2015) is focused on national-level policy output as it relates to religious groups, such as accommodations toward Muslims or restrictions on public practice of religious tenets among Christians. Older approaches to the study of religion and politics largely centered on or grew out of secularization theory, the notion that the world is slowly shedding its ties to religion as human civilization advances and technology spreads. Fox (2015) suggests that while many lament the death and/or transformation of secularization theory (see, for example, Stark 1999, Achterberg et al. 2009, Bruce 2009, Kaspersen and Lindval 2008), much of the concern over applicability of this older theory is due to the inability of empirical researchers to study how government behavior toward religion changes over time. The culture wars theory can be loosely tied to the secularization theoretical tradition, as a narrative to describe the final gasping breaths of religious groups in the U.S. fighting to remain politically relevant. It is not important whether religion is ‘dead’ or ‘dying’, or even less relevant in politics. What is important is relative levels of competition and success in the political arena.

Group dynamics and competition

As noted above, with some exceptions, rarely are individual and aggregate-level religious variables measured simultaneously. This study addresses this deficiency and pulls together elements from all three major research traditions in the religion and politics field. Exploring individual religiosity, religious group dynamics, and broader religious context simultaneously builds a more expansive understanding of religion's effect on American politics. We know that belonging to an evangelical Protestant sect of Christianity is correlated with conservative opinions on a constellation of policy issue areas, for example. But does this relationship change when examining different regions of the country or different time periods? Is there a multiplicative or enhancement effect present in different group competition circumstances? There is need for a framework that can account for each level of analysis (individual, group, state) while weaving a story that aligns with what we observe in the world around us.

Even within the study of religion and politics, religiosity of communities, spatial variation, and geography are factors that are often overlooked. Among those who accept the importance of religion in shaping politics, focus on religious context in place and space is a somewhat new proposition. If as a discipline we have laid to rest the notion that place matters (e.g. see Huckfeldt 2007), then we must be prepared to accept the fact that characteristics about place also matter.

Ironically, group dynamics form the basis for the first political science study of American politics. In his famous treatise on American democracy and civic society in 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote that America was "a nation of joiners," referring to the tendency of people to join social and political organizations. Relative to other countries,

Americans are much more likely to get involved with social and political issues via organized groups working in that area. A surprising number of Americans volunteer time and money to campaign for political candidates. The U.S. is home to numerous interest groups organized across a broad range of topics. These groups can include groups organized around a certain issue, such as the treatment of animals, or can have a much broader range of concerns, such as a church or veterans group might have. Whether it be a bowling league, the local chapter of the *Veterans of Foreign Wars* (VFW), or a protest movement, Americans love to join the crowd.

The pluralist nature of interests in American politics is a feature, rather than a bug. The *Federalist Papers* discussed factions in depth, and a key piece to solving the problem of tyranny of the majority is a pluralist system of interests. The greater the variety of groups, James Madison argued in *Federalist No. 10*, the less likely a majority will be able to invade the rights of other citizens. American democracy succeeds by encouraging diversity in interests and opinions, as this reduces the probability of a tyrannical faction gaining enough power to dominate political outcomes and policy. This argument is essentially echoed in Putnam and Campbell's (2010) work.

American politics is heavily influenced and shaped by the constellation of interests present and vocal in the political arena at any given point in time. Politics are the conflicts and controversies derives from group activities, and competition among different groups drives the policy process (Truman 1951). Within this framework of a pluralist political system,[6] scholars approach the study of American politics in three major intellectual traditions (Smith 1993, 1997): liberalism emphasizing individualism

[6] For an in-depth discussion of how American pluralism looks in practice, see Dahl (1961). See Mossberger, Tolbert, and McNeal (2008) for a similar discussion in the modern digital era.

and equality of opportunity (Hartz 1955: Lowi 1979; Shain 1994); civic republicanism centered recently on the study of social capital (Huntington 2006; Putnam 2001); and ascriptive hierarchy that largely deals with race, gender, and class inequality (Schattschneider 1960; Hero 2004; Sonbanmatsu 2006; Schlozman, Verba, and Brady 2012). Scholars like Smith (1997) contend these multiple traditions in American politics operate simultaneously, partly due to ongoing group conflict. Theoretical grounding of the study of religious group dynamics, however, has not occurred within a multiple traditions framework.

A key critique of the American politics literature is a lack of multiple traditions or an absence of a synthesis of these three theoretical traditions (Hero 2003). Hero's influential *Faces of Inequality: Social Diversity and American Politics* (2000) is a good example of multiple traditions work. He uses racial and ethnic group conflict and diversity to understand politics, policies and institutions across the fifty American states. His subnational perspective provides comparative leverage, measuring the relative size of racial and ethnic group populations over time to show the merging and blending of traditional white ethnic populations (Irish, Italians, etc.) with newer racial and ethnic groups (blacks, Latinos, Asian Americans).

Hero (2000) shows how state racial and ethnic diversity—measured by demographic group population size —are responsible for certain patterns in political outcomes such as incarceration rates and high school graduation rates. Hero (2000) argues context is critical beyond individual-level effects, socioeconomic distributions, and partisanship. States can be categorized into typologies based on its racial/ethnic diversity: bifurcated, homogenous, and heterogeneous states have distinct types of

politics. He tracked relationships between diversity, institutions, and policy. The political characteristics of states, he argued, are a both a product and determinant of ethno-racial diversity, an important consideration for anyone interested in state-level phenomena. His work also drew from each of the three theoretical foundations to paint a picture of American politics that is grounded in the major intellectual traditions of the discipline.

Part of the reason racial/ethnic context is such a powerful predictor of politics is patterning in geographic concentrations of different groups, driven mostly by historical race relations. The legacy of slavery cut deep into the fabric of American society. One of the more prominent ways is through concentration of African Americans in southern states and urban areas. The African diaspora, the result of a brutal slave trade popular in early parts of American history, is a major topic of research in various fields. The slave trade and resulting migration patterns influence American politics, culture, and society in profound ways (Conniff and Davis, 1994). Immigration of large numbers of people of Latino descent is also having profound effects on American politics, culture, and society. Where immigrants ultimately choose to settle inside our country's borders is, like concentrations of African Americans, not random.

Hero (2000) recognized these geographical patterns and pointed out that much of the work in political science up to that point had overlooked their importance. This study argues important contextual elements of American states--religious context and diversity—are also often ignored. This is partly due to a paucity of data, a topic addressed in more detail in later chapters. Most often, though, religion fails to rise to a level of importance worthy of systematic analyses. Recognizing and accounting for the religious landscape of the U.S. is critical if we are to understand the politics of the U.S, just as it is

critical to recognize and account for the racial/ethnic landscape or socioeconomic divisions.

While not as visible or salient throughout American history, religious group relations have also resulted in similar clustering and grouping of religious identities in certain areas of the country. The pattern of where secular Americans and evangelical Protestants live is not random, as the distribution and diversity of religious groups varies across states, counties and even within local communities. Indeed, religious characteristics help define the unique characteristics of many states, including Utah, Alabama, and Massachusetts, known for their high levels of Mormons, evangelical Protestants, and Catholics, respectively. Within states, rural areas tend toward high concentrations of religious Americans while urban areas tend to be less religious. For an example, Gallup estimated that 32% of the population in Iowa in 2015 was nonreligious. In Cedar Rapids, where the activists described in chapter one meet for coffee and breakfast on Sundays, nearly half of all residents (49%) identify as a religious 'None'; this relatively small metropolitan area more closely resembles a coastal American city such as Los Angeles than it does a typical Midwestern city. What consequences does this have for politics in Iowa?

The storyline of how certain religious groups come to prominence in certain areas is complex and stretches over many years. Rather than focusing on how the religious landscape has come to look the way it does, work set aside for another day, this project instead focuses on consequences. The effects of religious group dominance on American political life is a story that has not yet been told. The topic of religious group political relations in American politics is one that until rather recently had not been studied.

However, the cross-cutting nature of religion, the dynamics between religious groups, the context this all creates, and its impacts in so many areas of human life, make telling this story important.

Beyond questions of how religious context influences political context, there are also interesting patterns in religiosity among individuals that cannot be understood independent of the context they are occurring in. A notable example is the variation in attachment to religion across age groups. Younger Americans are not only turned off by politics and fleeing partisan identification at higher rates than usual, but they are also moving away from religious identification as well, as social stigmas surrounding non-identification dissipate (Campbell, Green, and Layman 2017; Manning 2015). As the population ages and younger people become more prominent members of society, these shifts could have potentially profound effects on social and political fabrics. Assessing how those shifts affect American politics, if at all, is another task of this research.

Membership Marketplaces, Political Resources, and Social Capital

Religious context and diversity is a function of the number of self-identified members belonging to each religious group in a state. The proportion of a state's population belonging to each religious group can tell us something about that state's social and political landscape. Hero (2000) used racial/ethnic diversity scales to create state typologies useful in explaining many political outcomes. Similarly, I use religious diversity scales to create state typologies of religious context. Much like the racial/ethnic composition of a state, the religious context of a state plays an important role in shaping the social and political climate. We can measure religious context using population estimates of membership numbers.

Groups are situated in political arenas that force them to compete with one another over finite resources. Political resources are thought of in a variety of ways. A simple understanding can be borrowed from work by Piven and Cloward (2005), who suggest two perspectives on political resources. In the distributional perspective, political resources are essentially anything that could potentially be used to influence an outcome. In other words, it is power manifest in its varied form, and this power (and thus political resources) is distributed unequally. Resources could thus theoretically be measured and compared. In the interdependent perspective, political resources cannot be defined in a concrete manner, and are essentially anything actors can do within an interaction with another actor. The ability to persuade thus becomes a political resource, as do other difficult-to-measure things such as institutional knowledge and networks. The major difference between the two is the conceptualization of power as an attribute of people, as in distributional perspective, or an attribute of relationships, as in the interdependency perspective.

Groups have their own ideas about political resources and may attach value to different things in different ways. It is probably not the case, due to the organizational nature of religious groups, that they are homogeneous in their understanding of political resources. Whether they view them as measurable attributes of people (or groups), or as abstract attributes of specific relationship dynamics, secular-religious competition theory assumes that religious groups recognize political resources in at least some rudimentary form, and attaches some level of value to them.

An important piece of power for groups, however conceptualized, is membership numbers. Secular and religious groups compete in the political arena over policy,

legislative seats, and other issues, but they also compete over members. Evidence of this can be found on highway billboard signs across the country, or in television ads from interest groups and religious organizations. For most people, much like partisanship, religious identity tends to remain relatively static throughout an individual's life. Religious identities are usually adopted and formed at early stages of life, but can be influenced and modified throughout adulthood. The likelihood of disaffiliation from the Catholic Church among young adults who were originally raised Catholic, for instance, can be influenced by a variety of factors, including length of time enrolled at a Catholic school (Perl and Gray, 2007). Implicitly, this suggests that individual religiosity is somehow a function of context and environment. In other words, shifting religious landscapes can have potentially profound effects on a variety of social, cultural, and political outcomes.

It is not new, of course, to describe American politics as a competitive battleground within which multiple competing factions vie for resources and outcomes (see, for example, Bachrach and Baratz 1962; Dahl 1961; Schattschneider 1960; Fleischmann and Moyer 2009). Competitive factions were at the center of debate during the formation of the republic. It is new to approach the study of religion and American politics from the perspective of competing factions in a membership marketplace, however. This translates into an examination of the religious landscape in each state, by examining population estimates of religious denominations in each state over time. This includes an examination of religious diversity, religious pluralism, and how relative levels of strength of religious groups drive politics. Fields of inquiry concerned with race, ethnicity, gender, and even partisanship have all enjoyed a theoretical renaissance where

these group memberships have been studied as both a social construct and as an important individual identity. Only recently, though, have theories of group threat begun to bleed over into questions about religion and American politics (see for example Campbell 2006; Berkman and Plutzer 2009, 2010).

Putnam (2001) famously described a decline in voluntary group membership and a collapse of social capital. His work has influenced numerous research agendas interested in the complexities of causes and consequences of shifts in social capital, and the concept is useful in describing why religious context is important. Social capital is a function of group identity, so the level and value of social capital for a community moves with the relative strength and size of citizen groups. In absolute terms, when a group gains members it potentially experiences a boost in overall level of social capital. In relative terms, groups potentially experience a boost in overall level of social capital when they experience membership growth at a higher rate than their next closest competitor in the membership market. Putnam (2001) argues that religious group membership is one of the most important forms of social capital in the United States. Secular groups experience a boost in social capital when absolute membership totals increase, and/or when relative rates of growth increase; the same applies to evangelical Protestants.

Change in religious context and diversity of a state is associated with change in both the political landscape of that state, and in behaviors of individuals within those states. When religious context and diversity shifts, so too does the distribution of political resources. Competition over members is a driving force behind much of what associational organizations, such as religious groups, do. There is always a benefit to

greater numbers of members and groups are generally active in their attempt to attract new members. By extension, the religious context of any given area is fluid over time.

Accurate depictions of state religious landscapes allow us to separate each state into a secular-religious competition typology. In empirical chapters to follow, states are grouped into categories based on the level of competition. One grouping of states has a larger proportion of the population that is religiously unaffiliated than the proportion of evangelical Protestants. States with higher-than-average proportions of religious 'Nones' and lower-than-average proportions of evangelical Protestants are considered *None-dominant consensus states*. In contrast, states with a higher-than-average proportion of evangelical Protestants and lower-than-average proportion of unaffiliated are *evangelical-dominant consensus states*. In these states, we would expect policy and politics to be consistent with what members of the dominant group would like to see, making politics much more consensual than in states where one group cannot exercise a clear advantage. Since religious 'Nones' tend to be much more liberal and evangelical Protestants tend to be much more conservative, these states are those where ideological scores fall heavily on one side or the other of the distribution. We might expect, then, greater levels of political conflict in *contested states*, those that fall somewhere near average proportions of religious 'Nones' and evangelical Protestants, an empirically testable hypothesis.

Toward a secular-religious competition approach

Secular-religious competition is more useful than secularization and culture war approaches to religion and American politics. Secular-religious competition theory is powerful because it moves the study of religion and politics away from focusing on an

inevitable decline of religion toward a study of secularism as a political ideology of separation of religion and state. Instead of conceptualizing religious conflict as an either/or proposition, this new approach allows for varying degrees of diversity and pluralism, which more closely reflects reality. The approach is easily adaptable to explaining religious group dynamics and religious context in subnational political environments. Secular-religious competition in the American states is simple to understand, and has a clear causal mechanism. Each state is an individual battleground between two sides (secular and non-secular) seeking to influence government activity. How successful a religious group is in attracting and keeping members is a way to assess how powerful they are. Measuring relative success and failure in the religious membership marketplace can be useful in understanding public opinion, political behavior, and policy in the states.

Secular-religious competition theory shifts focus away from emotional reactions to identities. Previous approaches assume that belonging to a certain religious group means having predictable emotional responses to members of other groups. Sometimes this translates into blind prejudice, such as feelings of animosity toward Muslims in the aftermath of the September 11th terrorist attacks. The culture wars theory is centered around similar assumptions about reactions evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' have toward each other. By focusing attention on competition over membership, this approach removes the need to assume animosity, or to explore specific causal mechanisms linking identity to behavior, problems scholars debating the culture wars theory have been grappling with for some time.

Growth in the idea of separation of religion and state, relative to growth in support of the notion that religion and politics should be intertwined, is the story of religion in American politics. The success of either camp is directly related to success in attracting members. Rather than emphasizing Converse-ian ideological constraints across religious groups, identifying how a certain religious identity correlates with opinion on various issues, or exploring variation in context geographically, secular-religious competition approach incorporates all three into a holistic theory of religion and American politics.

This study focuses specifically on the American states. Even in the United States, a secular democracy quite different from the Middle Eastern countries Fox (2015) found to be growing in accommodational policy toward religion, the states vary significantly in the importance and influence of religious groups in politics and public policy. Both the secularization and culture wars theses assume, inappropriately, that religious groups are locked into zero-sum games where gains for one group necessarily mean losses for another. This presupposes, for example, that a victory in Alabama for evangelical Protestants is necessarily a defeat for religious 'Nones' in Alabama. This is not always the case, however. Secular and religious forces do not necessarily play a zero-sum game, and secular-religious competition theory does not impose this kind of restriction. Gains for one group do not necessarily mean losses for another, as both groups operate in a pluralistic environment. A victory for evangelical Protestants may mean a loss for a different religious group, or it might not even translate into a negative outcome for another group whatsoever.

Secular-religious competition allows us to explore the nature of conflict between secular liberal and conservative religious forces in American politics without taking a

deterministic stance toward the existence or extent of conflict itself. The framework allows a nuanced approach to the subject, a matter of degrees rather than absolutes. Most importantly, it replaces the culture war narrative with one more accurately depicting the reality of American religious group dynamics: religious context plays an important role in politics directly by shaping partisan and ideological distributions, and indirectly by influencing the relationship between religious identity and individual attitudes/behaviors.

Recap

Assessing any type of competition between the secular left and religious right is conceptually equivalent to assessing the culture war. The 'culture war' concept in American politics dates back at least twenty-five years (see Hunter 1991, where the term first appears in scholarly work), though the concept is rarely operationalized or measured empirically. The culture war is a manifestation of group competition in the political arena over finite resources. This project measures the market share of religious 'Nones' versus evangelical Protestants in states over time, and shows how ongoing fluctuations in this competition can have an impact on both political outcomes in the states and individual behaviors and opinions. Doing so offers, for the first time, a robust exploration of not only hypotheses put forward in debates over the culture wars, but also of the role the American religious landscape plays in other areas of American society.

There is a fundamental assumption critical to secular-religious competition theory: the causal mechanism tying together a story about membership market share influencing politics remains at the individual level. People within a state must be impacted in some way by that state's religious context, meaning the effect of religious

context is indirect on aggregate measures of politics operating through individuals. In other words, for religious context to help shape partisanship and/or public opinion in a state, it must also be influencing partisanship and opinion formation among individuals in that state. To establish the utility of a secular-religious competition theoretical framework for understanding religion and American politics, empirical tests must first establish that a relationship exists between religious context and individual-level behaviors, a task undertaken throughout the next several empirical chapters.

This theory has the potential to upset the standard mode of thinking and theorizing about religion and American politics, particularly how politics in the states occurs. Sub-national research has long been missing a theoretically-sound manner of handling religious context. Partly, this is because of both data limitations and a lack of interest in developing a theoretical framework. If research designs call for analysis of sub-national variation, it is more than likely going to be important to account for the religious context of that sub-national unit. Secular-religious competition theory fills this theoretical gap, and allows for researchers to approach questions about the states with confidence that they are appropriately handling religious context.

Both sides of the culture war debate have a little bit of the truth on their side. It is certainly the case that the secular left and religious right are aware of each other, and they generally view each other as political opponents; I do not dispute that. There is a level of friction between these groups that drives many areas of political conflict in domestic American politics. However, the extent to which members of each group recognize the other, and allow behaviors and activities of the opposing group to influence their own attitudes and behaviors, is in question. Instead of a theory that attempts to explain why

members of these two groups do what they do because they react to each other, I propose a somewhat more nuanced understanding of religion and American politics based on relative level of influence.

Measuring secular-religious competition is discussed in more detail in the next chapter, in which I present the results of an expansive data collection and estimation procedure that provided a proper measure of religious context over time, and in a reliable manner for each state. These data are then compared to some of the popular methods of measuring similar concepts. Empirical tests of the secular-competition theory begin in Chapter 4. Operationalizing religious context in a way that corresponds with the theory I seek to test can now proceed: using membership numbers and perceptions of group members.

CHAPTER 3

Measuring State Religious Diversity and Competition Over Time

Assessing impacts of religious diversity and secular-religious competition in American politics requires a measure of religious affiliation at the state level over time. Current practice is to use congregational-based surveys to approximate religious affiliation in the American states (such as the data provided by the Association of Religion Data Archives), or to use large nationally-representative surveys that are disaggregated to the state level. The former are surveys of church leaders about their congregation's membership; the sample is drawn from the *American and Canadian Yearbook of Churches* (ARDA 2017). Because of the elite interviews they are not random sample surveys. The latter are exemplified by Pew's 2007 and 2014 religious landscape surveys; these large sample surveys (roughly 35,000 respondents) provide a wealth of information. But disaggregation from national surveys can lead to distortion from small sample sizes within geographic units and the data is only available for limited time periods requiring interpolation across years. Both methods can introduce bias when studying religious affiliation at the state level.

This chapter presents a new way to measure group religious adherence at the state level. It offers, for the first time, annual state-by-state population estimates of religious adherence stretching back several decades. It overcomes limitations of existing measures by drawing on more than one million respondents from randomly-sampled nationally-representative surveys including respondents from all fifty states (1987-2015). There is no requirement for linear interpolation because the estimates are generated year by year

and state by state. Unlike the ARDA data, the new measure provides state population estimates of the religiously unaffiliated, as well as evangelical Protestants and Catholics. After presenting the measure of interest, this chapter uses the new religious adherence measure to create typologies categorizing and grouping the American states based on secular-religious competition. Religious diversity and group competition are shown to be useful tools in explaining the changing political landscapes in the American states, particularly in terms of macro-partisanship, public mood, and policy adoptions. Finally, secular-religious competition is explored as a potential framework for understanding state politics. The typologies are explored over time and compared to racial-ethnic typologies. Preliminary evidence suggests secular-religious competition is an important driving force of politics in the American states.

A primary empirical goal is to evaluate the secular-religious competition framework for understanding the role of religion in subnational politics. Popular narratives about the culture war between secular liberals and religious conservatives have not directly measured the concept over time. Part of the problem are limitations imposed on researchers by insufficient measurement methods. Before testing hypotheses about the effects of religious conflict in American politics, a topic covered in later sections, this chapter discusses why measuring religious context must be done carefully, how previous measures suffer from various problems, and a solution to those problems utilizing recent advances in computational methods.

Why the American states?

Religious diversity in this project is defined as state denominational affiliation, or the distribution of religious identity among a state's population. Building on Fox's (2015) cross-national work, this study is interested in the role of religion in American politics over the past three decades; the goal is to assess religious diversity in shaping political attitudes and opinions over time. Religion, like race and ethnicity, is a social construct. Race, ethnicity, and religion are all identities with meanings that vary across cultures. Within American society, commonly referred to as a 'melting pot', these identities mean different things in different contexts. The American states provide a useful unit of analysis given the wide diversity in demographics, religious attitudes, politics and policy, and yet they share many common attributes as subnational units with shared power in a federalist structure.

Most public policy affecting the daily lives of Americans occurs at the state level, directly affecting the lives of the nation's 320 million people. While we think of the culture wars occurring across a broad American political landscape, gridlock and polarization in Congress, presidential power politics, and Supreme Court decisions, most policy decisions occur in the states. U.S. federalism is based on shared powers between the fifty states and the federal government. While the 3000+ U.S. counties provide useful variation for analysis and deliver public services, they are less influential in developing policy and are ultimately creatures of the states. Data limitations also make it difficult to obtain large enough samples to create religious affiliation for counties.

The research contributes to a robust and growing subfield of political science centered on the study of subnational American politics. The American states are often

referred to as 'laboratories of democracy' (Morehouse and Jewell 2004), within which political scientists evaluate a variety of hypotheses. Both behavioral and institutional questions can be examined from the perspective of the states, with topics ranging from federalism, public opinion and voter turnout, behavior of state legislatures and governors, public policy diffusion across states, among others.[7] Partisanship, ideology, and public mood are three major areas of focus, and speak to broad patterns in the American political landscape.[8] The state politics subfield is noted for its empirical rigor.

As discussed in the previous chapter, much of the existing research is based on individual religious beliefs and belonging. But religious identity has both individual and geographic components. The role of religion in a person's life shapes, and is shaped by, the religious environment where they live. Both the local community and larger geographic units, such as their state, mediate the relationship between religious identity and behaviors and attitudes (discussed in more detail in chapters 5 and 6). From a theoretical perspective, evaluating the role of religion in American politics must also consider these types of geographic elements.

Any study leveraging the comparative power of the American states must consider religion. There already exists some evidence of the power of religious context in explaining political phenomena at the state level. State religious context helps explain vote choice (Campbell 2006), policy outcomes and diffusion (Camobreco and Barnello 2008; Kreitzer 2015; Kreitzer and Boehmke 2016), and is routinely used as a proxy

[7] For an introduction to each research area, see: federalism (Weissert and Scheller 2008; Schneider, Jacoby, and Lewis 2011; Kelly and Witko 2012); public opinion and voter turnout (Hill and Leighly 1994, 1999; McDonald and Popkin 2001; Lupia 1994; Erikson, Wright and McIver 1987, 1993; Brace et al. 2002; Cohen and Barrilleaux 1993; Norrander 2002; Gray et al. 2004); state legislatures and governors (Brown 2010; Gamm and Kousser 2010; Shor and McCarty 2011; Windett 2011); state policy diffusion (Walker 1969; Gray 1973; Shipan and Volden 2008; Pacheco 2012; Boehmke and Skinner 2012)

[8] See, for example: Berry et al. 1998; Carsey and Harden 2010; Gray et al. 2012; Enns and Koch 2013;

control for state culture of interest group influence (see, for example Boehmke 2005). In the 2004 presidential election morality politics and appeals to religious identity were used to prime voters and influence vote choice (Donovan, Tolbert, and Smith 2008). Despite this literature, little attention has been paid to how religious diversity is measured within the states. Significant advances have been made in operationalization of identification (see, for example Keysar 2014; Chaves and Anderson 2014), but not on gathering large samples over time for robust subnational analysis.

Analyzing the states presents unique challenges, too. By state, religious identity can mean different things. Secular individuals residing in religiously conservative Southern states, for example, behave differently than secular individuals living in secular Western states. Similarly, evangelical Protestants residing in religiously conservative states behave differently than those in secular states. Such differences in behavior may also change over time, as well. While we can hypothesize about various pathways through which time might enter the equation, we know very little about temporal effects. State religious context may well shift over time and the role it plays in individual and institutional behaviors could fluctuate, either independently or as a function of changing compositions. Any measure of state religious context must also have a temporal element.

Finally, use of population data, such as states or countries, allow a theory or framework to be more broadly applied than relying exclusively on individual-level data. Sartori (1970) discussed this problem of research design, prevalent among studies utilizing a comparative approach. Moving up or down the ladder of abstraction, as he called it, naturally forces the researcher to make tradeoffs with applicability of the theory. Measuring concepts at lower levels of abstraction (i.e. individual) allow for greater

internal validity, but limit how far the theory can be stretched in terms of cases it applies to (external validity). Measuring religious context sub-nationally allows us to measure secular-religious competition over time, while also being precise enough to tell a sensible theoretical story of how such context might influence individual behavior and attitudes. The measures presented in this study are based on individual survey responses aggregated to the state level, balancing between internal and external validity.

Limitations of existing measures of state religious diversity

The social sciences regularly use imperfect measures of political and social phenomena. There are limitations with currently available state-level measures of religious affiliation, both in terms of methodology and scope. Currently available measures either overlook temporal dynamics over time, fail to measure religiously unaffiliated populations, or are not based on random sample methodology. There are two primary methods for empirical researchers to gather data on state-level aggregate religious affiliation: congregation-based surveys, and nationally-representative surveys.

An often-cited measure comes from the *Association of Religion Data Archives* (ARDA), who publish their data for public use on their website. The ARDA houses a series of surveys, funded and conducted by various groups over time, but which run concurrent with decennial census work every ten years. These are surveys of church leaders about their congregation's membership; the congregations are drawn from the *American and Canadian Yearbook of Churches.* Depending on the survey-year, a central collection organization will contact each congregation and request self-reported membership numbers. These data are incredibly valuable for studying members of

congregations and learning more about how the religion of certain groups influences various social phenomena. But the sampling used to create this measure is non-random and excludes many different religious groups, most prominently those who are unaffiliated with a church or religion. In addition, researchers must rely on untested linearity assumptions. Other limitations of the ARDA measure include not accounting for a mobile population, social pressures encouraging attendance when conviction is absent, or differences across congregations in whom can be counted as a member.

A second approach to measuring state religious affiliation is to disaggregate nationally-representative surveys by state. This strategy provides a different set of difficulties. This approach relies on availability of national survey data and many polling outlets do not ask questions about religion (though this trend appears to be correcting itself in more recent years). Among the readily available surveys a few stand out in terms of strong sampling, question-wording, and depth about religion. Pew Research has twice conducted a *Religious Landscape Survey* solely devoted to describing and analyzing religion among Americans, in 2007 and 2014. Trinity College fields a similar project on a more regular basis, the *Religious Identification Survey* (ARIS 2013). While extremely valuable resources to scholars, theses surveys are unfortunately unable to provide dynamic/over time estimates of religious affiliation for subnational geographic units, such as the state. Sample sizes in any given state are oftentimes not large enough for confident statistical inferences.

The ARDA, because they survey congregations, are unable to measure the growing population of religiously unaffiliated who do not belong to a congregation. One of the fastest growing groups in America is religious 'Nones', as noted in the *Pew*

Research Religious Landscape Survey from 2007 and 2014. In terms of measurement, this demographic group is one of relative obscurity until more recently. National proportions have more than doubled in this short seven-year period, moving from 11% of the national adult population to 23% (Pew 2014). However, there is currently no acceptable measure of the annual percentage of religiously unaffiliated citizens in each state. Researchers in need of these data must rely on disaggregation and interpolation methods using large nationally-representative surveys such as Pew.

While there are other surveys that both gather data over time on a large enough sample and also ask the questions to properly identify religious denomination, such as the *Cooperative Congressional Election Survey* or Amazon's mTurk, both online surveys raise sampling issues and have above-average response rates among religious 'Nones' and educated whites compared to other survey methods (Wright 2005; Vavreck and Rivers 2008; Berinsky, Huber and Lenz 2012) and do not include random samples by states. The *American National Election Survey* and the *General Social Survey* do not have random samples by state. Large sample U.S. Census data, such as the Current Population Survey or the American Survey, do not include questions about religion.

Americans are also more mobile than ever and religious identity is generally not static throughout a person's lifetime, making measurement every ten years problematic. Because of increased residential mobility, linear interpolation is difficult. The average American will move residences 11.4 times in their lifetime (U.S. Census Bureau 2013). In the year 2012 alone more than 28 million Americans packed up their belongings and found a different place to call home – nearly 11% of the total population age 15 or older.

Mobility among Americans has steadily increased over the years, meaning with every household changing address to another state, the religious landscape has changed.

Religious affiliation can also be thought of as something akin to partisanship: it is learned early through parental socialization and generally persists for a significant portion of a person's life, but is ultimately mutable. People can, and routinely do, change religious identification throughout their lifetimes, but with a frequency similar to party identification (for further discussion on religious conversion, see Gillespie 1979; Rambo 1993); that is, very infrequently.

Researchers thus must choose between the lesser of two evils: linearly interpolate between survey off-years using imperfect congregational data, or disaggregate from large-N surveys and hope the sampling method was appropriate. Neither of these are ideal solutions. A third option leverages the power of aggregation, data science and advanced statistics to generate dynamic estimates of state-level denominational adherence over time to overcome both problems, in addition to providing estimates of missing groups for the first time. The new measure of religious diversity developed here has three primary advantages: 1) It measures religiously unaffiliated, not previously included, 2) It is based on individual self-reported religious affiliation that is less susceptible to distortion and error by religious elites, 3)It is dynamic and estimated annually, and 4) reduces the probability of error by leveraging very large samples and the power of aggregation.

A new measure of religious diversity using multi-level regression and post-stratification (MRP)

Multi-level regression and post-stratification (MRP) has been used in many public opinion studies across the states where there is a dearth of data about an issue of interest and state-level estimates are desirable (Park, Gelman and Bafumi 2004, 2006; Lax and Philips 2009; Pacheco 2011, 2014; Enns and Koch 2012). MRP is a multi-step estimation procedure. First, multilevel models of individual survey data merged with state-level covariates are estimated to create baseline predicted probabilities. Then, predicted probabilities are created for each every possible unique combination of demographic variables that can also be found in U.S. Census Bureau data. Finally, the probabilities are weighted by the known distributions of those combinations of demographic variables to create a statewide estimate.

There are several reasons this approach is an improvement on previous measures. The demographic composition of a state informs the measure while still allowing for other individual effects to occur. The multi-level nature of the model allows the estimates to be a bit more precise than standard logistic regression models with the inclusion of state-level covariates, as long as inclusion of those state-level variables is theoretically sound (Buttice and Highton 2013). The model also allows state effects to vary; using MRP, we can account for the possibility of a college-educated white male being more likely to identify as a religious 'None' in the state of Oregon than they are in the state of Alabama, for instance.

Before any modeling can occur, data must be collected. The Roper Center's IPoll database was used to obtain 542 nationally-representative surveys conducted between

1987 and 2015.[9] The master dataset contained over 1 million respondents after eliminating cases for missing data on the demographic variables (age, education, race/ethnicity and gender). An average 5.6 surveys were used for each year in the time series dataset. Each year's worth of data was isolated. Using these data, multi-level mixed-effects (i.e. hierarchical) logistic regression models were estimates to predict the probability of identifying as an evangelical Protestant, unaffiliated and Catholic for each year covered. This translates to three mixed-effects multi-level models for each year. Fixed effects variables included race/ethnicity, sex, education, age, and variables specific to the respondent's state: unemployment rate, % Black, and a region dummy variable. The state identifier was treated as a random-effect.

This method treats the probability of a respondent falling into each religious identity category as the inverse logit of the additive effects for all variables once each mixed-effects multi-level model is estimated.[10] Once a model was generated for each religious identity, predicted probabilities were then calculated for each respondent in this way. Using these results, an average predicted probability by person-type was calculated for each unique combination of demographic variables (race/ethnicity, gender, education, age). Given the possible number of values in each of the demographic variables, this amounts to 112 unique demographic combinations. These person-type average probabilities were then weighted by the known proportion of the state population falling into each unique person-type demographic combination.

[9] Polling organizations include ABC, Washington Post, Associated Press (and collaborators), Gallup, NBC, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and Pew Research.

[10] Drawing from the example set forth by Lax and Philips (2007), the model is expressed formally as: $\Pr(y_i = 1) = logit^{-1}(\beta^0 + \alpha_{r[i]}^{race.gend} + \alpha_{a[i]}^{age} + \alpha_{e[i]}^{educ} + \alpha_{s[i]}^{state})$; where state-level effects are modeled: $\alpha_s^{state} \sim N(\alpha_{r[s]}^{region} + \beta_{m[s]}^{medinc} + \beta_{p[s]}^{pctblk}, \delta_{state}^2)$

The dataset was then collapsed into mean values for each denomination within each state, utilizing the same frequency weight corresponding to the known proportion of each unique category, drawn from U.S. Census Bureau estimates.[11] The modeled probabilities are an aggregate of the separate and independent probabilities of each respondent identifying as a religious 'None', evangelical Protestant, or Catholic. Sample tables of results from fitting these models are printed in the appendix.

The resulting dataset is thus estimated proportions of self-identified members of various religious groups in each state, annually: state population proportion estimates of people identifying either as (1) an atheist, agnostic, or otherwise have no preference when asked about their religious preferences (religious 'Nones'), (2) a white evangelical/'born-again' Protestant, or (3) a Catholic. Because African Americans and Latinos frequently identify as evangelical or "born again" care was used to create measures of white evangelical Protestants that are doctrinally and politically conservative, as is regularly done in Pew surveys.[12]

Results: religious diversity in the states over time

The American religious landscape changed drastically over the past few decades. State religious affiliation fluctuates significantly over time, across states, and within groups. Table 3.1 presents example estimates for each of the three groups in each state

[11] Decennial census data was used prior to 2000, and American Community Survey data were used for state-years after 2000.

[12] A cross-tabulation of ideology and vote choice by racial identity among evangelical Protestants is printed in the appendix. Secular-religious competition speaks specifically to the conflict occurring between white evangelical Protestants and secular liberals. While not part of mainline Protestantism in the United States, as it is commonly understood, members of historically black churches and Latino/a evangelical Protestants are not included in this measure.

for the years 1990, 2002, and 2013. The population proportion who do not identify with any religious group doubled in California and tripled in both New York and Texas over the 23-year period between 1990 and 2013, while the proportion identifying as evangelical Protestant dropped slightly. The Catholic proportion of California and Texas also shrunk slightly, though remained relatively unchanged in New York across that same time.

Fluctuation in religious diversity is not limited to large population states, either. The proportion of evangelical Protestants in Delaware, for instance, grew by 57% between 1990 and 2002 while the proportion of 'Nones' decreased slightly by 8%. Between 2002 and 2013, however, the proportion of evangelical Protestants in Delaware shrunk by 5% while the proportion of 'Nones' saw exponential growth, more than doubling over that period. The trend is somewhat bleak for religious groups, as Americans are becoming less and less likely to identify as a member of a religious organization over time.

Table 3.1: State Religious Identity Estimates for 1990, 2002, and 2013

	Religious 'Nones'			Evangelical Protestants			Catholics		
	1990	*2002*	*2013*	*1990*	*2002*	*2013*	*1990*	*2002*	*2013*
AL	4.1%	4.8%	11.1%	35.3%	44.0%	33.6%	4.7%	8.2%	6.1%
AR	4.6%	6.7%	14.0%	30.3%	35.7%	32.0%	9.1%	8.9%	8.1%
AZ	10.4%	16.1%	24.9%	14.5%	13.3%	11.5%	24.8%	25.5%	20.5%
CA	12.9%	17.3%	28.6%	10.8%	11.8%	7.8%	24.7%	24.2%	19.0%
CO	10.4%	16.0%	27.2%	17.0%	13.8%	12.2%	17.1%	23.8%	19.5%
CT	6.8%	10.1%	19.1%	6.3%	4.7%	4.5%	43.6%	39.5%	36.5%
DE	6.5%	5.4%	19.7%	7.0%	13.8%	12.0%	25.6%	26.3%	28.9%
FL	5.6%	7.5%	19.5%	19.1%	19.6%	13.5%	22.3%	23.1%	22.1%
GA	4.3%	5.0%	11.6%	28.7%	36.2%	23.8%	5.1%	11.9%	15.5%
IA	5.4%	7.9%	20.8%	19.2%	22.2%	17.7%	24.3%	26.8%	22.9%
ID	10.5%	15.2%	25.4%	17.1%	12.8%	10.5%	16.8%	14.6%	11.2%
IL	6.5%	7.6%	15.8%	13.6%	17.2%	11.7%	30.0%	34.1%	32.1%
IN	5.7%	8.9%	16.1%	23.2%	20.9%	22.7%	16.9%	28.1%	14.0%
KS	5.4%	8.2%	18.1%	22.9%	29.6%	22.2%	18.5%	19.2%	13.8%
KY	4.7%	8.6%	14.4%	36.0%	34.7%	26.6%	11.4%	13.3%	9.2%
LA	3.7%	4.3%	8.6%	14.4%	24.5%	19.7%	32.1%	31.8%	36.4%
MA	7.2%	12.5%	24.8%	5.9%	5.2%	2.8%	49.5%	42.4%	38.2%
MD	6.2%	7.3%	22.5%	8.6%	10.0%	9.7%	23.7%	29.4%	23.6%
ME	6.9%	11.5%	23.5%	10.9%	10.3%	12.6%	22.6%	24.3%	23.2%
MI	6.9%	7.6%	17.2%	18.5%	21.2%	14.0%	23.6%	26.2%	26.0%
MN	5.1%	8.9%	18.4%	12.5%	19.0%	16.4%	27.9%	26.3%	24.0%
MO	5.7%	7.2%	15.5%	28.8%	24.6%	20.5%	18.1%	22.7%	21.1%
MS	4.5%	4.7%	11.5%	34.3%	44.1%	31.4%	4.2%	11.6%	13.8%
MT	10.6%	17.9%	24.4%	23.3%	7.5%	12.3%	22.6%	16.1%	14.7%
NC	4.4%	6.4%	12.7%	28.2%	35.2%	28.0%	7.3%	10.1%	10.0%
ND	5.8%	10.2%	21.0%	18.6%	12.6%	19.2%	18.2%	37.0%	13.2%
NE	5.6%	8.0%	20.8%	18.9%	24.2%	8.5%	19.0%	26.2%	33.5%
NH	7.3%	11.6%	23.1%	7.7%	8.1%	4.7%	35.7%	26.8%	30.2%
NJ	5.6%	10.6%	17.3%	5.7%	5.5%	3.7%	41.2%	43.7%	40.5%
NM	10.4%	16.7%	27.6%	15.1%	14.5%	8.2%	26.5%	21.5%	17.0%
NV	10.5%	15.9%	24.5%	11.5%	11.9%	9.6%	25.4%	16.5%	19.0%
NY	6.9%	10.5%	20.5%	5.1%	7.1%	4.0%	38.8%	42.2%	38.6%
OH	5.9%	7.7%	16.8%	15.9%	21.3%	16.8%	25.3%	28.6%	19.7%
OK	5.0%	8.2%	15.3%	41.6%	38.6%	30.2%	8.0%	8.1%	8.3%
OR	12.2%	19.7%	32.4%	18.1%	16.3%	11.6%	15.7%	12.4%	13.1%
PA	5.8%	9.5%	16.7%	16.9%	16.5%	13.3%	29.1%	25.1%	31.3%
RI	7.9%	11.7%	27.1%	8.4%	7.8%	4.0%	38.4%	42.9%	41.8%
SC	3.5%	5.7%	12.8%	31.7%	35.3%	27.6%	5.6%	11.2%	8.4%
SD	5.7%	9.3%	15.7%	15.7%	19.1%	18.0%	30.5%	25.0%	20.9%
TN	4.7%	7.0%	13.7%	34.6%	44.9%	31.9%	6.3%	7.1%	9.1%
TX	5.3%	8.2%	14.8%	24.8%	26.4%	21.3%	21.0%	18.1%	15.7%
UT	11.6%	16.6%	21.6%	7.4%	7.3%	4.9%	11.5%	20.1%	7.8%
VA	6.7%	7.4%	16.7%	21.9%	24.9%	19.4%	12.6%	18.1%	17.0%

Table 3.1 -- continued

VT	7.6%	11.6%	18.6%	8.6%	7.8%	5.8%	27.3%	26.7%	18.2%
WA	10.8%	18.4%	31.8%	18.5%	13.6%	11.1%	15.2%	20.5%	16.1%
WI	6.0%	8.6%	20.4%	17.0%	14.9%	11.5%	30.2%	33.9%	24.7%
WV	5.4%	9.5%	17.0%	38.1%	38.4%	32.0%	10.1%	8.5%	4.8%
WY	12.8%	14.9%	25.7%	14.3%	17.6%	7.5%	30.5%	16.7%	15.8%

Note: AK, HI excluded for missing data. – further data collection to be conducted

Comparing estimates to popular measures

A major motivation of this work is to improve on previous measures, so how different is the new measure from some of the major methods identified in the earlier part of this chapter? Tables printed in the appendix compare the new measure to the ARDA State Congregation Membership Dataset (2010), Pew's *Religious Landscape Survey* (2014), and simple disaggregation using the CCES (2014). An important takeaway from these comparisons is that each method has both strengths and weaknesses. Pew (2014) and the new measure of religious 'Nones' (3.83 average difference) and Catholics (4.07 average difference) both track very well with each other. The Pew survey, however, appears to over-estimate the proportion of evangelical Protestants in most states (8.87 average difference). The Pew estimates for evangelical Protestants is higher than all other measures, the ARDA and CCES measures as well.

The ARDA data, on the other hand, is similar to the new measure of evangelical Protestants (3.39 average difference), and in many states, tend to actually under-estimate. The ARDA estimates higher proportions for Catholics than the new measure (5.64 average difference). CCES estimates for religious 'Nones' tend to be much higher than the new measure (this may be due to the internet platform used by this survey, as mentioned above), while CCES estimates for evangelical Protestants and Catholics are

very close to the new measure (4.3 and 3.9 average differences, respectively). There are some patterns across all three comparison measures, as well as some unique tendencies for each. Existing measures tend to over-estimate the size of white evangelical Protestants in the states. Pew and the new measure are very similar in estimated proportions of religious 'Nones', whiles the CCES tends to over-estimate this group. The ARDA is not able to provide a reliable measure.

Table 3.2 is a summary of Pearson's R correlation calculations between each of the measures discussed above. The new measure correlates well with each of the three comparison measures. These correlations show that these measures are all tapping into the same concept, but doing so with varying degrees of accuracy. Relying on only these correlations, the new measure seems to perform best when measuring religious 'Nones' and evangelical Protestants, relative to measuring Catholics. The correlation between the CCES and new measures of religious 'Nones', for instance, is .686. The correlation between the CCES and Pew measures, however, is only .558. The correlation between Pew and new measures is .678.

Table 3.2: Correlations Across Measures

	Evangelical Protestants		
	ARDA	Pew	CCES
Pew	.898		
CCES	.827	.866	
New	.907	.892	.862

	Catholics		
	ARDA	Pew	CCES
Pew	.918		
CCES	.883	.862	
New	.865	.841	.876

	Religious 'Nones'	
	Pew	CCES
CCES	.558	
New	.678	.686

Note: All correlations significant at $p < .05$ confidence level.

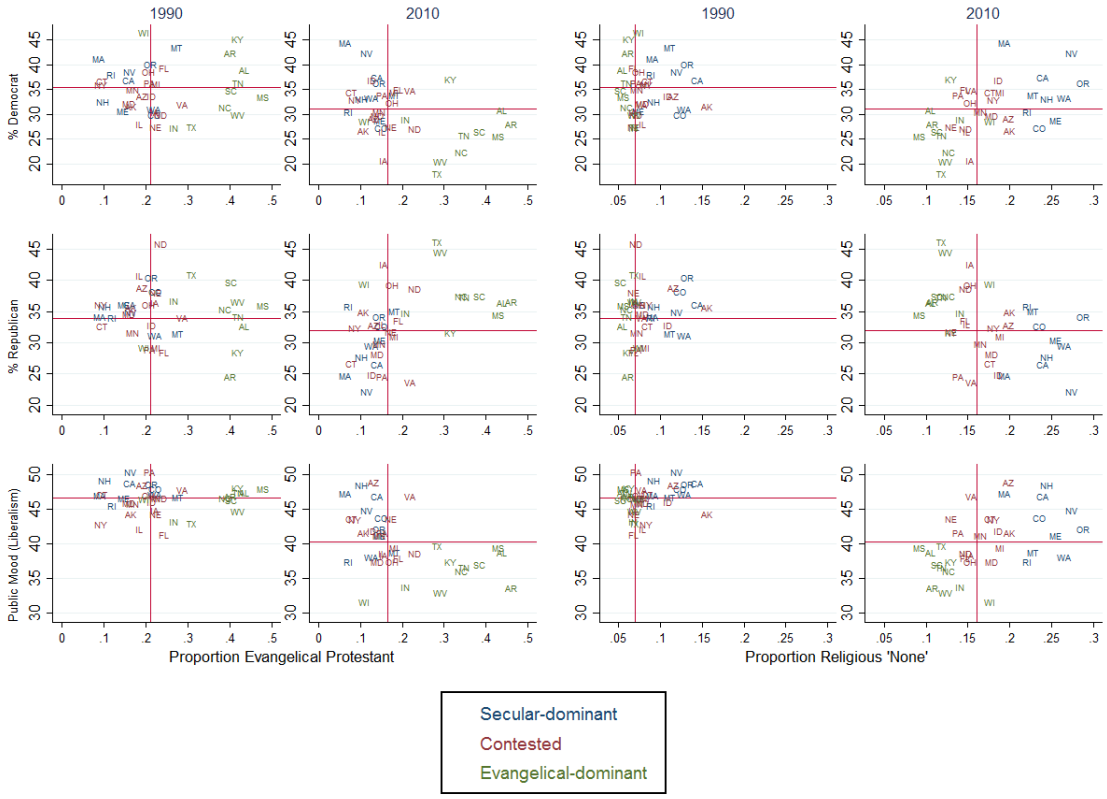
Some surveys are better at capturing some religious identities, and not as good for measuring others. Similarly, some surveys may be very good at narrowing in on various components of religion within a single respondent, but not very good at covering a significant number of respondents across all states. This results from a variety of things, but most notably the sampling methods for each survey influence these measures greatly. The new measure leverages the power of large-N aggregated datasets from a wide variety of surveys, accounting for potential sampling concerns through the power of aggregation, and providing a significant improvement in the ability to measure all religious identities with a heightened level of confidence in validity and reliability. In sum, the new measure is distinct from previous popular methods, but validates well in comparison.

State secular-religious competition typologies

If religious diversity in America has shifted over time, how has secular-religious competition changed? Secular-religious competition has been defined earlier as the relative membership advantages between evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' across the states. Using this new dataset, secular-religious competition is measured as the extent to which one group has a numerical advantage of 5% or more in annual group membership. Figure 3.1 plots states for the years 1990 and 2010 using the state-year dataset. The X-axis measures the proportion of the state identifying as either evangelical Protestant (the left-most two columns), or not identifying with any religion (the right-most two columns). The Y-axis varies by row; the first row measures identifying as Democrat, the second measures percentage identifying as Republican, and the third is a measure of public liberalism, or mood (Enns and Koch 2013). State abbreviations are colored per secular-religious competition typology in that year.

The most notable feature of Figure 3.1 is state clustering around intersecting means (red reference lines) in 1990, but spreading out into identifiable groupings in 2010. It was difficult to deduce partisan composition and overall ideological leaning of a state given only information about a state's religious context in 1990. By 2010, the religious context of a state, particularly in terms of secular-religious competition, is useful in understanding broad patterns in state political attitudes. How useful is religious context in predicting state macro-partisanship and public opinion? Chapter 4 explores this question in greater detail.

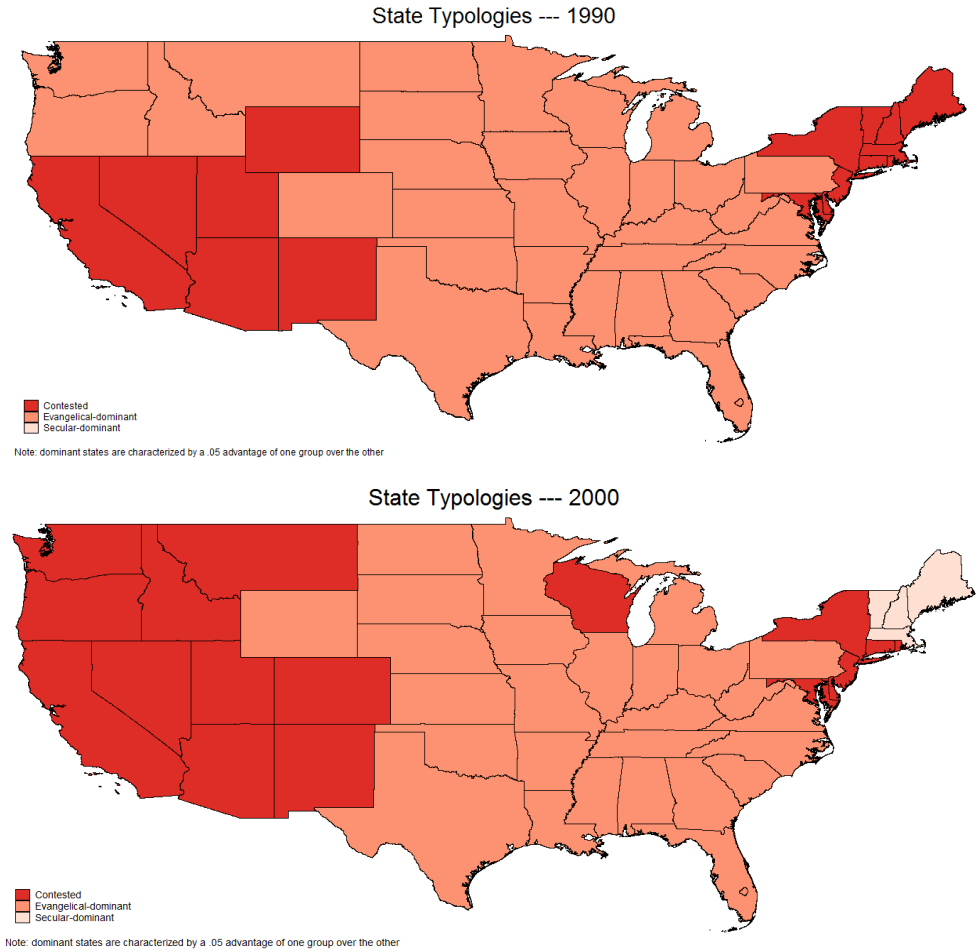
Figure 3.1: Partisanship, Public Opinion, and Secular-Religious Competition State Typologies 1990-2010



As both state religious diversity and secular-religious competition have become more prominent features of how Americans are sorted along partisan lines and public mood, how states are categorized has also fluctuated over time. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 overlays typologies onto maps of the American states over time, using the same membership advantage scheme of a 5% threshold. Prior to the turn of the 21st century policy in the American states largely reflected the wants and desires of the Protestant community. In 1990 most states were evangelical-dominant, reflecting success of political movements as part of the new religious right (Layman 1999, ch. 1). Only in the Northeastern and Southwestern regions of the United States were there any contested states. A short ten years later, the country changed in significant and notable ways.

Religious 'Nones' gained membership advantages in at least four states (all Northeastern: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts), while evangelical Protestants lost numerical advantages in Wisconsin and in several states in the Northwest (though seemed to gain an advantage in Wyoming).

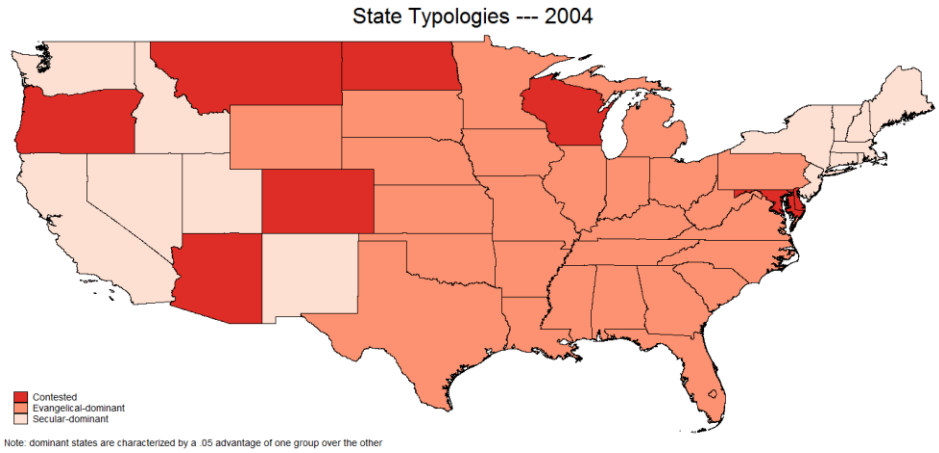
Figure 3.2: Evangelical-Dominant Nation Shifts to Contested Status 1990-2000

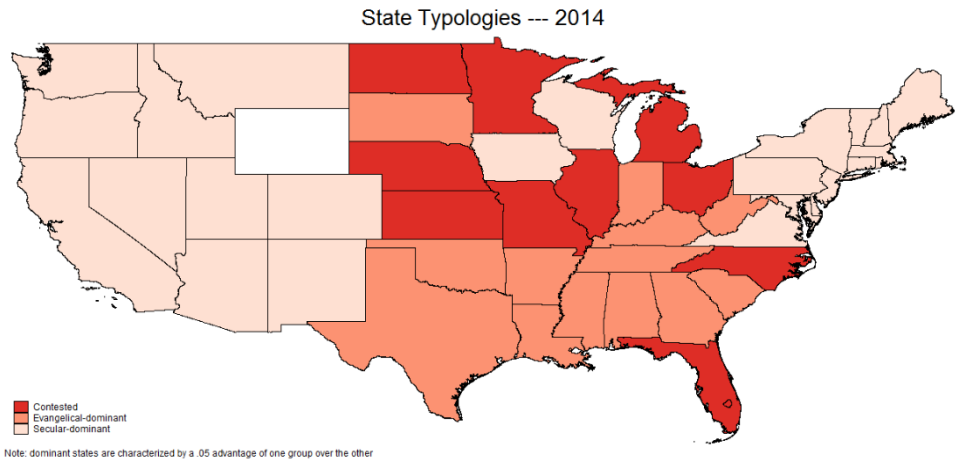


American politics experienced incredible tumult in the years immediately following the turn of the century. After a fiercely contested presidential contest, a global

terrorism event, and heightened focus on faith and family values following election of the country's first conservative evangelical Protestant president George W. Bush, significant divisions in the populace began to emerge. Religious 'Nones' gained numerical advantages throughout the country (though still primarily in Western and Northeastern states). By 2014 the number of evangelical-dominant states dwindled to a handful, mostly concentrated in the South and parts of the Midwest. Secular-dominant states grew to outnumber evangelical-dominant states, while many of the presidential battleground states are now contested. This organization of states in terms of dominant/contested status may be a primary feature of American politics.

Figure 3.3: Secular Growth to Regional Concentrations





Religious and racial/ethnic diversity

Chapter two discussed how these typologies are constructed in a similar manner as, and ultimately inspired by, the typologies Hero (2001) describes. Consider, then, how secular-religious competition typologies compare to Hero's state racial/ethnic diversity typologies calculated for the year 2000. Table 3.3 shows how these two classification systems compare. In Hero's typologies, homogeneous states are the most common, and in the secular-religious competition typologies, evangelical-dominant states are the most common.

Table 3.3: Hero's (2001) Typologies and Secular-Religious Competition Typologies (2001)

	Evangelical Dominant	Contested	'None' Dominant	Total
Homogeneous	13	7	2	22
	48.2%	38.9%	50.0%	44.9%
Heterogeneous	5	7	2	14
	18.5%	38.9%	50.0%	28.0%
Bifurcated	9	4	0	13
	33.3%	22.2%	0%	26.5%
Total	27	18	4	49
	100%	100%	100%	100%

There is somewhat of a pattern in the way religious context and racial/ethnic context overlap. In the year 2000, 55% of states were evangelical-dominant, 37% were contested, while only 8% were none-dominant. Of the largest grouping of states, evangelical-dominant, more than 48% (13 of 27) were homogenous. Homogeneous states make up the largest grouping of states in Hero's classification scheme, with just under 45% (22 of 49) falling into this category. Of the racial/ethnically homogeneous states, most were evangelical-dominant at 59% (13 of 22). Notably, there were only four none-dominant states in 2000, but none of them fell into the bifurcated category. Contested states in the secular-religious competition typology were somewhat evenly distributed across racial/ethnic state typologies.

In other words, evangelical-dominant states tend to be low in terms of white ethnic diversity and low in non-white minority diversity, contested states vary in their racial/ethnic context, while little can be concluded about none-dominant states due to their emergence later in history. Although there are only four None-dominant states in

2001, it is notable that none of the four fall into the bifurcated states, or those states with white ethnic diversity, but very low non-white diversity. The two measures, while related, are not correlated (Pearson's *r*: -.437) in a statistically significant way; both measure ascriptive hierarchies in the states. The religious and racial/ethnic contexts of a state are interrelated, both having great potential to explain various political outcomes, while the typologies are distinct concepts measuring unique social phenomena.

Policy implications

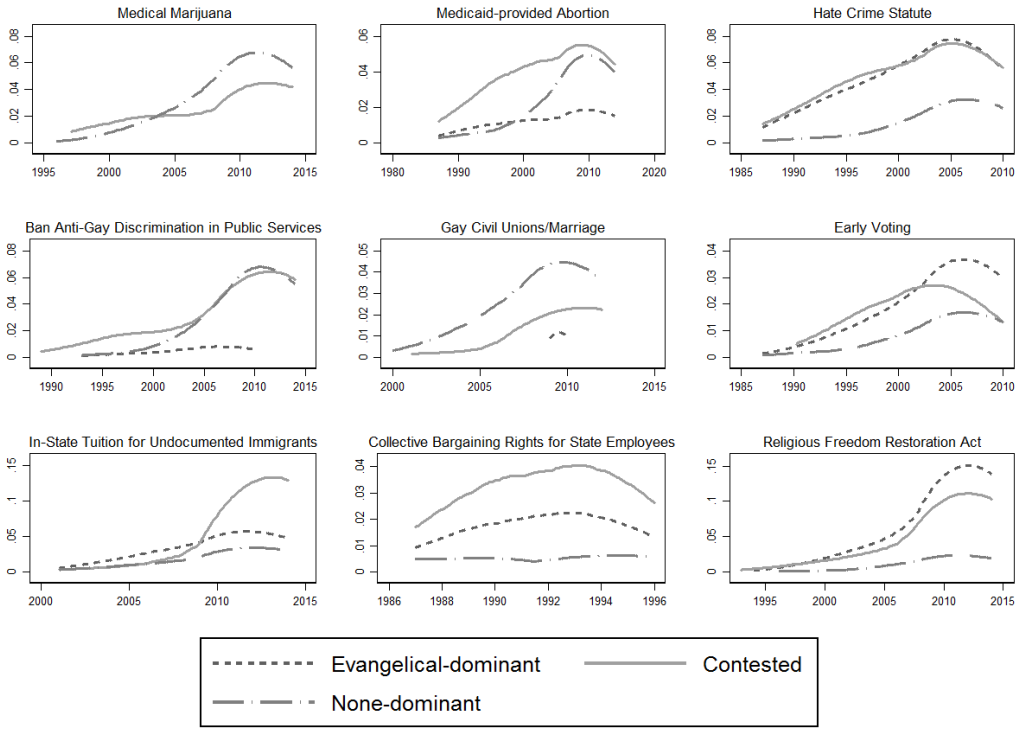
As mentioned earlier, the states are the source of most policy affecting the day to day lives of Americans. A common method to study policy outcomes is to assess relative risk of states adopting a policy, and assessing determinants of such risk. Proportional hazards models, growing in popularity among state politics scholars, model the likelihood of an event occurring (Cox 1972). To study state policy outcomes, proportional hazards models require specially-arranged datasets organized into state-years. The Correlates of State Policy (CSP) dataset[13] catalog the history of different policies in each state stretching back to the early 20th century, among other state-level variables. This means the dataset contains information on which policies are present in any state in any given year.

Figure 3.4 plots smoothed hazard estimates of relative risk of adopting various types of policies in the states. The graphs plot the baseline hazard rate along the Y-axis, which can be thought of as a likelihood of policy adoption occurring in any given state, by year on the X-axis. The graph drew from questions across a wide range of policy

[13] The dataset is publicly available for download at Michigan State University's website: http://www.ippsr.msu.edu/public-policy/correlates-state-policy

issues to show how states grouped by secular-religious typologies differ from one another in policy adoption behavior, and that state groupings vary in adoption behavior over time.

Figure 3.4: Smoothed Hazard Estimates of Various Public Policy Outcomes in the States



Evidence in Figure 3.4 suggests secular-religious competition may be an influential factor in the policymaking process. There are some clear correlations between state typology and policy outcomes. In the policy areas of medical marijuana, anti-gay discrimination in public accommodations, and gay marriage, risk of adoption in evangelical-dominant states is much lower relative to risk among contested and None-dominant states. On the other hand, evangelical-dominant states are much more likely to adopt early voting laws and a version of a religious freedom restoration bill. None-dominant states appear to be policy adoption leaders in areas of medical marijuana and

gay marriage, at least since 2005. They are also indistinguishable from contested states in the policy realm of anti-gay discrimination in public services. None-dominant and contested states are very similar in terms of likelihood of adoption when it comes to Medicaid-supported abortion services at the state level, while evangelical-dominant states are very unlikely to adopt such a policy. Contested states are much more likely than evangelical- or none-dominant states to adopt laws requiring in-state tuition rates for undocumented immigrant residents and to have strong collective bargaining rights for state employees.

Many of the patterns illustrated in Figure 3.4 should not be surprising, based on what we already know about ideological constraints among evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones'. Figure 3.4 offers for the first time, however, preliminary evidence of a connection between secular-religious competition and policy outcomes in a state, and shows this connection can change over time. In various policy areas, the risk of each state-type adopting relative to the other two typologies changes with time.

This preliminary evidences implies an added level of importance in studying religious context. Not only does religious context itself change over time, as states move in and out of each category as the maps above show, but the role of religious context in shaping policy outcomes also changes over time. In the late 1980s and early 1990s secular-religious competition in the states did not seem to be associated with whether a state adopted early voting reforms, as Figure 3.4 illustrates. Into the 21st century, however, evangelical-dominant states led the way in adoption of such laws, while contested and None-dominant states had a lower probability of adoption. Adopting early voting laws may be more likely in evangelical-dominant states because of mobilization

efforts such as ‘souls to the polls’ or other efforts aimed at getting people to vote after attending religious services on the weekend leading up to Election Day. There may also be competing explanations; in either case, competition between secular liberal and religious conservative forces may help explain parts of the policy-making process.

Concluding remarks

This chapter presented a new measure of state denominational affiliation, compared it to popular alternatives, showed how the measure could be useful in explaining state macro-partisanship, public mood, and policy adoptions, and explored how secular-religious competition in the states has shifted over time. This new measure makes several important advances. It accounts for an important and quickly growing group in the United States that has gone largely overlooked, religious ‘Nones’. It minimizes the potential for error to enter estimates, and removes uncertainty arising from congregational self-reporting. Moving from congregational-focused sampling frames to the individual-level, and by gathering many different surveys from across several years, this approach eliminates the need to assume linearity in group membership change over time. The resultant dataset is reliable and valid across states and groups, and over time.

The measurement presented here could be of use to a variety of researchers. In the past ten years, interest in questions of morality politics has grown quite significantly.[14] Methods used to answer such questions rely heavily on quantitative techniques. Much of this research is interested in policy outcomes or group behaviors at the state level, where

[14] This is generally recognized as a unique category of public policy that is defined by government regulation of some type of individual behavior via law. Regulations fall into this category when at least one of the groups advocating for or against the policy use moral arguments (Haider-Markel & Meier 1996; Tatalovich & Daynes 2011).

decision-making is centered on issues such as abortion rights and high school curriculum standards. Statistical models of state-level outcomes require reliable and valid measures of independent variables to avoid biased estimates and improper inferences. Researchers not just in political science, but also scholars from variegated fields, will find an improved measure of state-level denominational adherence useful. Sociologists and economists routinely utilize state-level religion variables in models. Researchers from religious studies may also utilize such a measure when conducting quantitative analyses.

Although the measure presented in this chapter is an important advance in operationalizing religious context in the states, especially when operationalizing conflict between religious groups, this does not mean the data housed by the ARDA and others are without use. Scholars interested in membership within certain denominations will find the ARDA a valuable resource, an area where the measure presented here falls short. Researchers developing more nuanced understandings of idiosyncrasies within religious groups might find the individual-level surveys conducted by the likes of Pew (*Religious Landscape Survey*) and Trinity College (*American Religious Identification Survey*) valuable resources, where my measure can only speak to aggregate membership by state. Nonetheless, this new measure is an important addition to the applied researcher's toolbox.

This chapter also presented evidence to support the notion that secular-religious competition in the American states is a driving force behind politics and policy. Change in the American religious landscape, at least in terms of the relative membership strength of secular liberal and religious conservative forces, is associated with change in state politics. Secular-religious competition also overlaps with racial/ethnic diversity. Could

competition between secular and religious forces in the states help explain broad patterns in American politics? Chapter 4 explores whether religious context plays a role in shaping micro- and macro-partisanship, ideology, and public opinion.

CHAPTER 4

Micro- and Macro-Partisanship, Ideology and Public Opinion in Religious Context

Does variation in religious diversity among the states affect partisanship, ideology and public opinion? This question is more complicated than an immediate reaction might suggest. Using a new measure for religious diversity, the previous chapter presented three reasons to believe it does. Religious diversity and secular-religious competition typologies help illustrate partisan divides across the states, overlap with racial/ethnic demography -- while still being a distinct concept -- and are associated with state adoption of salient public policies. This chapter uses the new measure presented in chapter 3 to provide a more systematic analysis of the role religion plays in politics across the various states and over time. Specifically, the analyses focus on how both micro- and macro-level partisanship, ideology, and public opinion may be shaped by religious diversity at the state level.

Many scholars have argued context, space, and place matter in state and local politics (Bledsoe et al. 1995; Branton and Jones 2005; Enos 2016; Gay 2004; Huckfeldt 1979; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993; Huckfeldt 2007; Hopkins 2010). State racial/ethnic context has been shown to be an important force in shaping politics and policy outcomes in the states (Hero and Tolbert 1996; Hero 2000; Tolbert and Hero 2001). Political culture typologies based on immigration patterns of original settlers across the states may also inform our understanding of various political outcomes (Elazar 1972). This study argues religious context may be a primary feature of state politics and public opinion, although its impact is less recognized. Much of the work on religion and

politics is concerned with individual religious identity. Building on research by Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson (2001) in *The Macro Polity*, this chapter takes a new approach by examining how state religious diversity and secular-religious competition influence partisanship and political attitudes at the macro and micro levels.

Does religious context influence broad macro patterns in American politics? How does religious context influence political attitudes over time and across regions of the U.S? If there is an impact, is it constant or does it fluctuate? Does religious context, not regularly included in models of political behavior, exert an independent influence on the expression of individual public opinion, partisanship and ideology? The answers to these questions suggest that religious diversity has both a direct and indirect influence on politics. Cross-sectional time-series data of the fifty states helps us evaluate the effects of religious diversity broadly speaking, while individual level analysis can illuminate causal mechanisms. The argument developed in this chapter is that understanding political attitudes requires considering religious context.

Studying political behavior from multiple levels of analysis can greatly improve our understanding (see for example Bartels 2009). We know different characteristics about a person are associated with a higher likelihood of identifying with a party; wealthier, older Americans tend to identify with the Republican Party while the young and poor tend to affiliate with the Democrats (Gelman et al. 2009; 2010). The income and age distributions of a state might also influence a person's opinion on various policy issues, or push them toward/away from one or another party. While these demographic characteristics of people shape their political attitudes, the distribution of these characteristics in the environment around them also play a role. Similarly, religious

beliefs are known to have direct effects on individual political attitudes, but religious context may also have an independent effect. Examining religious identification at the aggregate level could reveal effects not observable at the individual level (Erikson, Mackuen, and Stimson 2001; Soroka and Wlezien 2010).

This chapter thus conducts analyses at two levels: state-year and individual units of analysis. Concentrations of religious groups in certain geographic areas may tell us more about ideology, partisanship, or election outcomes than previously recognized. Religious context, as a primary component of culture, may be missing from many of the well developed statistical models used in the study of American politics.

Connections between state religious and political contexts

Change in the broad American religious landscape is well-documented (Conkle 1993; Green 1996; Chaves 2011; Chaves and Anderson 2014; Keysar 2014; Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2014). However, very little research exists on how religious diversity impacts political attitudes at the state level. This is largely due to a lack of valid, reliable measures of religion, as discussed in chapter 3. The growing field of religion and politics generally focuses on religion of the individual rather than the religion of a community. An extensive literature focused on individual behavior provides a theoretical starting point (see chapter 2). Denominational studies have made explicit connections between religious belonging and particular sets of political beliefs – 'attitude constraints' in the language of Converse (1964) – while studies of policy adoptions tell us that religious context is an important component of state politics. What expectations can be made about

how higher levels of evangelical Protestants, Catholics or religious 'Nones' in a state affect micro- and macro-partisanship, ideology, and public mood?

Religious context has been shown to be an important determinant of state policy adoptions (see, for example: Norrander and Wilcox 1999; Evans and Kelley 2004; Mooney and Schuldt 2008; Kreitzer 2015; as well as analyses in chapter 3). Research has also found religious context, in addition to various other influences, drives how issues are framed and debated, especially those centered around morality policy (Haider-Markel and Meier 1996, 2003). Issue evolution combined with the interest group orientation of religious forces in policy debates shapes whether various policies are adopted or spread from state to state (Haider-Markel 2001; Lindaman and Haider-Markel 2002; Haider-Markel and Kaufman 2006). The adoption of policies either legalizing or banning same-sex marriage and abortions, for instance, is heavily influenced by the religious context of a state. The studies analyzing morality policy areas show how concentrations of religious conservatives in a state is one of the primary determinants of whether such policies are adopted.

In contrast to the existing research on religious context and policy adoptions, this chapter explores how religious context may alter American politics by subtly changing attitudes of American citizens, influencing both micro- and macro-partisanship, ideology, and public mood. These political attitudes have well-documented influences on larger political outcomes (i.e. policy, election results) and may help explain divisiveness and conflict.

There is ample evidence that religious context effects state policy adoptions, but does it shape political attitudes as well? If so, does that relationship vary in strength over

time and across regions? The analyses that follow are a first attempt to connect state-level measures of secular-religious competition and religious diversity to political contexts, outside of policy outcomes. A benefit of the secular-religious competition framework over the culture wars approach to studying religion in American politics is the more complex story it can tell. As shown in chapter 3, many states fall into the contested category, with balanced proportions of evangelical Christians and the religiously unaffiliated residents. When applied to the states, the culture wars framework suggests that places with higher levels of evangelical Protestants or the religiously unaffiliated will spark a reaction from the other group. In other words, it misses out on the possibility that politics is shaped more by areas where the two groups are balanced in terms of membership numbers, and focuses instead on those areas where one group is larger than the other – in evangelical- and None-dominant states.

Moving beyond the culture wars to the religious diversity framework means that the relationship between religion and American politics is non-static. In different areas of the country, and in different points in time, religious context varies in its effect. Dynamics between white evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' are a primary feature of American politics, though in a much more nuanced way than the culture war approach suggests.

Religious context and individual attitudes

The study of partisanship is couched in two classic approaches to the subject: the social psychological school (i.e. the Michigan school of voting: Campbell et al. 1960), and the sociological school (i.e. the Columbia school of voting: Berelson et al. 1954).

Religious upbringing drives people toward certain political identities, and this process is influenced by religious context. Congregational affiliation aids in accumulation of social capital, by providing adherents with interpersonal connections and exposure to community norms and ideals about politics. Belonging to a church where a clear majority of members identify as Republicans, for instance, can play a significant role in pulling young members of the church toward the Republican Party. Community leaders belonging to a particular identity influence attitudes and behaviors of other people belonging to that identity. If this is the case, the religious context of a state should be a significant determinant of its partisan composition.

Self-identified ideology is one of the most studied topics in political science (see, for example: Norrander and Wilcox 2008; Ellis and Stimson 2012; Carmines, Ensley, and Wagner 2012; Enns and Koch 2013; Dalton 2013; Feldman and Johnston 2014; Wright, Erikson and McIver 1992). Beyond partisan attachment, religious context should be expected to shape distributions of state populations across the ideological spectrum from very liberal populations to highly conservative. Religion can drive people toward (or away) from certain political worldviews, and this relationship should be reflected in the aggregate. Ideology is essentially a summary of a person's political views, that can be used to group like-minded people; if religion is thought to influence a person's worldview, it should also influence their ideology.

However, any discussion of ideology in America must also consider the differences between symbolic and operational ideology (Ellis and Stimson 2012). Symbolic ideology, or self-placement on a standard 7-point ideological scale from liberal to conservative, provides unique challenges to researchers. Over time, differing

emotional responses are attached to the 'conservative' and 'liberal' labels that could influence the likelihood of identifying. Identifying with one end of the ideological spectrum is symbolic in the sense that applying such a label to one's self is suggestive of a worldview. The meaning of the terms 'liberal' and 'conservative' are not universal. Americans may claim to be conservative when asked by a survey interviewer, but respond to questions about issue areas in a way that is more consistent with the liberal direction on the ideological spectrum. It is thus important to distinguish between the two.

One way to assess operational ideology is to ask respondents about various public policy issue areas. How much a respondent tends toward liberal or conservative direction in their responses can be used to gauge operational ideology to overcome any potential interpretive gaps between respondents and survey items. This study uses measures of public mood and opinion as a proxy for operational ideology. Public mood is thought of as the overall liberal/conservative tendencies of a state's population; public mood is essentially a function of mass public opinion across various issue areas.

Combined, these three elements (partisanship, symbolic ideology, and public mood) represent much of the information Americans use to make political decisions. Many American rely on heuristics, or informational shortcuts, for a variety of political decision-making processes (Lau and Redlawsk 1997, 2006; Marcus, Neuman and MacKuen 2000; Zaller 1992), and ask similar questions when determining whom to vote for: which party does each politician belong to? How liberal or conservative are they relative to the rest of the field? Where does the candidate they stand on these policy issues I am most concerned about? These three basic questions are often front-of-mind

when deciding what to do on Election Day. Does religious diversity and competition cognitively reside at this intersection between political attitudes and action?

The larger argument here is that there is both a direct and indirect influence of religious context: secular-religious competition influences both how individuals view and interact with politics, but also state-level macro measures of opinions and attitudes. Religious context may help inform political attitudes and opinions of individuals, but also plays a role in determining the distribution of the population in the aggregate, in terms of partisanship, ideology, and public opinion. The following section first presents evidence that religious context plays an important role in individual-level political attitudes, followed by an examination of indirect effects on macro-level outcomes.

Partisanship and vote choice

The figures below summarize results of mixed-effects multinomial logistic regression models of self-reported partisanship, vote choice, and ideology using data from the 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) common content, consisting of roughly 65,000 respondents. The CCES is a nationally-representative large-sample online survey, a collaborative project among numerous researchers from various institutions. Full results from the statistical models are reported in the appendix. Modeling choices are consistent with the cross-sectional nature of state data combined with individual-level outcome variables, and are estimated utilizing survey weights to account for potential sampling bias. Coefficients for secular-religious competition typology are reported at the top of the table in italics, and evangelical-dominant state typologies are the excluded group meaning effects of the competition typologies must be

interpreted relative to this baseline group. As shown in Table 4.1, controlling for various covariates known to be predictors of partisanship as well as individual religiosity variables, secular-religious competition plays a significant role in self-identification as a partisan. Independent variables included in model estimation, but not reported in the table of results, are age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, income, religious importance, frequency of church attendance, religious identity, self-reported ideology, and political interest. Table 4.1 summarizes the effect of the secular-religious competition variables of interest.

Table 4.1: Multi-level Multinomial Logistic Regressions of Partisanship, Vote Choice, and Symbolic Ideology

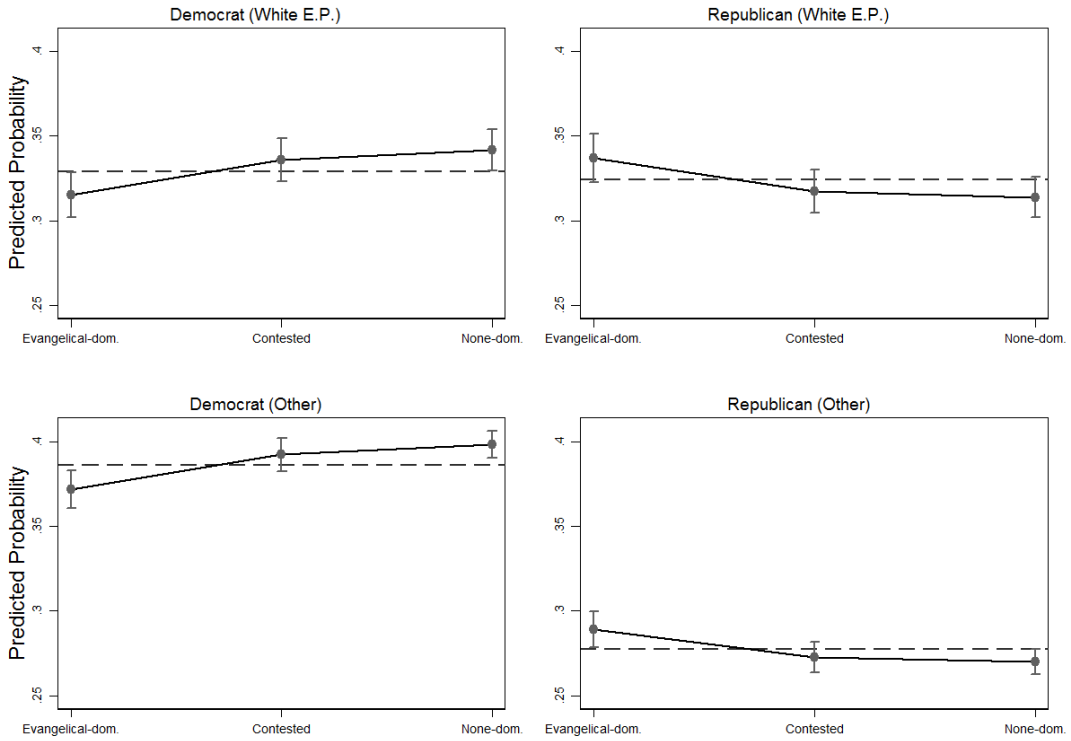
	Partisanship	Vote Choice	Ideology
	Democrat	*Vote Trump*	*Liberal*
Resides in	0.05	-0.10*	-0.06*
Contested State	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Resides in None-	0.08*	-0.22*	0.02
Dominant State	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	-1.03*	-2.13*	-0.45*
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)
	Republican	*Vote Clinton*	*Conservative*
Resides in	-0.09*	0.14*	-0.08*
Contested States	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Resides in None-	-0.11*	0.03	-0.00
Dominant State	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Constant	-2.17*	-1.68*	-1.84*
	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Observations	58382	63037	64557
AIC	65500.35	95438.00	113819.69

Note: Unstandardized multi-level multinomial logistic regression coefficients with standard errors reported below in parentheses. Baseline categories are Independents for partisanship, Moderates for symbolic ideology, and Other Candidate for Vote Choice. Control variables included but not reported are age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, income, religious importance, frequency of church attendance, religious identity, ideology/partisanship (for models of partisanship/ideology).
Source: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, common content.

Figure 4.1 illustrates how these results vary by religious identity. Among white evangelical Protestants, the probability of identifying as a democrat is slightly different depending on which state type a person resides in. Statistically speaking, the effect of residing in a contested state does not differ greatly from the effect of residing in an evangelical-dominant or None-dominant state. This is evident from the statistically insignificant coefficient for residing in a contested state, and the overlapping confidence intervals in Figure 4.1. Residing in a None-dominant state, however, leads to a higher probability of identifying as a Democrat among white evangelical Protestants, relative to those who live in an evangelical-dominant state. Among all other respondents, who are not white evangelical Protestants, the effect is slightly stronger on the probability of identifying as a Democrat, and becomes statistically significant for identification as a Republican; residing in an evangelical-dominant state lowers the probability of being a Democrat and raises the probability of being a Republican.

Excluded from the graph are Independents; the probability of identifying as an independent or non-partisan is unchanged when varying religious context. Considering its influence on identification as a Democrat or Republican, however, secular-religious competition is an important piece to the partisanship puzzle. Whether the religiously unaffiliated outnumber evangelical Protestants, or the other way around, has a significant impact on individual partisanship in America.

Figure 4.1: Predicted Probabilities of Partisanship Varying Secular-Religious Competition Typology and Evangelical Protestantism



As an extension to partisanship, and to consider the unusual political environment that took shape in the 2016 presidential election, Figures 4.2 and 4.3 present predicted probabilities of voting for Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, or another, third-party candidate (also generated using results from models summarized in Table 4.1). Figure 4.2 presents results among white evangelical Protestants while Figure 4.3 presents results among all other respondents. Again, we can see evidence of secular-religious competition influencing the political decision-making process of American citizens. For white evangelical Protestants, living in a state where evangelical Protestants have a numerical advantage over the religiously unaffiliated is associated with a much higher probability of voting for Trump, a roughly 10 percentage point increase. While the effect is not quite as

large, the religious context of a state also influenced the probability of voting for Clinton; it was lower in evangelical-dominant states than in None-dominant states. The probability of supporting a third-party or independent candidate in the 2016 presidential election is heightened, notably, in states where the religiously unaffiliated far outnumber evangelical Protestants, relative to states where the situation is flipped; though the substantive effect is smaller, a roughly 5 percentage point gap. Additionally, in the models reported in the appendix, the coefficients for state secular-religious competition typologies are rather large, rivaling religious identity and race in some cases.

Figure 4.2: Predicted Probabilities of Vote Choice Varying Secular-Religious Competition Typology, Among White Evangelical Protestants

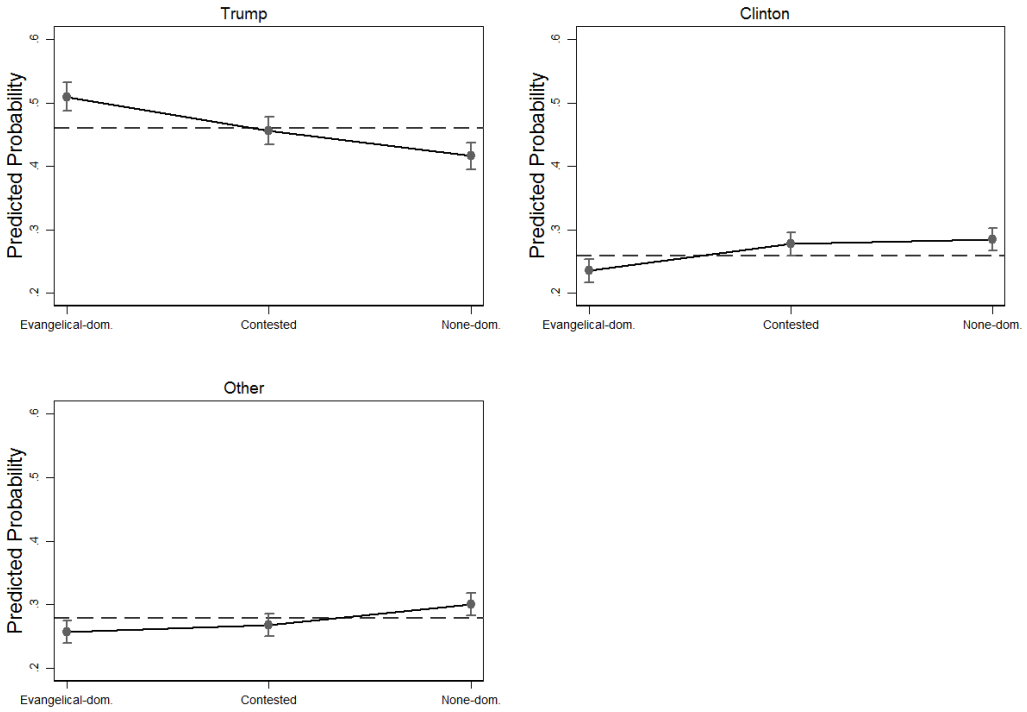
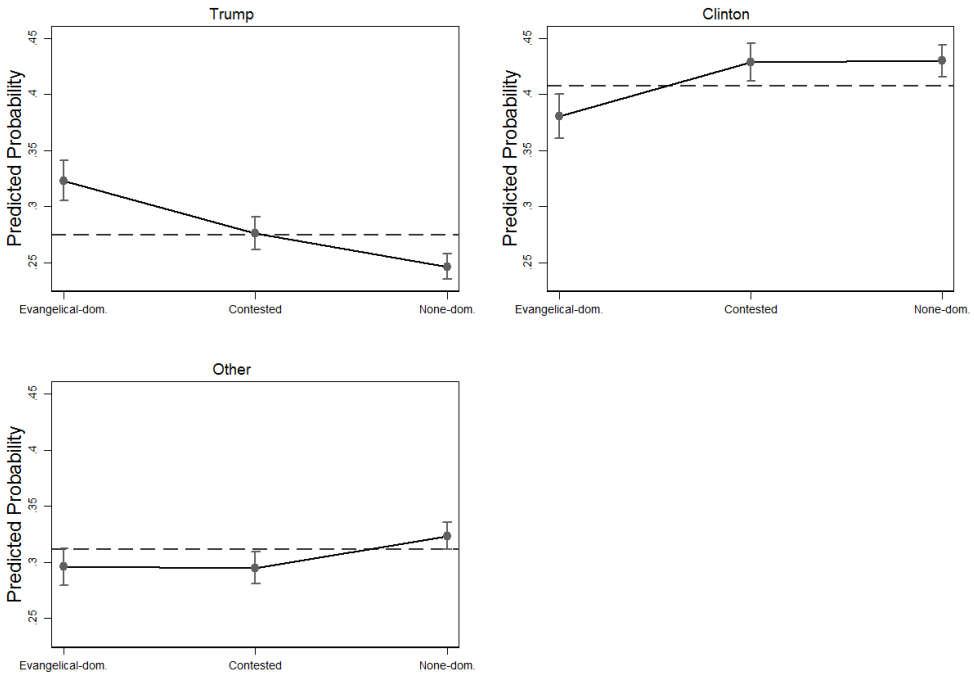


Figure 4.3 also presents predicted probabilities for vote choice, but for respondents in the dataset who are not white evangelical Protestants. The results for this

subsample of the dataset are very different than they are for white evangelical Protestants. The largest effect of secular-religious copmetition is on the probability of voting for Trump: there is nearly a 10 percentage-point difference between residents of evangelical-dominant states, where the probability is higher, and none-dominant states. The overall probability of voting for Trump among these voters is much lower than the probability of voting for Clinton, and residents of evangelical-dominant states are less likely than residents of contested or none-dominant states to vote for Clinton. There is little to no difference in the probability of voting for a third-party/independent candidate among this subsample, when varying secular-religious competition typology.

Figure 4.3: Predicted Probabilities of Vote Choice Varying Secular-Religious Competition Typology, Among All Others



None-dominant states are where third-party and independent candidates do best in presidential politics, and where Clinton had a higher likelihood of winning over an evangelical Protestant voter. Republicans appear to fare well in evangelical-dominant states; at least that is how the 2016 election was decided. Florida, North Carolina, Ohio, and Michigan were all in contested status as of 2016. These are all also battleground states in presidential politics, and could have swung the election in Clinton's favor had she won only half (39) of the electoral votes these four states add up to (78). The predicted probability of a contested state resident voting for Clinton is roughly .45 among all respondents (whether or not they identify as an evangelical Protestant), but this probability overlaps with the probability for residents of None-dominant states. That is, residing in either state type is associated with a higher likelihood of voting for Clinton.

In the None-dominant states of Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, however, Clinton lost a combined 30 electoral votes and, arguably, the White House. How would the election have looked if Clinton focused on converting critical independent voters in None-dominant states? The two states already mentioned plus Iowa, another None-dominant state, brings Clinton within 1 electoral vote of winning. A strategy focused on attracting key votes from the country's fastest growing demographic group may very well have changed the race entirely. Clinton lost several other None-dominant states where she may have been more competitive had her campaign taken a different approach and directly courted religiously unaffiliated voters. In Arizona for example, worth 11 electoral votes, Clinton lost by a margin of 4.1%. Modern campaigns should take note of the role religious context plays in shaping how people vote. Where these two groups

stand in terms of success in the membership marketplace plays a significant role in state presidential politics by directly influencing the vote choice of Americans in 2016.

It is not especially surprising that religious context is correlated with vote choice in the 2016 general election. Social pressures from peers and community members can be powerful political persuasion tools (Sinclair 2012). The religious conservative community signaled in many ways that support for Trump was socially acceptable, even very early in the Republican primary contest (Taylor 2015), despite attempts by the Democrats to portray Trump as a crude, brash candidate out of touch with the moral convictions of the religious right.[15] On the flip side, the secular community communicated quite clearly how unacceptable Trump was as a candidate. There is ample evidence that the two groups were attempting to sway voters, and success varied depending on how dominant each group is by state.

Symbolic ideology

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 graphs predicted probabilities of identifying as a liberal, conservative, or moderate, again split between white evangelical Protestants and all others (once again relying on results summarized in Table 4.1). In the case of symbolic ideology, the impact of secular-religious competition is less clear. There is not a statistically significant relationship between identifying ideologically and residing in different state types. One surprising takeaway, however, is that residents of contested states tend to identify more than any other citizens as moderate, and there is a statistically

[15] A bumper sticker from the campaign read, for example, "One of the deplorables, but redeemed by Christ," with clear reference to the comments Hillary Clinton made about Trump supporters at a campaign event during the 2016 presidential election.

significant difference among those who are not white evangelical Protestants when they live in contested versus None-dominant states.

Figure 4.4: Predicted Probabilities of Self-Reported Symbolic Ideology Varying Secular-Religious Competition Typology, Among White Evangelical Protestants

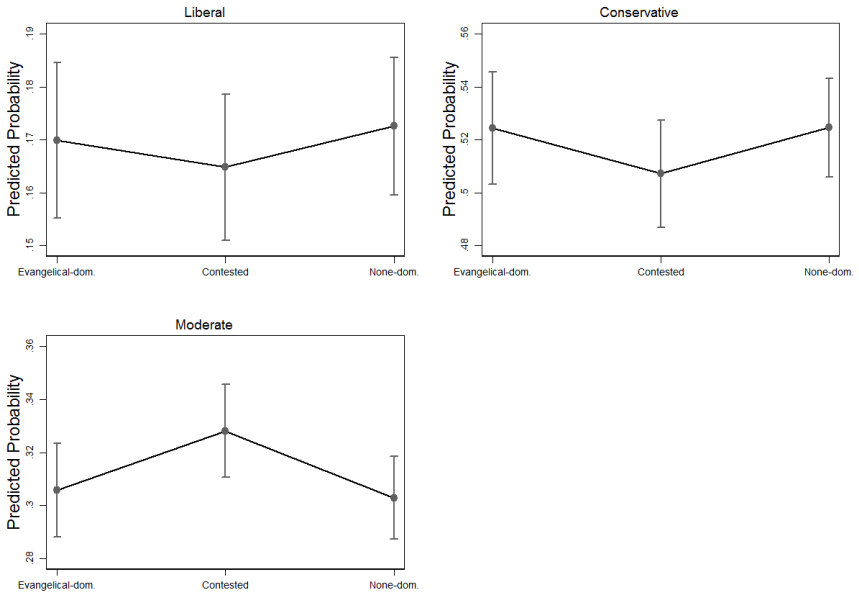
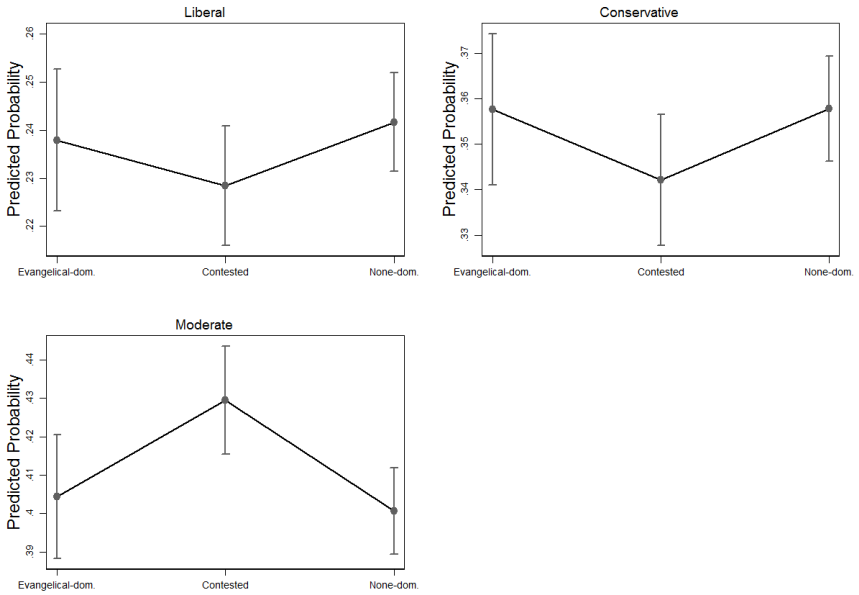


Figure 4.5: Predicted Probabilities of Self-Reported Symbolic Ideology Varying Secular-Religious Competition Typology, Among All Others



In sum, residents of evangelical-dominant states tend to both vote and identify as a Republican, regardless of religious identity, though evangelical Protestants trend more in that direction than anyone else. Residents of contested states are more likely to both vote and identify as a Democrat, and this relationship is stronger if they are also not white evangelical Protestants. Democrat candidates seem to be leaving votes on the table, so to speak, by failing to engage directly with this growing demographic group. Many of the None-dominant states where the religiously unaffiliated outnumber evangelical Protestants were won by the Republican candidate.

Public opinion

Finally, the analyses below present the strongest evidence for importance of state religious diversity and secular-religious competition in directly shaping individual attitudes. Like the models of partisanship, ideology, and vote choice, Figure 4.4 presents predicted probabilities of support for various policy positions, derived from mixed-effects logistic regression models.[16] The 2016 CCES asked respondents a variety of public opinion questions and their responses were modeled as a function of secular-religious competition. Holding all other variables constant, varying only religious context, reveals some interesting things about opinions on a variety of issues.

In states where evangelical Protestants significantly outnumber religious 'Nones,' respondents are far less likely to support assault rifle bans, support expanding power of the EPA to regulate carbon emissions, support strengthening the Clean Water Act (1972)

[16] Full results for models used to generate predicted probabilities in Figures 4.3 and 4.4 are printed in the appendix.

or Clean Air Act (1970), or support gay marriage, relative to residents of any other state typology. Respondents in contested and None-dominant states are very similar, or statistically indistinguishable, in terms of their support for an assault rifle ban and support for expanding EPA power to regulate carbon emissions. Respondents in None-dominant states, however, are more likely to support both strengthening the Clean Water/Air acts and support gay marriage, relative to respondents in contested states.

Figure 4.6: Predicted Probability of Supporting Various Issues by Religious Context

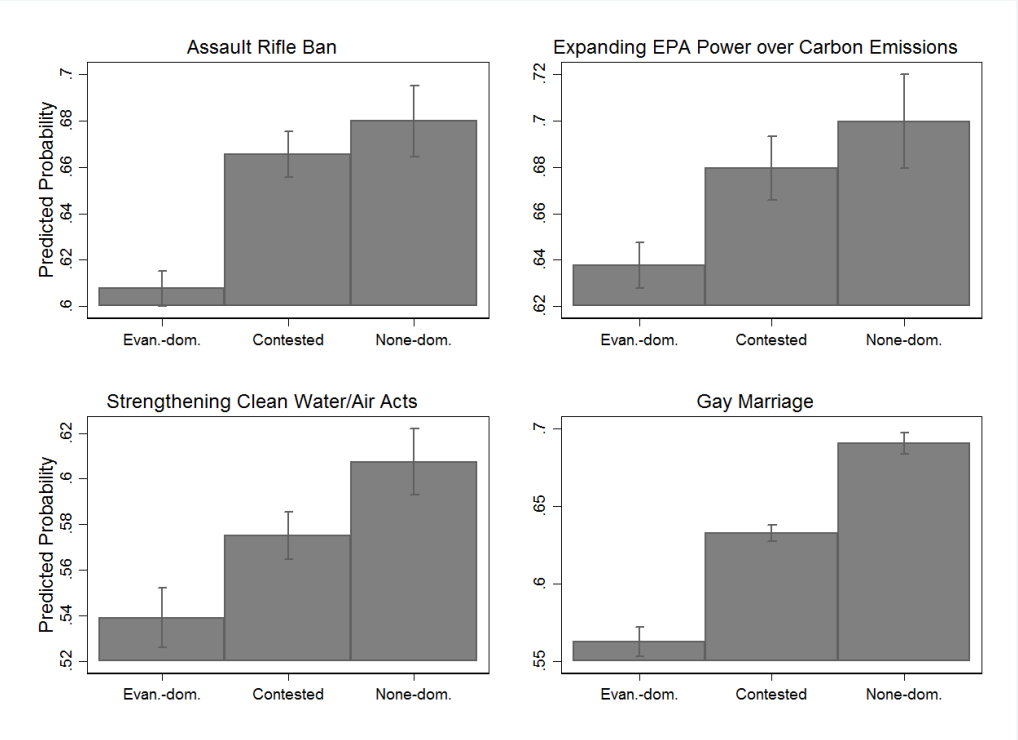
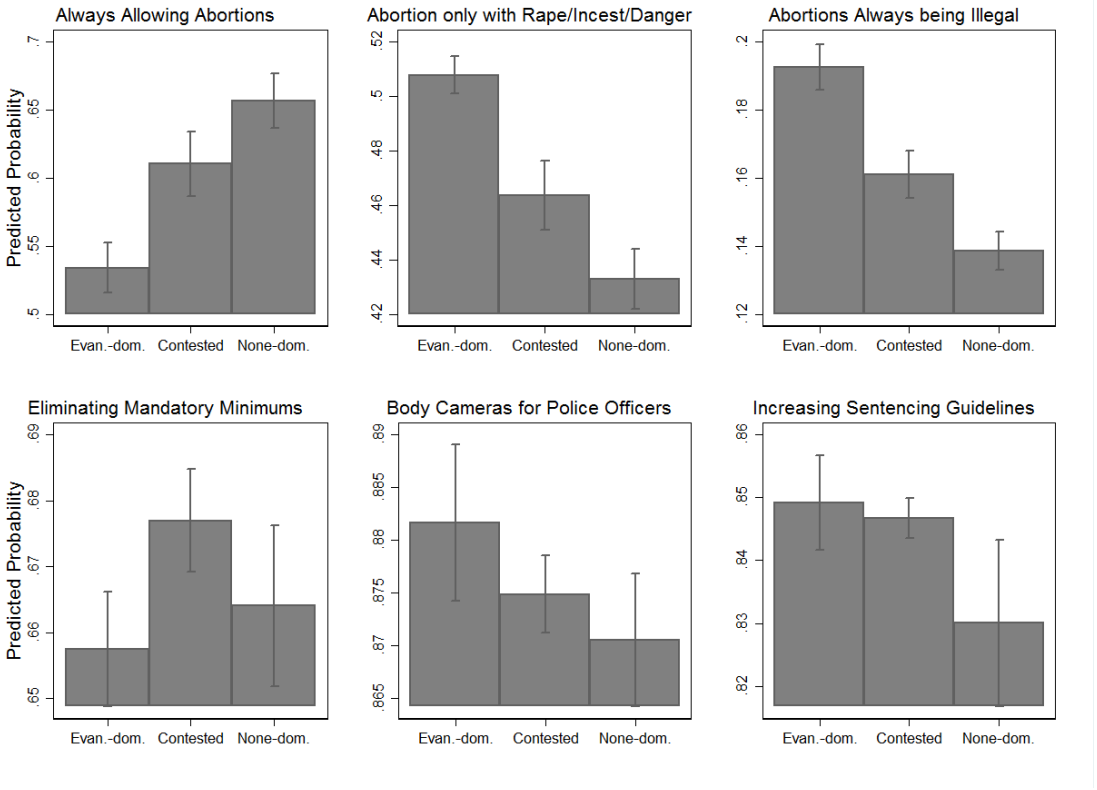


Figure 4.5 illustrates predicted probabilities on a variety of other public opinion issues, revealing similar relationships between secular-religious competition and the political opinions of residents. Figures 4.4 and 4.5 illustrate how public opinion can vary given differing religious contexts, across a wide variety of issues – including those

outside the scope of previous morality policy research. Views on gun control, the environment, and criminal justice reform are all significantly impacted by the religious environment a respondent finds themselves in.

Figure 4.7: Predicted Probability of Supporting Various Issues by Religious Context



Modeling macro-partisanship, ideology, and public mood

As noted earlier, an analysis of American political attitudes would be incomplete if it remained at the individual level. "The crucial actor in the democratic political process is the individual known as "the voter." Viewed at the macro-level perspective, the voter transforms into "the electorate." Although the electorate is simply the sum of voters, our knowledge of the individual voter turns out not to be a reliable guide for

generalizing to the electorate and its role in democratic politics," (Erikson, MacKuen, and Stimson 2002, p. 3). The following section now turns to aggregate versions of partisanship, ideology, and public opinion measures analyzed in the previous section, with the goal of analyzing the role of religious context over time and across regions. Moving to the state-level of analysis leverages a comparative approach and introduces temporal components. The following analyses answer the question of whether effects of state religious context vary over time or across regions of the country.

The three outcome variables of interest are macro-partisanship, aggregated symbolic ideology, and an overall public mood measure all generated by Enns and Koch (2013). Using multi-level regression with post-stratification, they produce public mood scores for each state stretching several decades. They generate a dataset from 1956 to 2010 for most states, providing a measure of how liberal a state is overall on 73 different issue areas. Higher scores thus reflect more liberal public mood. They also calculate the proportion of each state identifying as Democrat or Republican, and a proportion of each state identifying as liberal or conservative.

Evaluating the role of religious context on macro-politics of the states over time requires a multivariate time-series model that accounts for the continuous nature of the dependent variables. Cross-sectional time-series data are characterized by repeated observations over time across panels. In this case, states are treated as panels. Treating data this way introduces the possibility of problematic correlations across panels, as well as across time within panels, or heteroscedasticity and auto-correlation concerns (Beck 2001). Standard errors in ordinary least squares analyses will be biased downward, increasing the chance for Type 1 'false positive' errors (Beck and Katz 1995). One path

to handling deflated standard errors is to estimate models with panel-corrected standard errors (Beck and Katz 1995). Doing so places constraints on how much influence in inferences they have.

Previous values of the dependent variable are oftentimes a predictor of current values; similar autoregressive processes could potentially arise with independent variables, as well. In the case of religious diversity, where its value at time *t* is partially explained by its value at time *t-1*, lagged dependent variables can help build confidence by dealing with some of the potentially problematic autocorrelation and omitted variable bias (Keele and Kelly 2006). However, some have argued that lagged dependent variables generate negatively biased coefficients (Achen 2000). The proper modeling choice for the time-series data at hand is to treat each state as an independent time-series, a task left for future work. The temporal dynamics of these data must be explored further, and models below can be thought of as preliminary findings.

The state-level political variables were modeled using botha special case of the autoregressive distributed lag (ADL) (2,1) model (Beck and Katz 2011), discussed in greater detail in a recent study (Wilkins 2017), and a standard AR1 model.[17] Wilkins argues that while entertaining dogmatic rules about inclusion of lagged dependent variables in a research program is a bad idea, the problems Achen (2000) and others have lamented about are perhaps less concerning than originally believed. Wilkins uses Monte Carlo simulation to show the special case of the ADL (2,1) model produces better coefficient estimates for independent variables than either a standard linear model or an AR1 model. Stationarity conditions apply, as is standard when using time series

[17] Formally, the model is adapted from Wilkins' (2017) equation 4: $Y_t = \alpha Y_{t-1} + \varphi Y_{t-2} + \beta X_t + \beta X_{t-1} + \varepsilon$

models.[18] Neither the strength of the dynamic process nor the strength of autocorrelation between error terms are important mediators in these findings, however. When very little is known about the temporal dynamics in data, modelling choices that minimize percent bias in coefficient estimates are wise. This special case of the ADL (2,1) model minimizes bias in coefficient estimates, while requiring less of the data in terms of assumptions about correlated error terms or strength of dynamics. The results from the ADL (2,1) model are presented as a robustness check in the appendix, while the AR1 models are printed in the text below.

Preliminary evidence suggests religious context is an important determinant of all three political context variables. However, as expected, the effect of religious context varies greatly by time-period and region. Tables 4.1 – 4.6 each follows a similar format: *Overall* models refer to the entire pooled dataset across all years; *Pre-2000* and *Post-2000* models sub-sample data to include only years prior to 2000, and only years after and including 2000; *Region* models limit analyses to each of four major geographical regions of the United States drawing from the entire pooled dataset over time.

Table 4.1 models aggregate state partisanship, within-state proportions of self-identified Democrats. As noted above, the models include one lag of the dependent variable and one lag each of the independent variables. Religious context, operationalized in this case as the diversity in identification among the three primary groups of interest (evangelical Protestants, religious 'Nones', and Catholics), is weakly correlated with the overall distribution of Democrats in a state.[19] In most cases, null findings might be

[18] Data used in the following analyses satisfy stationarity conditions, as determined by unit root testing (Wei 2005).
[19] Models of state proportions of Republicans reveal similar results.

unimportant and overlooked. However, the important takeaway from Table 4.1 is that while the effect of religious context is not always present, it does play a role in different time periods and in different regions.[20] Prior to the year 2000, religious context was not a significant organizational feature of American politics – as the maps in chapter 3 illustrated. After the year 2000, however, the proportion of white evangelical Protestants and Catholics does correlate well with the partisan makeup in the states. States with higher proportions of this group after the turn of the century are comprised of fewer Democrats than other states. Among these data, there is no regional variation in the way religious context shapes aggregate partisanship. This provides the first bit of evidence that group presence is related in interesting ways with partisanship in the states, but this relationship varies depending on time (pre- and post-2000).

[20] Tests for statistical significance for all analyses in this chapter are only printed if they reach the .05 confidence level; some of the coefficients are significant at a lower threshold of .1, suggesting more data may reveal effects this limited set of observations cannot.

Table 4.2: Linear Regression of % Democrat with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors

	Overall	*Pre-2000*	*Post-2000*	*South*	*Northeast*	*West*	*Midwest*
Democrat$_{t-1}$	.70*	.78*	.64*	.60*	.52*	.71*	.59*
	(.06)	(.08)	(.10)	(.08)	(.11)	(.07)	(.09)
% None	8.28	24.30	-20.48	-11.24	29.22	16.69	1.05
	(11.17)	(19.84)	(11.03)	(21.96)	(19.02)	(10.05)	(20.48)
% None$_{t-1}$	-6.78	-27.27	12.34	4.72	-25.33	4.15	5.68
	(11.17)	(19.53)	(12.11)	(23.18)	(20.00)	(10.40)	(22.30)
% Evan.	3.10	13.05	-17.99*	5.22	7.21	-.75	-14.56
Prot.	(5.45)	(8.62)	(6.82)	(6.91)	(17.19)	(7.07)	(8.43)
% Evan.	-.37	-11.72	18.74*	-4.81	-12.55	-8.33	1.61
Prot.$_{t-1}$	(5.44)	(8.46)	(6.90)	(6.58)	(17.90)	(6.94)	(8.56)
% Catholic	-.61	5.56	-7.74	1.02	-.46	5.65	-2.11
	(3.93)	(5.99)	(4.98)	(7.59)	(6.37)	(4.71)	(6.17)
% Catholic$_{t-1}$	2.44	-4.27	12.72*	4.68	3.26	3.68	-.08
	(3.49)	(5.22)	(4.77)	(7.36)	(6.13)	(4.52)	(5.47)
Constant	8.07*	5.72	11.92*	13.17*	14.01*	4.26	14.72*
	(2.76)	(4.26)	(3.59)	(4.47)	(5.05)	(2.45)	(5.20)
Observations	1124	582	542	368	206	274	276
R^2	.53	.62	.49	.44	.31	.60	.40
Wald Chi^2	215.36	145.59	308.08	100.88	35.02	159.51	80.04
Test	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

Source: Enns and Koch (2013)
** $p < .05$*

Table 4.2 models the proportion of a state self-identifying as a liberal. These results show religious context is much more associated with symbolic ideology than it is with partisan identification. Religious context has a strong influence on the distribution of liberals and conservatives in a state, particularly concentrations of Catholics and white evangelical Protestants. Contrast this with the individual-level findings in the previous section; in the aggregate, partisanship is far less affected than the distribution of symbolic ideologies. Among individual respondents, however, the likelihood of identifying as a Democrat or Republican is strongly associated with religious context, whereas the likelihood of identifying as a liberal or conservative is not.

The row of coefficients corresponding to the evangelical Protestant identification variable (*% Born Again*) show this in action. In the overall model, evangelical Protestants are correlated with lower numbers of self-identified liberals in a state. The cumulative effect of a variable in this AR1 model can be thought of as the size of the remaining coefficient when combining statistically significant lagged effects. In other words, the overall effect of *% Born Again* on the proportion Democrat in time *t* is -3.55 (-15.91 + 12.36). Every one percentage-point increase corresponds to a roughly 3.55 percentage point decrease in the proportion of liberals. This effect is not present prior to 2000, however, and is also not present in Southern states; it is, however, rather prominent after the turn of the century (in this dataset, at least), and in all other regions of the country. Similarly, the proportion of Catholics in a state have an effect in the overall model (though close to zero when accounting for lagged effects, -10.76 + 11.09 = .33) which is present prior to 2000 but not afterwards, and with varying regional effect. There is no effect in the Northeast, and a much greater effect in other parts of the country.

Thinking for a moment about the maps and tables presented in chapter 3, and the discussion of previous research over the past several decades in chapter 2, these results make sense, especially within the secular-religious competition framework. Prior to 2000, few religious 'Nones' were open and vocal about their lack of affiliation with a religious identity. Much of the conflict between religious groups in American politics was a matter of doctrine; Catholics routinely clashed with Protestants in the political arena, or religious groups were characterized by in-fighting over wedge issues rather than conflicts focused externally toward outgroup members (Layman 2001, ch. 1). Somewhat contrary to Layman's (2001) findings, however, the evidence presented here suggests that religious

context tends to sort people more along symbolic ideological lines than it does along partisan lines. While this could be a function of an ongoing partisan realignment we are not fully appreciative of quite yet, these results confirm the central argument of this study: religious diversity plays a significant role in shaping micro- and macro-political attitudes, but this effect is not constant over time or across regions.

Table 4.3: Linear Regression of % Liberal with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors

	Overall	Pre-2000	Post-2000	South	Northeast	West	Midwest
% Liberal$_{t-1}$	.76*	.75*	.72*	.67*	.70*	.82*	.77*
	(.07)	(.14)	(.09)	(.12)	(.11)	(.08)	(.09)
% None	-4.97	-15.44	-9.24	4.80	-8.31	-7.10	-16.46
	(9.66)	(24.02)	(7.57)	(23.08)	(16.64)	(9.83)	(20.91)
% None$_{t-1}$	9.79	2.70	13.22	-6.48	9.86	13.77	22.02
	(9.68)	(22.88)	(7.89)	(24.09)	(17.24)	(10.17)	(22.58)
% Evan. Prot.	-15.91*	-18.65	-11.16*	-13.68	-39.87*	-14.10*	-24.17*
	(4.88)	(9.59)	(4.69)	(7.38)	(14.41)	(6.60)	(8.37)
% Evan. Prot.$_{t-1}$	12.36*	12.32	7.09	8.42	9.31	8.07	20.35*
	(4.88)	(9.10)	(4.88)	(7.15)	(14.94)	(6.45)	(8.45)
% Catholic	-10.76*	-14.29*	-3.78	-14.81*	-10.13	-9.53*	-16.77*
	(3.33)	(6.58)	(3.59)	(7.40)	(5.47)	(4.24)	(5.93)
% Catholic$_{t-1}$	11.09*	11.95*	8.75*	12.78	2.22	9.93*	15.08*
	(2.90)	(5.20)	(3.46)	(7.33)	(5.07)	(4.26)	(5.10)
Constant	4.33*	6.68	4.95*	7.40	12.18*	3.03	4.58
	(2.06)	(4.17)	(1.95)	(4.62)	(4.15)	(2.11)	(4.92)
Observations	1124	582	542	368	206	274	276
R^2	.66	.63	.75	.50	.62	.69	.66
Wald Chi^2	368.15	63.67	818.23	104.12	128.05	136.11	100.91
Test	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

Source: Enns and Koch (2013)
** $p < .05$*

Tables 4.3 and 4.4 model public mood (or operational ideology) as a function of state religious context, similar to models of partisanship and symbolic ideology already presented. Religious context plays little role in shaping operational ideology on its own, at least as it is measured here as an overall measure of public mood in the liberal direction. In the pooled time series, as well as both prior to and after the year 2000,

religious context is not found to be a significant explanation of variation in public mood. Changes in the religious landscape of states does not translate into changes in public mood in the aggregate until after the year 2000, when the proportion of evangelical Protestants in a state is significantly correlated with how liberal people are along 73 issue areas. Similar to partisanship in Table 4.1, operational ideology has only recently come under the influence of religious context.

Table 4.4: Linear Regression of Public Mood (Liberalism) with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors

	Overall	Pre-2000	Post-2000	South	Northeast	West	Midwest
Public Mood$_{t-1}$	.88* (.05)	1.02* (.09)	.74* (.08)	.89* (.07)	.83* (.09)	.89* (.08)	.85* (.08)
% None	6.20	8.39	-2.92	-3.03	-4.56	17.55	-4.62
	(8.70)	(14.48)	(8.71)	(16.25)	(12.81)	(10.71)	(16.88)
% None$_{t-1}$	-2.35	-.94	-5.40	11.29	-5.18	-8.68	7.03
	(8.88)	(13.89)	(9.22)	(16.90)	(13.54)	(11.18)	(18.36)
% Evan. Prot.	-3.14 (4.29)	3.55 (5.34)	-11.90* (5.68)	-2.55 (5.08)	-7.88 (10.66)	1.47 (7.08)	-9.23 (6.64)
% Evan. Prot.$_{t-1}$	.87 (4.32)	1.39 (5.26)	-1.47 (5.98)	4.19 (4.79)	-14.37 (11.39)	-4.55 (7.28)	-.47 (6.73)
% Catholic	-2.73	-.76	-1.44	-3.04	-3.97	-.71	-7.52
	(3.00)	(3.92)	(4.26)	(5.35)	(4.23)	(4.73)	(4.70)
% Catholic$_{t-1}$	1.42	3.47	-2.85	4.56	-5.62	-.89	.59
	(2.71)	(3.29)	(4.17)	(5.36)	(4.01)	(4.68)	(4.08)
Constant	4.83	-4.06	15.91*	2.68	14.10*	3.59	9.37
	(2.61)	(3.93)	(3.40)	(4.31)	(4.82)	(3.05)	(5.12)
Observations	1124	582	542	368	206	274	276
R^2	.81	.91	.77	.81	.74	.83	.77
Wald Chi^2	494.11	229.07	491.90	284.05	131.11	168.77	146.14
Test	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

Source: Enns and Koch (2013)
** $p < .05$*

Table 4.4 takes this analysis one step further by incorporating partisanship and symbolic ideology into the model of public mood as well, in addition to the religious context variables. Table 4.4 results, when considered alongside results from Tables 4.1 and 4.2, show both the direct and indirect effects of religious context on political context. Beyond the year 2000, the proportion of evangelical Protestants and Catholics in a state are directly related to the overall public mood in a state. Higher values of each correlate with less liberalism among the public. Lagged values of Catholics tend to pull public mood in the conservative direction in the Northeast, as well. Indirectly, religious context drives symbolic ideology and partisanship during different time periods and in different regions, which in turn shifts public mood. Both political phenomena have regional effects, only influencing public mood in the South and Northeast, regions where religious context play a more prominent role in shaping macro-politics.

There are important implications of these findings. Even while accounting for two of the most important predictors of public mood, the proportion of religious groups in a state also holds explanatory power. Even more important, temporal and regional variation also emerges. These models account for the variation in public mood attributable to symbolic ideology (and the lagged terms for each), and still reveal a statistically significant relationship with religious context, and this relationship varies across time and region as expected given evidence in tables 4.1 - 4.3 and the descriptive analyses in chapter 3. These results show a much more complicated relationship between religion and politics than standard models of religious context suggest.

Table 4.5: Linear Regression of Public Mood (Liberalism) with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors

	Overall	Pre-2000	Post-2000	South	Northeast	West	Midwest
Public Mood$_{t-1}$	.67*	.82*	.58*	.70*	.64*	.66*	.62*
	(.07)	(.11)	(.10)	(.07)	(.08)	(.10)	(.08)
% None	2.50	6.00	-4.67	-6.68	-7.55	12.47	-5.27
	(7.91)	(12.68)	(8.05)	(12.55)	(8.69)	(9.61)	(12.79)
% None$_{t-1}$	-2.03	.86	-9.13	9.87	-6.41	-8.50	2.40
	(7.96)	(12.29)	(8.39)	(13.02)	(9.35)	(9.89)	(13.95)
% Evan. Prot.	-2.19	3.81	-9.70*	-2.04	3.21	-.13	-2.48
	(3.42)	(4.08)	(4.19)	(3.96)	(6.44)	(6.08)	(5.10)
% Evan. Prot.$_{t-1}$	-.06	1.83	-4.30	4.19	-8.40	-2.63	-1.28
	(3.64)	(4.47)	(4.99)	(3.73)	(7.47)	(6.19)	(5.13)
% Catholic	-.86	1.34	-2.44	-1.38	.49	-.51	-4.30
	(2.39)	(3.02)	(3.19)	(4.13)	(2.71)	(4.20)	(3.48)
% Catholic$_{t-1}$	-1.35	2.17	-7.05*	1.76	-6.11*	-3.39	-.76
	(2.23)	(2.58)	(3.32)	(4.04)	(2.74)	(4.33)	(3.20)
% Liberal	.24*	.20	.19	.22*	.34*	.19	.19
	(.08)	(.12)	(.10)	(.09)	(.08)	(.14)	(.10)
% Liberal$_{t-1}$	.04	.03	.13	.07	-.05	.06	.06
	(.09)	(.13)	(.12)	(.10)	(.09)	(.15)	(.10)
% Democrat	.12*	.06	.08	.13*	.13*	.10	.18*
	(.05)	(.07)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.11)	(.07)
% Democrat$_{t-1}$	-.03	.01	-.02	-.03	-.02	.03	-.01
	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.05)	(.06)	(.11)	(.07)
Constant	5.73*	-2.51	16.11*	2.18	9.63*	5.51	7.60
	(2.44)	(3.83)	(3.10)	(3.28)	(3.34)	(3.06)	(3.90)
Observations	1124	582	542	368	206	274	276
R^2	.86	.94	.81	.86	.84	.87	.84
Wald Chi^2	701.61	327.15	709.06	607.20	312.95	255.20	297.31
Test	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

Source: Enns and Koch (2013)
* $p < .05$

While Table 4.4 reveals little effect of religious diversity on public mood, a central claim to the culture wars framework is that evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' react to heightened levels of the other group. In that case, there should be an interactive effect between the proportion of each group in a state. Does the effect of

religious ‘Nones’ in a state depend on the proportion of evangelical Protestants present? Table 4.5 below presents evidence to suggest that yes, it does. The interactive effect varies, however, depending on the secular-religious competition typology. In evangelical-dominant states, higher values in both variables results in a significant downtick in aggregate policy mood liberalism. In contested states, the interaction has a very significant positive effect on the overall level of policy mood liberalism. In None-dominant states, however, there is no statistically significant effect.

To best evaluate the effect of the interaction, Figures 4.8 and 4.9 plot the marginal effect of the proportion of religious ‘Nones’ on aggregate policy liberalism in a state, given various levels of evangelical Protestants after the year 2000. The graphs plot the linear prediction varying only these two variables, while holding all other variables constant at their central tendency. Figure 4.8 graphs linear predictions among evangelical-dominant states. Regardless of the proportion of evangelical Protestants in the state, evangelical-dominant states experience a statistically significant downtick in aggregate policy mood liberalism with every percentage-point increase in the proportion of religious ‘Nones’. The effect, however, increases drastically the larger the proportion of evangelical Protestants are present. When the proportion of religious ‘Nones’ in the state is zero, or close to zero, the predicted level of aggregate policy mood liberalism is roughly 40, regardless of how big the proportion of evangelical Protestants are present. Moving from zero to roughly half of the population, however, results in a drastic downtick the larger the proportion of evangelical Protestants there are. The predicted value in a state with 20% evangelical Protestants is roughly 30. In a state with 80% evangelical Protestants, the predicted value falls well below zero – a value not possible

given the range of this variable. The effect is so large it sends the linear prediction off the scale. Figure 4.9 shows the opposite effect for contested states; the proportion of religious 'Nones' has a statistically significant and substantively large positive effect on aggregate policy mood liberalism. Linear predictions for None-dominant states were not plotted, as the interaction between the two variables of interest is not statistically significant.

Table 4.6: Linear Regression of Public Mood (Liberalism) with Panel-Corrected Standard Errors

	Evangelical Dominant		*Contested*		*None Dominant*	
Public Mood$_{t-1}$	.54*	.52*	.56*	.56*	.65*	.65*
	(.10)	(.11)	(.09)	(.09)	(.10)	(.10)
% None X % Evan. Prot.		-160.70*		462.12*		71.76
		(50.97)		(157.51)		(95.79)
% None	-28.52*	18.00	6.73	-65.88*	4.40	-2.84
	(10.39)	(20.13)	(9.71)	(24.72)	(10.93)	(13.60)
% None$_{t-1}$	-1.59	-2.75	-4.06	-7.31	-20.90*	-20.43*
	(16.71)	(16.29)	(6.24)	(6.02)	(9.65)	(9.52)
% Evan. Prot.	-10.63*	1.35	-21.94*	-81.92*	7.05	-8.62
	(3.26)	(4.80)	(7.25)	(24.04)	(10.41)	(26.25)
% Evan. Prot.$_{t-1}$	-7.44	-6.72	-1.29	1.85	-4.84	-4.65
	(4.99)	(5.08)	(6.31)	(5.76)	(9.29)	(9.31)
% Catholic	-5.19	-5.13	1.66	1.15	-1.95	-1.89
	(3.94)	(4.00)	(3.87)	(3.41)	(4.04)	(4.06)
% Catholic$_{t-1}$	-5.17	-4.73	-6.50	-8.22	-6.54	-6.82
	(4.75)	(4.59)	(4.55)	(4.47)	(3.59)	(3.67)
% Liberal	.05	.05	.15	.13	.41*	.41*
	(.09)	(.09)	(.12)	(.11)	(.14)	(.14)
% Liberal$_{t-1}$	.25*	.22	.23	.22	-.12	-.12
	(.12)	(.12)	(.13)	(.12)	(.17)	(.17)
% Democrat	.10	.11*	.05	.03	-.00	-.00
	(.05)	(.05)	(.07)	(.06)	(.11)	(.11)
% Democrat$_{t-1}$	-.02	.01	-.04	-.01	.04	.04
	(.06)	(.07)	(.08)	(.07)	(.11)	(.11)
Constant	19.48*	16.38*	15.27*	25.06*	12.95*	14.31*
	(4.69)	(4.38)	(3.22)	(5.09)	(3.22)	(4.06)
Observations	269	269	129	129	144	144
R^2	.68	.69	.77	.79	.78	.78

Table 4.6 -- continued

Wald Chi^2	113.61	248.16	638.92	504.62	286.34	286.34
Test	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00

Source: Enns and Koch (2013)
** p < .05*

Figure 4.8: Linear Prediction of State Public Mood in Evangelical-Dominant States Post-2000

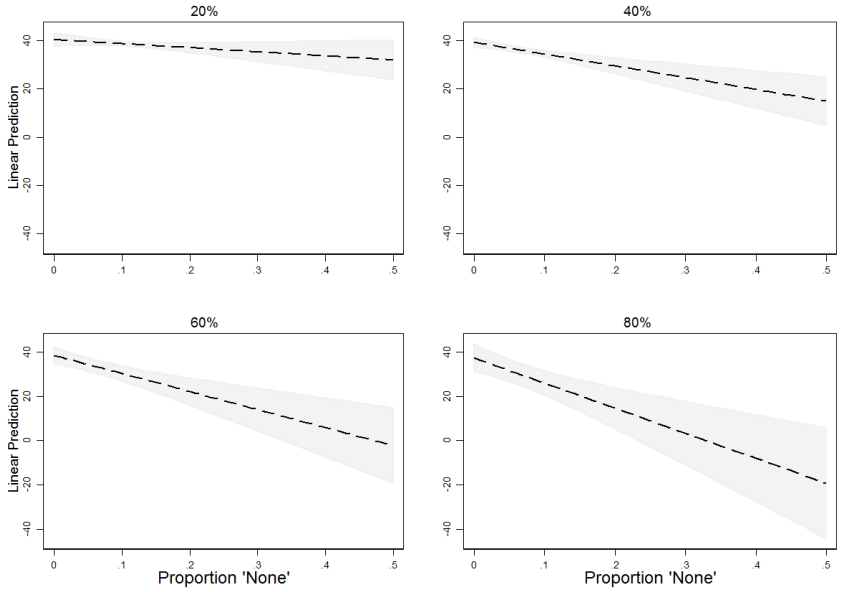
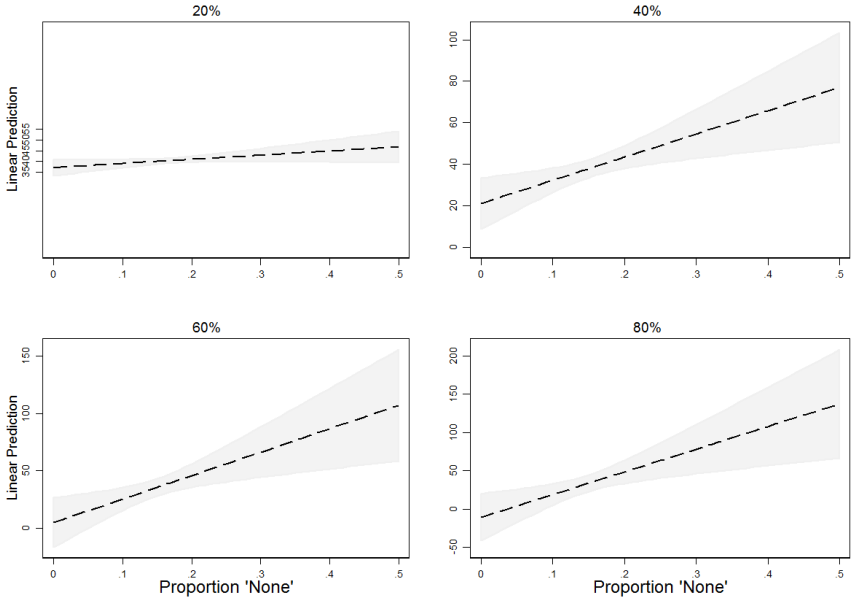


Figure 4.9: Linear Prediction of State Public Mood in Contested States Post-2000



Concluding remarks

We can now see that religious context and political context are intertwined in a manner much more complicated than previously understood. Determining the direction and strength of the causal arrow remains a problem, but a relationship is shown to exist; religious and political contexts merge to create political outcomes. Tying these direct and indirect pathways to specific policies or election results remains a task for future work. However, we can safely say that the proportion of religious groups in the states influences partisanship, symbolic ideology, and public mood. These three factors are known to be significant predictors of various other outcomes of interest. This relationship between religious and political contexts varies over time and differs by region.

Interestingly, religious diversity and secular-religious competition have complimentary effects on the micro- and macro-political attitudes in the states. Secular-religious competition shapes individual vote choice in presidential elections and plays a significant role in how Americans view different issues. The evidence presented here shows no effect of competition on whether a person identifies as a liberal, conservative, or moderate. In the aggregate, however, religious diversity plays far less of a role in shaping partisanship and public mood, but has a very strong effect on symbolic ideology. Religious diversity and secular-religious competition are complimentary in that they are both functions of the religious landscape of a state, and both operate on different components of political attitudes.

While religious context has a non-constant effect on state politics across various time periods and regions, the effect is non-zero and varies in strength and significance.

This is an important consideration to make when modeling political outcomes at the state level. Properly accounting for religious context, in the same way one would concern themselves with properly accounting for racial/ethnic context, is critical to model specification. Models failing to account for these dynamic relationships could potentially lead to faulty inferences.

The religious landscape of our communities determines the range of political preferences of our elected officials, drives policy decisions, even influences how we view each other. The growth of the Christian Right is commonly referred to as a 'cultural defense movement', a function of converging moments of modernization and expansion of central government to deal with the challenges of a technologically-advancing society. The growth and success of the Christian Right is a function of the secularization of politics in an increasingly technological society. Likewise, the secularization of politics can be traced back to the counter-culture movements of the 1960s and 1970s; which were, of course, a reaction to the political hegemony enjoyed by moral Christians across America, particularly in the post-war peacetime of the late 1940s and 1950s. The two groups have seemingly been locked in an ongoing cycle of reactionary politics.

This chapter began by asking such a question: Is a political cycle unfolding in American politics directly tying religious 'Nones' and evangelical Protestants together? The evidence presented here suggests that the answer to this question is no. Reactionary behavior between the two groups has created a series of public political clashes leading observers to conclude the two groups are locked in never-ending conflict. Understanding the ways these religious groups influence politics beyond simply sparking a reaction from the other side is critical if we are to truly understand how religion and politics are

intertwined in the states. In a world of growing polarization and geographic sorting among likeminded ideologues and partisans (Gelman 2009; Bishop 2012), the story of state-level politics over the past several decades is partly one of secular-religious competition. These two groups have independent effects on shaping politics in their states, however, regardless of whether the other group is present or not. This begs the question: are Americans aware of the size of outgroups in their state and reacting to actual levels, or are they more influenced by perceived levels of threat from such out groups? Chapter 5 turns to this question next.

CHAPTER FIVE

Perceived Threat, Group Influence, and Political Participation

Previous chapters explored evidence for religious context influencing political attitudes of Americans and the states they live in. Chapter four, using measures of religious context introduced in chapter three, illustrated how both individual attitudes and aggregate political characteristics of the states (symbolic ideology, public mood, and partisanship) are influenced by competition between religious groups and the overall religious diversity of the state. In other words, religious context is a significant influence on the political attitudes of individuals, as well as the overall distribution of political attitudes within and across states.

Part of the problem when analyzing religious context is determining whether people are even aware of the context they reside in. Does the reality of a person's religious context match their perceptions? Do perceptions of a person's environment matter more, or less, in determining political attitudes than the reality of religious context? It is one thing to show state-level variables measuring secular-religious competition are associated with political attitudes; it is another to determine whether people can accurately determine what their religious context is. Most people probably do not think in terms of the religious landscape in their communities. If they understand it at all, it is probably not informed by any empirical measure. People develop an understanding of their environment that may or may not reflect reality. Perceptions about other religious groups and the religious landscape where a person lives can be something separate and independent of the actual presence of other groups and the actual religious

landscape. To better understand the significance of religious context in American politics, we must then consider both subjective individual perceptions and objective empirical measures.

This chapter now turns to understanding whether evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' are locked in a culture war, or if political conflict between them is instead best understood within the secular-religious competition framework. There is evidence that these two groups may not be as directly motivated by each other in their actions than the culture wars narrative describes. To do so, this study distinguishes between actual measures of group dynamics and perceived measures, using survey data. Perceived political threats from out-groups, while important in determining attitudes and opinions, are not strongly related to political participation. Instead, religious identity drives political activities such as attending meetings, rallies and protests, using political yard signs and bumper stickers, participating in petition drives, working on campaigns, and donating money to candidates when people experience a threat of declining in-group influence. The activity and membership numbers of out-groups matter far less.

I show that respondents' subjective perceptions of relative levels of in-group influence affects how their own religious identity will impact participation, controlling for actual levels of change in state religious context. These new findings expose limitations of our current understanding of how religion shapes participation in politics, open the door to a new avenue of research into religion and politics by conceiving of participation in terms of psychology and relative levels of influence, and has practical significance for campaign micro-targeting.

Religious group threat

Limited scholarly attention has been paid to the interactions between religious groups within the political arena, especially inter-religious group threat. What influence, if any, do perceptions of influence of other religious groups have on political participation of American voters? How much does in-group influence matter, relative to out-group influence? Pundits and politicians alike describe an ongoing culture war between religious and secular people in America. Conservative evangelical Protestants attempt to engage citizens by pointing out a growing secular threat in American politics; seculars have begun to organize with interest groups and lobbying efforts which mostly did not exist until recently. How do Christian perceptions of a growing secular threat, and secular perceptions of Christian influence in politics, play into their respective decisions to participate in politics? Few studies have explored these questions in political science and how political behavior among members of religious groups is shaped or determined by how they view other groups around them.

An approach to religious group interactions growing in popularity among scholars is group-threat theory. A focus on inter-group conflict and perceptions of group threat is developed as a core explanatory variable predicting political participation in this research, building from work by Campbell (2004; 2006). Campbell (2006) weaves group threat theory into his approach to religion and politics, tracing its use from Key (1946) through the civil rights era and beyond (Matthews and Prothro 1963; Blalock 1967; Wright 1977; Giles and Buckner 1993). Campbell examines presidential election results from 2004 to determine whether evangelical Protestants felt threatened by greater proportions of secularists in their communities. He finds that voting preferences among white

evangelical Protestants are determined, to a large extent, by the community context they are in. The higher the number of secularists in their communities, the more likely white evangelical Protestants are to vote Republican.

Most studies connecting context to individual level political behavior or attitudes, however, typically use objective measures of religiosity. Using proportions of religious adherents in a particular geographic area as a measure of threat, for instance, relies on the assumption that people are aware of that part of the population and of their relative size. Where previous studies have been unable to strongly connect context to behavior, this chapter leverages unique survey questions designed to reveal attitudes about perceived threat and influence of religious groups in American politics.

This chapter tests perceived level of influence religious group members imagine their group to have, and shows how perceived influence and threat may guide behavior and political participation within different contexts. In the analyses that follow I find that white evangelical Protestants are less concerned about the relative position of seculars in politics and are much more concerned with the loss of Christian influence in politics. On the other hand, secular Americans are not concerned about the relative level of Christian influence in politics and only their in-group level of influence is a significant predictor of political behavior.

Religion and American politics: evangelical Protestants and religious 'nones'

Much of the religion and American politics research analyzes specific denominations, focused on congregations and religious organizations. Conceptualizations of the congregation as a source of social capital have been used to explain connections

between service attendance and civic engagement (Verba, Brady, and Schlozman 1995; Campbell 2004; Beyerlein and Hipp 2006; McDaniel 2008; Djupe and Gilbert 2009). Frequent association with other religious members of a person's congregation, via the organizational mechanism of church attendance, leads to higher levels of civic engagement. Churches are one of the most common ways by which Americans engage in civic society, learn about politics, and form their opinions (Putnam 2001).

Other research explores idiosyncratic political behavior amongst members of certain denominations (Jelen and Wilcox 1991; Campbell 2006; Ayers and Hofstetter 2008; Cann 2008; Hofstetter, Ayers, and Perry 2008; Jalalzai 2009), analyzes how religiosity and strength of attachment to a religious identity factors into party identification and/or political attitudes (Barreto and Bozonelos 2009; Campbell, Green, and Layman 2011; Gasim, Choi, and Patterson 2014), and considers religious out-groups in the United States such as Muslims (Dana, Barreto, and Oskooii 2011) and Latino Americans (Taylor, Gershon, and Pantoja 2012). Congregational research is rich in detail and incredibly valuable for understanding members within denominations, but tells us little about how interactions between religious groups plays out in politics in real-time.[21] Likewise, individual-level analyses of membership in specific denominations is limited in their ability to understand perceptions of other religious groups.

This chapter tests hypotheses derived from an application of group threat theory to the realm of religion and politics, or the culture wars framework. The culture wars framework relies on the theoretical foundation of group threat theory. Scholars of group

[21] For an exception to this, see Schoettmer's (2014) work analyzing connections between race, religion and political engagement. While useful in terms of understanding interactions between in- and out-groups and the effect such interactions have on political engagement, the work is limited in scope to Muslim Americans.

threat theory generally fall into two camps with competing hypotheses: conflict and contact. Conflict theorists argue that the presence of an out-group generates tension with the in-group, leading to reactionary behavior among in-group members. Within the context of race and politics, higher levels of African-Americans in the population typically translates into increased support among white voters for racially conservative candidates and policies (Key 1949; Blalock 1967; Tolbert and Hero 1996; Hero 1999). The contact hypothesis, on the other hand, argues that higher numbers of out-group members lead in-group members to become socialized to their presence, so to speak, and become more accepting and tolerant. Generally speaking, the contact hypothesis is used to explain attitudes, beliefs, and views toward minority groups, rather than explaining any specific behavior. There is evidence to support both sides of the debate (Carsey 1995; Alvarez and Butterfield 2000; Hood and Morris 2000).

However, the central focus of this chapter is not race and politics, but the interplay between out-group members who do not affiliate with a religious denomination (religious 'Nones') and in-group white evangelical Protestants. As has been a theme throughout this study, very little research has looked specifically at the relationship between evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones', and how that relationship translates into political participation. Evangelical Protestants have been found to be rather intolerant of religious 'Nones', but the source of this intolerance is in dispute and likely a function of several factors (Wilcox and Jelen 1990). A limitation of previous studies of group threat theory and religion and politics has been limited independent variables operationalizing the concepts of group threat. So far, proportions of religious groups in a certain community, neighborhood, or state context have been used by previous scholars

to measure threat. But objective religious group size may or may not accurately reflect perceptions of inter-group influence.

We know that individuals exercise bounded rationality and motivated reasoning: "people are more likely to arrive at conclusions they want to arrive at," and to selectively search out information (Kunda 1990:480; see also Lodge and Taber 2000; Redlawsk 2002; Lau and Redlawsk 2006). In terms of electoral contests, Uhlaner and Grofman (1986) discuss how perceptions of competition in upcoming elections are generally consistent with their preferences; people engage in what is known as "wishful thinking," perceiving their favored candidate will win an election whether the election is close or not. Previous research has found perceptions to be a very strong predictor of political behavior, such as voting even when also controlling for objective measures of electoral competition (McDonald and Tolbert 2012). Perceptions of relative levels of religious group influence could be wildly different from reality and modeling perceptions instead of objective measures of influence allows researchers to get closer to the concept of ultimate interest: threat.

Religious group threat – in-group and out-group

Research into public opinion has found that Americans often use heuristics (i.e. informational short cuts) and limited information (Zaller 1992; Lau and Redlawsk 2006). Political psychology adds to this understanding by showing how decision-making, such as those involving vote choice or decisions about political participation, are generally housed in two separate emotional processes: the dispositional system and the surveillance system (Marcus et al 2001). Most of the time, people are 'flying on auto-pilot',

confirming previously-held beliefs and utilizing information shortcuts. However, every so often, a shock to the system occurs, causing people to switch from the auto-pilot dispositional system to the surveillance system, allowing them to re-evaluate facts and circumstances surrounding them with more careful attention.

I contend a similar effect mediates the relationship between religious group identity and political participation. Perceptions of influence links group identity to participatory behavior. When religious group members perceive their group to hold a relatively high level of influence, their group identity does not drive them to participate at higher rates. When something causes them to believe their group is losing influence in politics, the surveillance system is triggered and group members are suddenly more active and engaged in the political process.

This chapter utilizes a nationally representative survey in which respondents were asked specifically about Christian influence in politics. Christian politicians frequently cite the growth of secular values and the encroachment of the irreligious left as reasons for conservative Christians to participate in politics. Appeals to Christian values and a promise to uphold Christian roots are, many times, the core of candidates' campaign messages. The widespread influence of Christianity in politics, on the other hand, is viewed as problematic to those wishing to separate church and state, and new research suggests the wedding of conservative politics with religion may be driving the rise of secularism in the United States (Campbell, Layman, and Green 2017). This work argues the enmeshing of religion into political messaging has been driving people with tenuous connections to the Christian faith away from religion in a significant manner.

I assume that when Christians are concerned about the loss of influence of Christian values in politics it is not because of another religion moving in, but rather due to secular irreligious values that strip Christianity out of politics. When seculars are concerned about growing Christian influence in politics it is due to a loss of secular influence in politics. This conceptualization of the conflict hypothesis suggests a zero-sum game: for one group to exercise greater levels of influence over politics the other must experience a loss of influence. I test two possible hypotheses regarding the interplay between religious affiliation, perceptions of influence, and political participation. First, I look for evidence of out-group threat:

H_{1a}: Perceptions of greater numbers of secular citizens leads evangelical Protestants to react by increasing participation in politics.

H_{1b}: Perceptions of greater Christian influence in politics leads religious 'Nones' to react by participating more in politics.

The best way to explain political behavior of evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' takes the group conflict hypothesis one step further. Instead of reacting to each other, political behavior of evangelicals and 'Nones' is driven by the perceptions each group has of their own group's level of influence. That is, the sphere of influence a person believes their group maintains in the political arena determines whether group identity affects their rate of participation.

Marcus et al (2001) describe the triggers switching people from one decision-making process (dispositional) to the other (surveillance) as feelings of anxiety and

operationalize them in a rather broad way in their research. The authors link anxiety to activation of the surveillance system and a de-coupling from the dispositional system. While emotions are not measured directly here, feelings of anxiety are driven by concern over the relative level of influence a person's group has in politics. When influence is high, people continue business-as-usual dispositional decision-making processes. When influence is low, however, people react and engage more in politics to boost their group's standing in civil society. This leads us to the conditional sphere of influence hypothesis:

H_{2a}: The effect of religious group identity is conditioned by perceived levels of influence of their group.

H_{2b}: The effect of group identity among evangelical Protestants is unrelated to perceptions of influence of religious 'Nones'.

H_{2c}: The effect of group identity among religious 'Nones' is unrelated to perceptions of influence of evangelical Protestants.

For the threat mechanism to work as described in the influence hypothesis, individuals must be driven to higher levels of participation *based on their own group's perceived level of influence*. To reiterate, the hypotheses being tested are roughly based on competing theories of group threat. Evidence for the conflict hypothesis (H_1) would be a positive effect on political participation among evangelicals whenever they perceive a growing number of religious 'Nones' in their community, or a positive effect on political participation among religious 'Nones' whenever they perceive a growing influence of Christian values on politics. Evidence for the sphere of influence hypothesis (H_2) would

be a positive effect on participation among evangelicals whenever they perceive Christian values are losing influence, as well as a positive effect among religious 'Nones' when they perceive decreasing numbers of secular-minded people in their community, while neither group experiences an effect of group identity on participation when perceiving higher levels of influence of the outgroup. The next section turns to the data and modeling strategies used to test the above hypotheses.

Modeling religious influence and participation

Unique survey questions designed by the author about voter anxiety regarding group influence were included on the 2014 Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES), a nationally representative internet survey drawing respondents from all fifty states. Half of the CCES questionnaire is team content designed by participating institutions asked of a subset of 1,000 people. The survey is fielded in two waves during election years, pre- and post-election in which parts of the survey are completed over time beginning in late September and stretching into the end of October.

Two questions are of importance to this study: (1) are Christian values gaining influence in politics, losing influence, or has the influence of Christian values in politics remained about the same? (2) Is the number of non-religious/secular people residing in your community getting larger, smaller, or has it remained about the same? These questions tap into anxiety mechanisms for evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones'. The decline in influence of Christian values in politics over time is a primary concern for evangelical Protestants, especially politically active evangelicals. The spread of religious 'Nones' and their secular worldview has been a primary concern for evangelical

Protestants for several decades now. A loss in Christian influence or an increase in numbers of religious 'Nones' are problematic for evangelicals and can generate a feeling of anxiety about their position in the political realm, triggering a switch to the surveillance system. Meanwhile, an increase in the influence of Christian values or a decrease in numbers of secular people are problematic for religious 'Nones' for a similar reason. Both questions elucidate similar feelings of anxiety for religious and irreligious citizens alike – the relative level of influence their group has in the political arena.

Figure 5.1: Distribution of Perceived Christian Influence in Politics

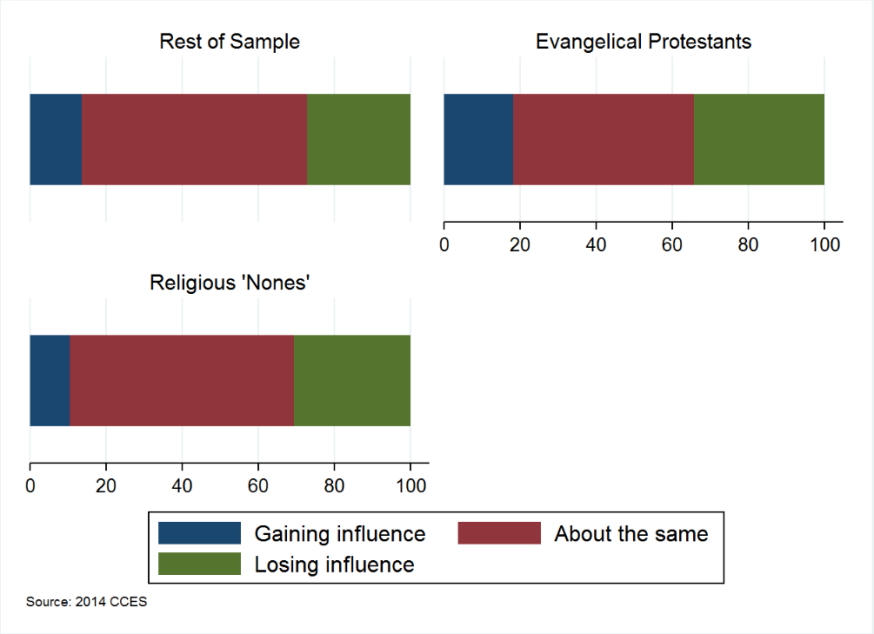
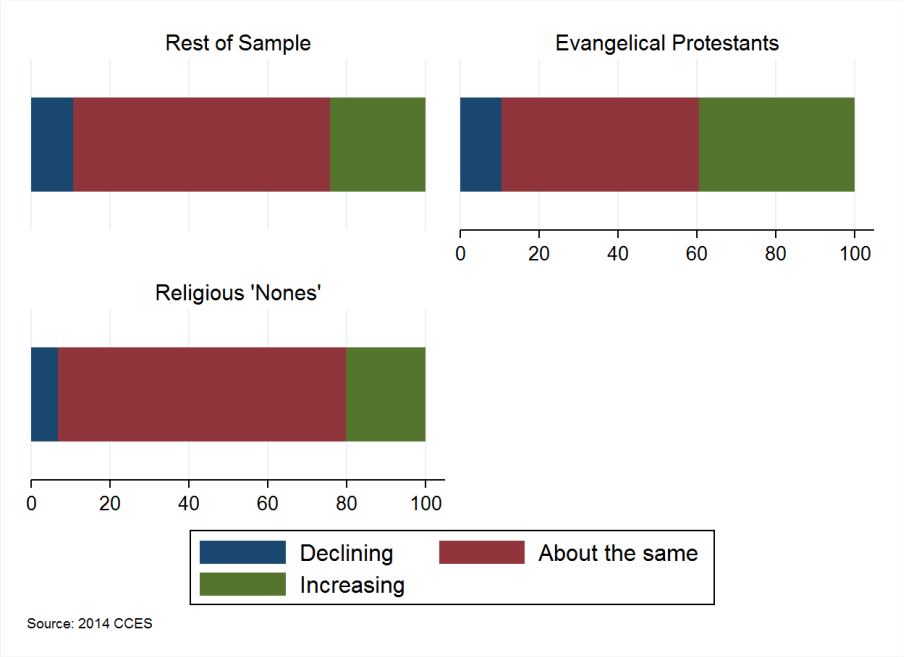


Figure 5.2: Distribution of Perceived Number of Religious 'Nones'



As shown in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, relative to non-evangelicals, evangelical respondents are more likely to respond either gaining or losing influence rather than 'about the same', an indication that evangelicals are of a stronger opinion about this subject than the rest of the population. The direction of this opinion is very important. Comparing Figure 5.1 to 5.2, evangelical Protestants are more likely than religious 'Nones' to respond that Christianity is gaining influence, evidence of the 'wishful thinking' phenomenon described earlier. Similarly, evangelicals are equally likely to respond that Christian influence is decreasing relative to non-evangelicals, but much more likely to respond that influence is growing. Again comparing the two figures, evangelicals are much more likely than religious 'Nones' to perceive growth in the number of secular people in their community, while the two are roughly equally likely to see a decline in that number. This potentially provides evidence of threat on its face; in

the aggregate, evangelicals are more likely than other groups to perceive growing numbers of secular people around them, whether or not this is actually true.

Among the unaffiliated the story is slightly different. Religious 'Nones' are more likely to see no change in their numbers while being less likely to respond the number is either increasing or decreasing relative to the religiously affiliated. Meanwhile, they are more likely to see Christian values losing influence and less likely to see Christian values gaining influence than the rest of the population. This may suggest a lack of communal cohesion among religious 'Nones' – perhaps they do not perceive greater numbers of secular-minded people in their community because the central organizing function of a church is not present for such groups of people. Regardless, the trends appear different for these two questions amongst evangelicals and religious 'Nones'.

Ultimately this chapter is interested in differences in political behavior, specifically participation in the 2014 midterm elections. A series of questions asked respondents about various activities they may have engaged in: voting (59.7%), attending a meeting or rally (11.64%), placing a sign in their yard or bumper sticker on their car supporting a candidate (12.56%), working for a campaign (5.71%), and donating money to a candidate or campaign (16.89%).[22] Each respondent was scored based on how many of these activities they participated in and this becomes the dependent variable. The dependent variable measures how active in politics a respondent was in the 2014 midterm elections. Most people engaged in at least one of the five types of political activities, while 36.9% did not participate at all.

[22] The CCES is a nationally representative survey of registered voters. Higher rates of political participation in all areas described as part of the dependent variable are to be expected.

Independent variables of interest are the two questions tapping into perceptions of influence levels. Using the two questions described above a series of dummy variables are constructed that allow responses of 'about the same' on both questions to be set as the reference categories while including all indicators for the other four possible options. Simply put, the models include binary variables for the high and low values of each influence question. In addition, a series of control variables already known to influence participation are included to isolate the effect of relative levels of influence.

The three hypotheses are tested utilizing the following model of the underlying data-generation process:

$$y_i^* = \alpha + b\,X_i + c\delta_i + \varepsilon$$

Where y_i^* is the (exact by unobserved) political participation score for respondent i, b is the estimated effect of a given vector of control variables X_i, c is the estimated effect of the interaction term δ, the quantity of interest, while α and ε are standard intercept and error terms.[23] While we cannot observe y_i^* directly (the exact level of political participation for each respondent), we can sort them into categories based on cut-points. Table 5.1 presents results from a series of ordered logistic regression models.[24] Independent variables controlling for partisanship, race, ethnicity, sex, age, income, and education are included. See appendix tables for full results of each

[23] Due to the nature of internet-based survey data all results are reported using survey weights to account for discrepancies between sample demographics and demographic characteristics of the larger population.

[24] As the variable is essentially a count variable, robustness checks were conducted utilizing poisson regression methods. Results are substantively similar and ordered logistic regression results are reported for ease of interpretation and calculating marginal effects.

multivariate regression model. The variables of interest are reported at the top of the table. Interaction variables speaking to group threat are clustered at the top, followed by variables testing the influence hypothesis. Each model controls for actual change in both the proportion of religious 'Nones' and the proportion of evangelicals between 2008 and 2013.[25]

Table 5.1: Ordered Logistic Regression of Political Participation Score

Threat Variables								
E.P. X:								
Nones ↓	-.975 (.60)							
Nones ↑		-.056 (.43)						
None X:								
Christianity ↓			-.142 (.42)					
Christianity ↑				.466 (.55)				
Influence Variables								
E.P X:								
Christianity ↓					.686* (.41)			
Christianity ↑						-1.230* (.65)		
None X:								
Nones ↓							1.929* (.71)	
Nones ↑								-.368 (.45)
Δ Nones '08-'13	1.297 (3.84)	1.557 (3.82)	1.582 (3.84)	1.607 (3.83)	1.648 (3.79)	1.610 (3.84)	1.383 (3.84)	1.504 (3.81)
Δ Born Again '08 – '13	2.198 (3.60)	2.123 (3.58)	2.043 (3.59)	2.047 (3.58)	1.901 (3.59)	1.946 (3.66)	1.875 (3.58)	2.067 (3.58)
Evangelical Protestant	-.185 (.37)	-.269 (.42)	-.298 (.36)	-.296 (.36)	-.527 (.40)	-.091 (.36)	-.296 (.36)	-.295 (.36)

[25] This measure is developed and described in Chapter 3.

Table 5.1 -- continued

Protestant	-.414	-.422	-.420	-.420	-.423	-.419	-.425	-.428
	(.32)	(.32)	(.32)	(.32)	(.32)	(.33)	(.33)	(.32)
Catholic	-.031	-.034	-.037	-.034	-.022	-.035	-.042	-.034
	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)
None	-.329	-.355	-.313	-.417	-.368	-.364	-.477	-.268
	(.31)	(.31)	(.35)	(.31)	(.31)	(.30)	(.31)	(.32)
Christianity ↓	.457*	.454*	.487*	.452*	.268	.430*	.445*	.444*
	(.19)	(.19)	(.22)	(.19)	(.22)	(.20)	(.19)	(.19)
Christianity ↑	.722*	.696*	.698*	.588*	.729*	1.019*	.738*	.687*
	(.28)	(.28)	(.28)	(.32)	(.28)	(.27)	(.28)	(.28)
Nones ↓	.798*	.543*	.546*	.570*	.552*	.595*	.271	.565*
	(.36)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)
Nones ↑	.662*	.694*	.675*	.686*	.688*	.697*	.672*	.761*
	(.20)	(.23)	(.20)	(.20)	(.20)	(.20)	(.20)	(.23)
Religiosity	1.244*	1.250*	1.252*	1.273*	1.143*	1.188*	1.260*	1.220*
	(.62)	(.62)	(.62)	(.62)	(.62)	(.60)	(.62)	(.62)
Democrat	.521*	.517*	.520*	.518*	.514*	.479	.503*	.505*
	(.30)	(.30)	(.30)	(.30)	(.30)	(.31)	(.30)	(.30)
Republican	.819*	.813*	.818*	.811*	.822*	.771*	.809*	.808*
	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.28)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)	(.28)
Conservative	-.212*	-.218*	-.217*	-.216*	-.207*	-.217*	-.221*	-.222*
	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)
Political Interest	.742*	.728*	.726*	.724*	.734*	.730*	.737*	.736*
	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)
Black	-.048	-.041	-.035	-.040	-.015	.022	-.038	-.032
	(.40)	(.39)	(.40)	(.40)	(.39)	(.39)	(.41)	(.40)
Hispanic	-.779*	-.785*	-.773*	-.774*	-.768*	-.737*	-.778*	-.774*
	(.42)	(.41)	(.41)	(.41)	(.41)	(.42)	(.41)	(.41)
Female	-.199	-.211	-.216	-.219	-.210	-.206	-.195	-.194
	(.19)	(.19)	(.19)	(.19)	(.18)	(.19)	(.19)	(.19)
Age	.023*	.023*	.023*	.023*	.023*	.024*	.023*	.023*
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Income	.056*	.057*	.056*	.055*	.054*	.054*	.061*	.059*
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Education	.174*	.179*	.180*	.179*	.178*	.174*	.174*	.178*
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Cutpoint 1	4.125*	4.050*	4.060*	4.021	3.985*	4.055*	4.044*	4.077*
	(.84)	(.83)	(.84)	(.83)	(.83)	(.83)	(.84)	(.84)
Cutpoint 2	6.739*	6.659*	6.669*	6.634*	6.607*	6.684*	6.670*	6.690*
	(.88)	(.88)	(.89)	(.88)	(.88)	(.88)	(.89)	(.89)

Table 5.1 -- continued

Cutpoint 3	7.869*	7.786*	7.796*	7.760*	7.742*	7.816*	7.802*	7.819*
	(.89)	(.88)	(.90)	(.89)	(.89)	(.89)	(.90)	(.89)
Cutpoint 4	9.194*	9.108*	9.118*	9.080*	9.067*	9.143*	9.127*	9.141*
	(.92)	(.92)	(.93)	(.92)	(.92)	(.92)	(.93)	(.93)
Cutpoint 5	9.987*	9.900*	9.909*	9.872*	9.859*	9.936*	9.920*	9.933*
	(.96)	(.96)	(.97)	(.96)	(.96)	(.96)	(.97)	(.97)
Observations	934	934	934	934	934	934	934	934
Log Likelihood	-1025.22	-1027.12	-1027.05	-1026.59	-1024.85	-1022.88	-1022.39	-1026.61
AIC	2104.43	2108.24	2108.09	2107.18	2103.70	2099.77	2098.78	2107.22

Note: Unstandardized regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. Dependent variables ranges from 0 to 5. Data from 2014 CCES.

There is no unambiguous support for conflict theory present in Table 5.1. The primary variables of interest to the conflict hypothesis are reported in the first four models, where adherence and unaffiliation are interacted with perceived growth in secular members of a respondent's community and perceived level of Christian influence in politics. If the conflict hypothesis were to influence political participation directly, these variables should be positive and statistically significant. They are not positive in three of four cases and not statistically significant in any. Evangelical Protestants in the 2014 midterm elections were not reacting to a perceived growth in irreligious people around them and religious 'Nones' were not reacting to a perceived increase in Christian influence in politics; at least not in the number of political activities they engaged in.

There is, however, strong support for the influence hypotheses in Table 5.1. For evangelical Protestants, the effect of perceived influence is actually largest when they

perceive Christianity to be *gaining* influence. When evangelicals do not perceive external threat, and enjoy growing levels of influence in politics, the incentive to participate is reduced. The coefficient on this interaction term is -1.23 and is statistically significant at the $p < .1$ level. Evangelicals who perceived Christianity is losing influence in politics are more likely to participate in higher numbers of political activities. This is critical. Evangelicals participate more in politics when they feel political influence is slipping away, not when they feel as if they are surrounded by religious 'Nones'.

When evangelical Protestants perceive their group is *losing* influence they react, triggered by the anxiety caused from loss of influence, and engage more in politics. How they evaluate their own group's relative influence in politics is much more important than perceived growth in religious 'Nones'. Whether perceptions of growing numbers of religious 'Nones' triggered a reaction in another manner cannot be discerned from these data; what we can say is that of the evangelical Protestants who believe the number of religious 'Nones' around them is growing, there does not appear to be any systematic influence on how they behave politically. Voter preferences, of course, are not captured here and could very well be influenced. In terms of the activities by which people engage in politics, however, this does not appear to influence evangelical Protestants in the way the conflict hypothesis from group threat theory would suggest. The culture wars framework is incapable of explaining the relationships between religion and political participation evidenced in Table 5.1.

These results also suggest an answer to the perceptions vs. reality question. Perceptions of relative group influence, rather than objective measures of citizen denominational adherence (but while controlling for objective measures as well), drive

political participation more. Objective measures of change in denominational adherence do not have any discernable effect on participation; their coefficients are largely swamped by their standard errors. Political psychology is a better explanation for divergent political behavior by religious (un-)affiliation than group threat theory. Anxiety associated with a perceived loss of influence drives people to participate more often in politics, even when controlling for the variables important to group threat theory. Previous work has found group threat to be an important predictor of attitudes (Campbell 2006), but the evidence shown here does not seem to support the notion that group threat can predict behavior as well. While evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' differ in a great number of ways, they both behave in predictable ways if we can measure relative levels of anxiety in both groups.

To illustrate these results, Figures 5.3 and 5.4 plot the predicted probability of falling into each category of the political participation score, ranging from engaging in no political activity whatsoever to engaging in 5 or more political activities during the 2014 midterm election cycle. Figure 5.3 compares probabilities for evangelical Protestants, using model results from the fifth and sixth models in Table 5.1. Figure 5.4 does the same for religious 'Nones', using model results from the seventh and eighth models in Table 5.1.

Figure 5.3: First Differences of Predicted Probabilities Among Evangelical Protestants, Varying Perceptions of Religious Context

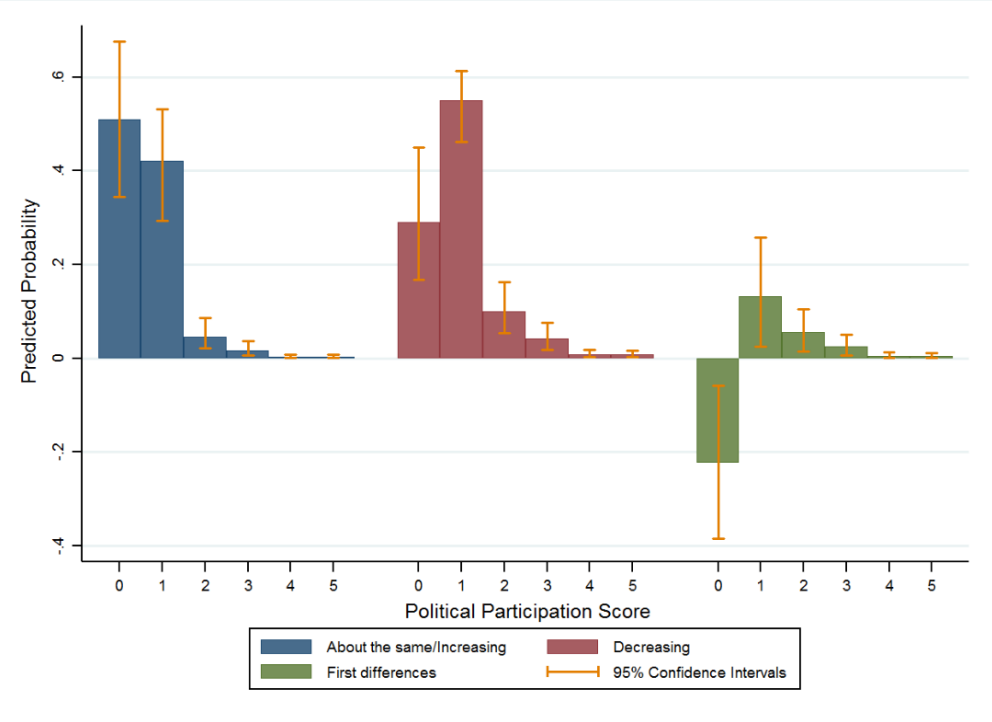
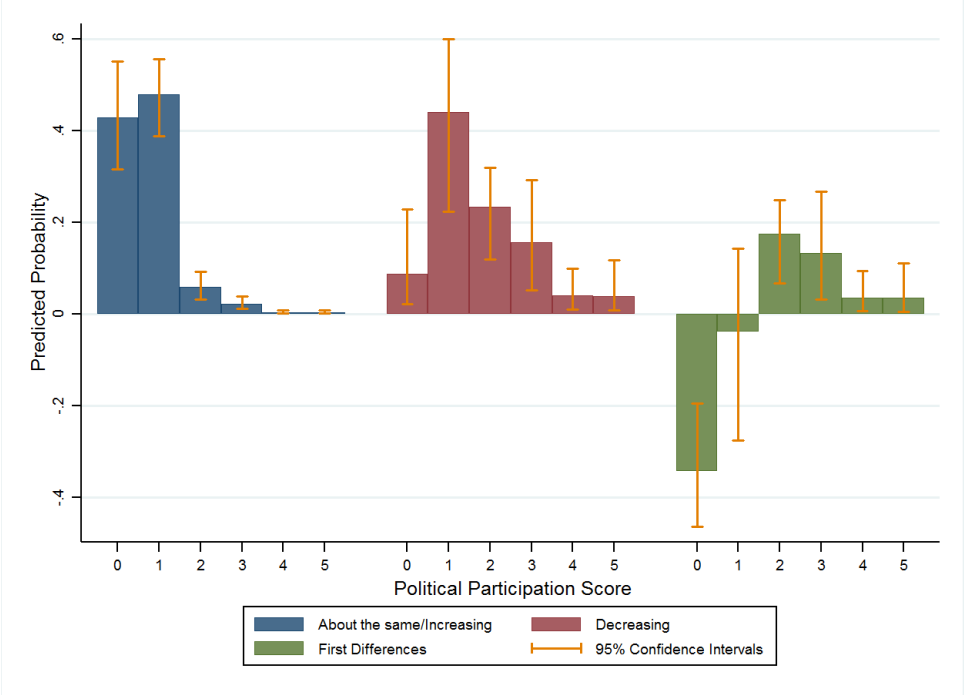


Figure 5.4: First Differences of Predicted Probabilities Among Religious 'Nones', Varying Perceptions of Religious Context



Notably, most of the action occurring in these models is by activating people who otherwise would not participate, and encouraging them to get involved in politics. The biggest change, shown in the first differences columns on the right-hand side of the graphs, comes from a significant decrease in the probability of not engaging in any political activities at all, and a rather large increase in the probability of engaging in at least one. In other words, the power of perceptions of religious context is in the fact that they move people to action, not necessarily that they cause already-politically-active people to engage in a higher number of activities. This has important implications for messaging during election cycles. Strategic campaigns and political operatives may find great success in activating their supporters if they can manage to convince them that the religious group they belong to is losing influence in politics. This appears to be the case for both evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones'.

For ease of comparison between hypotheses and results, Table 5.2 neatly outlines the findings. Addition/subtraction signs indicate statistically significant effects on political participation (in their respective direction) for each perception variable, while an 'X' indicates no statistically significant relationship. We would expect to see certain boxes with +/- if the group threat or influence hypotheses were to hold up. For the conflict hypothesis, we would need to see effects in both 2B and 4A: evangelical Protestants reacting to heightened levels of religious 'Nones', and religious 'Nones' reacting to heightened levels of Christian influence in politics (perceived or real). We see effects in neither box. Weak support for out-group threat comes from a reduction in evangelical political behavior when Christian influence is growing: effects we would

expect to see from people becoming comfortable that they are *not* necessarily threatened. This is not a very convincing argument for the presence of group threat in these models, however.

Table 5.2: Summary of Results from Table 5.1

	Perception Variable:			
	↓ Christian Influence (1)	↑Christian Influence (2)	↓ Secular Numbers (3)	↑ Secular Numbers (4)
(A) Evangelicals	✓ (+)	✓ (-)		
(B) Nones			✓ (+)	

On the other hand, there is strong evidence in support of the sphere of influence hypothesis. Political participation for both groups is strongly associated with how they perceive the relative influence *of their own groups*; participation is not statistically significantly associated with perceptions of growth in out-group influence. For the sphere of influence hypothesis to hold we would expect to see effects in 1A and 3B and would expect to see 'Xs' in 2B and 4A: effects of dips in Christian influence in politics for evangelicals without a subsequent effect of growth in number of religious 'Nones', with effects of dips in number of seculars for religious 'Nones' without a simultaneous effect stemming from an increase in perceived influence of Christianity in politics. This is precisely what we see in Table 5.2. Evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' are less concerned about each other and more concerned about their own relative level of influence, at least in the aggregate data presented here. A decrease in perceived influence triggers a reaction that drives a member to engage more politically.

To summarize, this first cut through the data suggests there is no support for the conflict hypothesis while there are strong results supporting sphere of influence hypothesis. A great deal of weight can be put into the sphere of influence hypothesis as both questions used to measure it reveal psychological elements critical to a political psychology approach. Conceiving of threat as something occurring based on perceptions versus reality clarifies how different religious groups react to each other when it comes to political behavior.

Table 5.3: Ordered Logistic Regression of Political Participation Score

Threat Variables				
Born Again X	24.494			
Δ Nones '08-'13	(17.55)			
None X		14.435*		
Δ Born Again '08-'13		(7.54)		
Influence Variables				
Born Again X			-10.126	
Δ Born Again '08-'13			(7.92)	
None X				-.138
Δ Nones '08-'13				(10.09)
Born Again	-1.127*	-.329	-.287	-.292
	(.67)	(.36)	(.36)	(.36)
Protestant	-.422	-.387	-.456	-.421
	(.32)	(.33)	(.32)	(.32)
Catholic	-.025	-.025	-.061	-.035
	(.30)	(.29)	(.30)	(.46)
None	-.374	-.413	-.365	-.351
	(.30)	(.31)	(.30)	(.46)
Religiosity	1.286*	1.245*	1.286*	1.251*
	(.60)	(.62)	(.63)	(.62)
Δ Nones '08-'13	-2.813	1.359	1.533	1.568
	(4.11)	(3.84)	(3.82)	(4.19)
Δ Born Again '08-'13	2.683	-.890	5.161	2.102
	(3.63)	(4.03)	(3.94)	(3.59)
Christianity Losing	.462*	.479*	.466*	.454*
	(.19)	(.19)	(.19)	(.19)

Table 5.3 -- continued

Christianity Gaining	.700*	.696*	.682*	.695*
	(.27)	(.28)	(.28)	(.28)
Nones Decreasing	.593*	.535*	.568*	.545*
	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)	(.31)
Nones Growing	.681*	.683*	.695*	.678*
	(.20)	(.20)	(.20)	(.20)
Democrat	.496	.525*	.528*	.517*
	(.30)	(.30)	(.30)	(.30)
Republican	.807*	.835*	.854*	.814*
	(.28)	(.29)	(.29)	(.29)
Conservative	-.235*	-.223*	-.227*	-.219*
	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)	(.11)
Political Interest	.728*	.730*	.732*	.728*
	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)	(.12)
Black	-.028	-.062	-.029	-.039
	(.39)	(.40)	(.40)	(.40)
Hispanic	-.809*	-.723*	-.758*	-.783
	(.41)	(.40)	(.41)	(.41)
Female	-.254	-.231	-.223	-.211
	(.18)	(.19)	(.18)	(.19)
Age	.024*	.024*	.023*	.023*
	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)	(.01)
Income	.058*	.060*	.057*	.057*
	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)	(.03)
Education	.178*	.177*	.180*	.179*
	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)	(.06)
Cutpoint 1	3.855*	4.090*	4.071*	4.048*
	(.83)	(.85)	(.84)	(.84)
Cutpoint 2	6.483*	6.716*	6.689*	6.656*
	(.88)	(.90)	(.89)	(.89)
Cutpoint 3	7.621*	7.851*	7.822*	7.783*
	(.88)	(.91)	(.90)	(.89)
Cutpoint 4	8.944*	9.174*	9.145*	9.105*
	(.91)	(.94)	(.93)	(.92)
Cutpoint 5	9.736*	9.965*	9.937*	9.897*
	(.96)	(.98)	(.97)	(.97)
Observations	934	934	934	934
Log Likelihood	-1022.81	-1023.93	-1025.09	-1027.14
AIC	2099.62	2101.86	2104.17	2108.27

Note: Unstandardized regression coefficients with robust standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. Dependent variable ranges from 0 to 5.
Source: Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) 2014

Table 5.3 reports findings from alternative specifications of the same models in Table 5.1. The difference is focused exclusively on objective measures of denominational adherence while also controlling for perceptions. Table 5.3 bolsters findings reported in Table 5.1, showing the objective measures of adherence are not driving political activity in any noticeable way. When interacted with each of the adherence variables at the top of each model (again grouped by threat and influence hypotheses), we can see there is still very little to no support for group threat theory. There is a statistically significant effect of the change in number of evangelical Protestants on the political participation of religious 'Nones', suggesting religious 'Nones' in the 2014 election may have been reacting somewhat. However, this is hardly strong evidence of an ongoing culture war between the two groups. Tables 5.1 and 5.3 both show a consistent effect of perceptions, and show that objective measures are simply not explaining political behavior as well. While religious 'Nones' may be driven to participate more when they live in areas with high numbers of evangelical Protestants, it is much more likely the case that this operates through perceptions of changing influence levels. This finding could also be the result of a small number of religious 'Nones' in the sample, most of whom happen to live in states where the number of evangelical Protestants has grown over the past five years.

Discussion

The purpose of this chapter was twofold. First, to test whether conventional theories of group threat applied to religion can extend beyond explanations of voter preferences into the realm of specific behaviors. The evidence from 2014 suggests it cannot, at least not in any identifiably uniform manner. By extension, this evidence also

suggests the culture wars framework to be an inappropriate description of how the religious right and secular left interact in the political arena. Second, this chapter approached the study of political participation from a political psychological lens focused on relative levels of influence as an explanation for divergent participatory patterns among groups of evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones'. The empirical findings suggest the relative group influence, and by extensions the secular-religious competition framework, works quite well in explaining divergent political behavior.

The rise of the religious 'Nones' in American politics through the dawn of the twenty-first century has important political consequences. The fact that their numbers continue to grow, whether individual religious 'Nones' notice such growth or not, suggests political operatives may be interested in learning more about their political proclivities and behaviors. Identifying as a religious 'None' appears to be politically relevant when a non-religious person feels 'surrounded and outnumbered', so to speak. If a religiously unaffiliated person views the number of like-minded people in their community is dwindling, they reach out politically becoming more likely to vote and participate directly in campaigns with signage and bumper stickers. Whether this effect holds in presidential elections is yet to be determined. Previous research examining group threat theories of religion and politics as applied to evangelical Protestants are thus far limited to differences in preferences. This chapter updates our understanding to examine specific behaviors. When evangelical Protestants perceive a growth in the number of secular people in their community there does not appear to be a subsequent reaction in terms of higher likelihood or probability of participating in politics.

The data reported here shine an optimistic light on the constant culture war discourse so prevalent in popular media. Evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones', while they might have very little in common in terms of worldviews and policy preferences, appear to be relatively unaffected by the perceived presence of each other. While research into preferences and dis-affiliation (breaking away from religion and becoming a 'None') may find political causes, religious 'Nones' in the 2014 midterm election only participated at higher levels when they felt surrounded and outnumbered by religious Americans; a situation religious 'Nones' have been in for nearly all of American history. This effect is not present for evangelicals feeling surrounded by irreligious people. Effects stemming from the tendency for younger people to identify as religious 'Nones' and split away from their parents' religious leanings are only just beginning to manifest themselves in American politics; as the number of religious 'Nones' grows, so does the potential for them to congeal into a cohesive group with coherent policy goals and preferences. It is perhaps true that no man is an island, but for many religious 'Nones' in the religiously-dominated American political landscape today, it seems to feel that way.

CHAPTER SIX

Toward a Better Model of Religion and American Politics

This project began with a question: what is the best way to understand how tension between evangelical Protestants and religiously unaffiliated populations influences American politics? Until now, researchers have lacked a proper measure to fully evaluate the nuanced ways in which religious context and diversity play a role in shaping the political environment of the states. It has been common practice to treat conflict between evangelical Protestants and religious 'Nones' as a foregone conclusion, that any heightened presence of one will necessarily lead to a reaction from the other.

Instead, secular-religious competition framework offers a new and unique way of thinking about religious conflict in American politics. This framework draws together some of the seminal pieces of political science. Approaching questions through the lenses of micro- and macro-politics echoes the work on broad patterns in the American political landscape tackled by authors of *The Macro Polity*. Examining religious diversity as both a unifying and dividing factor draws from the groundbreaking work of Putnam and Campbell, who argue that the melting pot of American culture is largely working in the sense that it helps Americans empathize and see eye to eye with one another. Shifting the focus away from a static 'yes'/'no' approach to the question of religious conflict, and toward a more fluid conceptualization of membership marketplace competition, builds on the recent cross-national work by Fox. By piecing together these broader strands of research, and knitting them into a more expansive theory, the secular-religious

competition framework presented here represents a significant step forward in our understanding of religion in American politics.

Part of the motivation for this project is the current state of affairs in American domestic politics. Polarization is at an all-time high, while nearly all decision-making in all levels of government is being conducted in hyper-partisan vacuums void of independent thinking. The recent 2016 presidential election brought many of the uglier aspects of our divisive politics to the forefront. How much of this can be explained by religious conflict? Chapter 2 explored how the religion and politics literature might be useful in explaining today's political conflict. In particular, clashes between secular liberals and religious conservatives dominate much of our domestic politics. The popular framework for understanding these clashes, however, is in need of update. Secular-religious competition fills a theoretical need, by providing a more nuanced approach to understanding the fluid nature of the American religious landscape.

When conducting empirical social science, concept measurement is of vital importance. Validity, or how closely our measures match the concept we are actually trying to measure, must be present or any attempt to draw inferences will be an exercise in futility. Chapter 3 explored how many of the common methods for assessing subnational religious affiliation over time have been inadequate for complex statistical analyses. Our ability to model and estimate has improved in leaps and bounds while many of our measures remain antiquated. This project presents a new method for measuring religious of the states over the past three decades by using multi-level regression with poststratification. The newly-generated estimates compare well with the commonly-used estimates, and in some cases is able to highlight deficiencies.

With a new measure in hand, Chapter 4 sought to uncover evidence for secular-religious competition as a driving force behind American politics. The religious context of a state in general, and the competition between secular liberals and religious conservatives in particular, play an important role in shaping both individual- and aggregate-level political attitudes. The micro- and macro-partisanship, ideology, and public mood of a state is determined in large part by the religious landscape in that state. In other words, religious context is a consideration that must be made in any model, individual- or state-level, as environment matters. A long line of research has shown how other elements of context play an important role in shaping attitudes and behaviors of Americans. Religious context is one of them.

Finally, Chapter 5 presented evidence that while measurement is important, the causal mechanism connecting empirical levels of religious context to individual behaviors must also account for perceptions. A common understanding out of the culture wars framework is that higher levels of one group should lead to some sort of reaction by the other. Greater numbers of religious 'Nones' out-group members should drive evangelical Protestant in-group members to participate in politics at a greater frequency. However, the actual overall empirical measures are not nearly as important in predicting behavior of this sort as perceived levels of in-group influence. Americans are far more concerned with how influential their own group is, and less concerned with others. It is only when in-group relative influence is threatened that group identity becomes a motivating factor behind political participation.

This project will continue into the future, with several important updates on the horizon. First and foremost I hope to expand the conceptualization of religious diversity

beyond simple affiliation to also include an assessment of behaviors and beliefs, in addition to belonging. It could prove quite valuable to not only say Alabama has a far greater proportion of their population as evangelical Protestants than does Massachusetts, but also that the evangelical Protestants in Alabama score much higher in terms of beliefs and behaviors, as well. A measure of degree could help explain otherwise perplexing subnational political outcomes. A second line of work will also focus on improving data sources and gathering more surveys to cover larger numbers of years.

Overall, the largest contribution I hope this project makes is a new and improved measure of subnational religious affiliation that provides, for the first time, robust annual estimates for every state stretching back several decades. Scholars from a wide variety of disciplines should find this measure useful. In addition, I hope to contribute to our understanding of the nuanced ways religious context influences American politics. For quite some time, the culture wars framework has dominated popular understandings of religious conflict. This research should give pause to those critics of diversity as a dividing, rather than unifying force.

A great number of scholars and thinkers have celebrated diversity as a virtue, an idealistic goal appropriate for modern democratic governments to strive for. The question as to whether enmeshing people from different cultures and faiths together in close proximity will result in something good or bad remains an open question. The work presented here, however, hopefully provides some preliminary evidence to suggest that perhaps mere presence is not all that is required; simply achieving higher membership numbers may influence broader political outcomes and distributions, but winning hearts and minds, so to speak, requires changing perceptions. Jefferson never saw a difference

in religious belief to be a reason to distance himself from somebody, he never used it as a source of conflict or contention. Americans may very well live up to this ideal, but the right message delivered by the right messenger could potentially convince them that they are under threat, and doing so could cause them to forget the sage words Jefferson once wrote to Hamilton so many years ago.

APPENDIX

Table A.1: Sample Multilevel Logistic Regression Results (2010)

	Religious 'None'	Evangelical Protestant	Catholic
White Female	-0.350*		0.395*
	(0.05)		(0.05)
Black Female	-0.752*		-1.176*
	(0.08)		(0.10)
Latina	-0.759*		1.962*
	(0.09)		(0.07)
White Male	0.087		0.337*
	(0.05)		(0.05)
Black Male	-0.325*		-1.067*
	(0.08)		(0.11)
Latino	-0.405*		1.812*
	(0.08)		(0.07)
Female		0.208*	
		(0.02)	
Education	0.075*	-0.141*	0.030*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Age	-0.427*	0.343*	0.107*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Unemployment Rate	0.069*	-0.048	0.023
	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.03)
% Black	-1.422*	-0.011	-0.048
	(0.54)	(1.11)	(1.09)
Midwest	-0.362*	1.008*	-0.432*
	(0.10)	(0.20)	(0.19)
South	-0.569*	1.604*	-1.311*
	(0.10)	(0.21)	(0.20)
West	0.082	0.483*	-1.039*
	(0.11)	(0.22)	(0.21)
Constant	-0.930*	-2.625*	-1.649*
	(0.17)	(0.32)	(0.32)
Var	-1.695*	-0.794*	-0.816*
	(0.15)	(0.11)	(0.11)
LR Test	88.47*	1092.66*	1071.61*
N	45897	45897	45897
Log Likelihood	-18439.019	-21177.031	-21786.903
AIC	36908.037	42374.061	43603.806

Table A.1 -- continued
Note: Unstandardized multilevel logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses
*** p < .05**
Source: Data collected by the author.

Table A.2: Ideology and 2016 Presidential Vote Choice among Evangelical Protestants

	Liberal	*Moderate*	*Conservative*	*Vote for Trump*
White	10.84	20.11	69.05	59.02
Black	31.86	30.64	37.50	7.04
Hispanic	19.87	21.09	59.05	27.54
Total	15.72	22.20	62.07	45.87

Source: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Survey, weighted

Table A.3: New Estimates Compared to ARDA Data (2010)

	% Born again	% Born again (ARDA)	Diff.	% Catholic	% Catholic (ARDA)	Diff.
AK	15.18	14.21	0.97	12.05	7.16	4.89
AL	38.41	42.04	3.64	6.14	4.20	1.94
AR	37.10	38.98	1.88	5.87	4.21	1.67
AZ	11.63	11.93	0.30	22.48	14.56	7.92
CA	9.75	9.40	0.35	18.16	27.47	9.31
CO	14.91	11.95	2.96	15.85	16.14	0.28
CT	4.57	4.40	0.17	38.94	35.09	3.84
DE	9.95	7.20	2.75	29.29	20.33	8.96
FL	16.22	16.22	0.00	22.97	13.38	9.59
GA	29.18	29.45	0.27	12.26	6.16	6.10
HI	10.71	9.58	1.14	12.80	18.35	5.55
IA	19.67	13.21	6.46	22.84	16.51	6.33
ID	15.46	12.86	2.60	14.45	7.87	6.57
IL	13.42	12.85	0.57	31.20	28.44	2.76
IN	23.37	19.10	4.27	20.46	11.53	8.93
KS	23.58	18.11	5.47	20.35	14.95	5.40
KY	32.99	33.39	0.40	15.90	8.29	7.61
LA	16.32	23.48	7.16	41.89	26.49	15.40
MA	3.70	3.43	0.27	44.51	44.91	0.40

Table A.3 -- continued

MD	9.26	12.02	2.76	28.85	14.50	14.35
ME	14.13	4.44	9.69	20.87	14.31	6.56
MI	16.81	12.92	3.89	22.17	17.37	4.80
MN	14.61	14.04	0.56	28.50	21.69	6.81
MO	26.18	25.36	0.81	17.84	12.09	5.74
MS	37.43	39.38	1.95	9.70	3.79	5.91
MT	15.93	12.24	3.69	16.40	12.90	3.50
NC	31.26	27.11	4.15	10.63	4.50	6.14
ND	25.10	11.69	13.42	23.10	24.88	1.78
NE	18.31	15.82	2.49	25.14	20.41	4.73
NH	10.26	3.58	6.68	22.37	23.63	1.26
NJ	4.72	4.33	0.40	43.38	36.80	6.58
NM	17.66	13.47	4.19	19.77	28.41	8.63
NV	8.03	7.89	0.13	24.67	16.70	7.97
NY	5.34	4.50	0.84	38.17	32.45	5.72
OH	18.73	12.93	5.80	22.28	17.27	5.00
OK	34.01	40.82	6.81	7.98	4.76	3.22
OR	15.71	11.67	4.04	14.25	10.43	3.82
PA	16.20	8.49	7.71	32.26	27.58	4.69
RI	5.78	2.49	3.28	39.28	44.33	5.05
SC	32.23	30.50	1.73	8.38	3.93	4.45
SD	22.15	14.51	7.64	28.39	18.29	10.10
TN	36.17	37.57	1.40	9.56	3.51	6.04
TX	22.30	25.67	3.38	18.35	18.59	0.23
UT	3.51	2.28	1.23	9.09	5.79	3.30
VA	21.04	19.14	1.90	20.45	8.43	12.02
VT	6.75	3.62	3.13	23.77	20.50	3.27
WA	12.60	12.20	0.40	16.76	11.66	5.09
WI	12.18	14.17	1.99	30.21	25.07	5.14
WV	34.72	13.48	21.24	11.52	5.17	6.35
WY	11.16	10.51	0.65	11.29	10.86	0.43
Avg.	18.13	15.94	3.39	21.28	16.85	5.64

Table A.4: New Measure Compared to Pew Research Center Data (2014)

	% None	% None (Pew)	Diff.	% Born again	% Born again (Pew)	Diff.	% Catholic	% Catholic (Pew)	Diff.
AK	29.95	31.00	1.05	8.53	22.00	13.47	15.50	16.00	0.50
AL	12.33	12.00	0.33	36.16	49.00	12.84	4.87	7.00	2.13
AR	14.56	18.00	3.44	41.18	46.00	4.82	4.25	8.00	3.75
AZ	30.28	27.00	3.28	12.42	26.00	13.58	16.33	21.00	4.67
CA	32.30	27.00	5.30	8.86	20.00	11.14	15.14	28.00	12.86
CO	24.19	29.00	4.81	13.39	26.00	12.61	17.96	16.00	1.96
CT	27.75	23.00	4.75	6.48	13.00	6.52	25.29	33.00	7.71
DE	21.15	23.00	1.85	8.56	15.00	6.44	22.57	22.00	0.57
FL	16.79	24.00	7.21	14.75	24.00	9.25	22.40	21.00	1.40
GA	19.97	18.00	1.97	29.37	38.00	8.63	4.48	9.00	4.52
HI	25.08	26.00	0.92	12.71	25.00	12.29	13.28	20.00	6.72
IA	23.46	21.00	2.46	11.61	28.00	16.39	18.27	18.00	0.27
ID	29.17	27.00	2.17	9.18	21.00	11.82	13.60	10.00	3.60
IL	18.69	22.00	3.31	14.34	20.00	5.66	24.99	28.00	3.01
IN	18.10	26.00	7.90	26.21	31.00	4.79	15.09	18.00	2.91
KS	20.41	20.00	0.41	19.76	31.00	11.24	17.74	18.00	0.26
KY	19.81	22.00	2.19	33.59	49.00	15.41	7.83	10.00	2.17
LA	11.73	13.00	1.27	21.58	27.00	5.42	23.56	26.00	2.44
MA	25.05	32.00	6.95	6.35	9.00	2.65	40.02	34.00	6.02
MD	17.37	23.00	5.63	9.97	18.00	8.03	21.51	15.00	6.51
ME	26.84	25.00	1.84	8.55	13.00	4.45	23.55	30.00	6.45
MI	21.42	24.00	2.58	16.47	25.00	8.53	17.03	18.00	0.97
MN	19.05	20.00	0.95	17.44	19.00	1.56	19.06	22.00	2.94
MO	20.41	20.00	0.41	22.75	36.00	13.25	15.70	16.00	0.30
MS	13.94	14.00	0.06	38.92	41.00	2.08	5.54	4.00	1.54
MT	25.08	30.00	4.92	16.96	28.00	11.04	9.01	17.00	7.99
NC	16.13	20.00	3.87	16.10	35.00	18.90	10.61	9.00	1.61
ND	17.99	20.00	2.01	14.51	22.00	7.49	14.53	26.00	11.47
NE	17.09	20.00	2.91	17.79	25.00	7.21	25.62	23.00	2.62
NH	26.92	36.00	9.08	8.94	13.00	4.06	19.45	26.00	6.55
NJ	24.49	18.00	6.49	6.91	13.00	6.09	30.22	34.00	3.78
NM	28.77	21.00	7.77	10.76	23.00	12.24	22.82	34.00	11.18
NV	29.12	28.00	1.12	10.54	20.00	9.46	18.38	25.00	6.62
NY	18.95	27.00	8.05	4.51	10.00	5.49	31.57	31.00	0.57
OH	19.13	22.00	2.87	18.10	29.00	10.90	21.95	18.00	3.95
OK	14.85	18.00	3.15	31.97	47.00	15.03	8.92	8.00	0.92
OR	30.49	31.00	0.51	14.86	29.00	14.14	10.99	12.00	1.01
PA	20.39	21.00	0.61	14.99	19.00	4.01	20.61	24.00	3.39
RI	28.36	20.00	8.36	8.36	14.00	5.64	28.20	42.00	13.80
SC	11.76	19.00	7.24	28.65	35.00	6.35	8.74	10.00	1.26
SD	12.66	18.00	5.34	20.04	25.00	4.96	15.07	22.00	6.93

Table A.4 -- continued

TN	15.85	26.00	10.15	34.42	31.00	3.42	5.68	18.00	12.32
TX	13.42	18.00	4.58	19.66	31.00	11.34	17.92	23.00	5.08
UT	23.37	22.00	1.37	4.70	7.00	2.30	7.97	5.00	2.97
VA	19.66	20.00	0.34	13.40	30.00	16.60	13.43	12.00	1.43
VT	26.38	37.00	10.62	8.78	11.00	2.22	20.66	22.00	1.34
WA	27.79	32.00	4.21	10.36	25.00	14.64	15.85	17.00	1.15
WI	18.24	25.00	6.76	12.56	22.00	9.44	20.40	25.00	4.60
WV	20.20	18.00	2.20	30.33	39.00	8.67	5.06	6.00	0.94
Avg.	21.36	23.14	3.83	16.88	25.61	8.87	16.92	19.53	4.07

Table A.5 New Measure Compared to CCES Data (2014)

	% None	% None (CCES)	Diff.	% Born Again	% Born Again (CCES)	Diff.	% Catholic	% Catholic (CCES)	Diff.
AK	29.9	44.0	14.1	8.53	18.0	9.4	15.5	24.4	8.9
AL	12.3	26.6	14.2	36.2	34.6	1.5	4.9	6.6	1.8
AR	14.6	16.6	2.0	41.2	38.1	3.1	4.2	7.9	3.6
AZ	30.3	36.8	6.5	12.4	11.5	0.9	16.3	21.6	5.2
CA	32.3	33.6	1.3	8.9	10.2	1.3	15.1	21.5	6.3
CO	24.2	34.8	10.6	13.4	17.4	4.0	18.0	16.2	1.8
CT	27.8	24.9	2.8	6.5	4.8	1.7	25.3	38.7	13.4
DE	21.2	25.4	4.2	8.6	10.1	1.5	22.6	22.2	0.4
FL	16.8	26.2	9.4	14.7	16.3	1.5	22.4	21.8	0.6
GA	20.0	27.6	7.6	29.4	23.3	6.1	4.5	8.8	4.3
HI	25.1	42.1	17.0	12.7	2.8	9.9	13.3	17.9	4.6
IA	23.5	28.7	5.2	11.6	24.5	12.8	18.3	15.2	3.0
ID	29.2	32.1	3.0	9.2	15.0	5.8	13.6	9.2	4.4
IL	18.7	27.5	8.8	14.3	12.4	1.9	25.0	27.5	2.5
IN	18.1	32.0	13.9	26.2	23.5	2.7	15.1	14.5	0.6
KS	20.4	21.3	0.9	19.8	30.9	11.1	17.7	13.1	4.6
KY	19.8	20.5	0.7	33.6	39.5	5.9	7.8	12.2	4.4
LA	11.7	25.0	13.3	21.6	21.0	0.6	23.6	21.9	1.7
MA	25.0	25.7	0.7	6.3	6.1	0.2	40.0	35.5	4.5
MD	17.4	29.4	12.0	10.0	8.2	1.8	21.5	19.3	2.2
ME	26.8	27.6	0.8	8.5	21.2	12.6	23.6	21.7	1.9
MI	21.4	29.0	7.5	16.5	16.2	0.3	17.0	20.3	3.3
MN	19.1	30.5	11.4	17.4	18.6	1.1	19.1	19.8	0.8
MO	20.4	31.8	11.4	22.7	25.7	2.9	15.7	12.6	3.1

Table A.5 -- continued

MS	13.9	16.4	2.5	38.9	33.9	5.0	5.5	7.5	2.0
MT	25.1	32.1	7.0	17.0	30.7	13.7	9.0	12.5	3.4
NC	16.1	23.9	7.8	16.1	27.9	11.8	10.6	10.3	0.3
ND	18.0	24.8	6.8	14.5	18.7	4.2	14.5	16.5	1.9
NE	17.1	23.4	6.3	17.8	20.7	2.9	25.6	24.5	1.1
NH	26.9	33.1	6.2	8.9	8.5	0.5	19.5	29.1	9.6
NJ	24.5	25.5	1.0	6.9	4.7	2.2	30.2	37.2	7.0
NM	28.8	28.1	0.7	10.8	12.8	2.0	22.8	19.1	3.8
NV	29.1	34.6	5.5	10.5	10.1	0.5	18.4	21.1	2.7
NY	18.9	23.8	4.8	4.5	7.3	2.7	31.6	33.6	2.0
OH	19.1	30.1	10.9	18.1	19.0	0.9	22.0	19.2	2.8
OK	14.9	25.5	10.7	32.0	41.9	10.0	8.9	10.0	1.1
OR	30.5	44.4	14.0	14.9	19.8	4.9	11.0	8.8	2.2
PA	20.4	25.0	4.6	15.0	15.3	0.4	20.6	25.7	5.1
RI	28.4	33.7	5.3	8.4	3.2	5.1	28.2	38.3	10.1
SC	11.8	19.4	7.7	28.6	24.9	3.7	8.7	10.1	1.3
SD	12.7	22.6	10.0	20.0	29.2	9.2	15.1	12.0	3.1
TN	15.9	21.7	5.8	34.4	39.1	4.7	5.7	8.7	3.0
TX	13.4	22.3	8.9	19.7	19.9	0.2	17.9	21.7	3.7
UT	23.4	29.8	6.4	4.7	2.0	2.8	8.0	11.2	3.2
VA	19.7	23.9	4.3	13.4	18.2	4.8	13.4	13.6	0.1
VT	26.4	30.2	3.8	8.8	6.1	2.7	20.7	28.9	8.2
WA	27.8	35.7	7.9	10.4	19.5	9.2	15.8	11.5	4.3
WI	18.2	31.4	13.1	12.6	17.6	5.1	20.4	24.9	4.5
WV	20.2	37.0	16.8	30.3	36.1	5.7	5.1	6.6	1.5
AVG	21.4	28.1	7.8	16.9	17.3	4.3	16.9	20.3	3.9

Table A.6: Multi-level Multinomial Logistic Regressions of Partisanship, Vote Choice, and Symbolic Ideology (Full Model Results of Table 4.1)

	Partisanship	Vote Choice	Ideology
	Democrat	*Vote Trump*	*Liberal*
Resides in	0.05	-0.10*	-0.06*
Contested State	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Resides in None-	0.08*	-0.22*	0.02
Dominant state	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Age	-0.01*	0.03*	-0.00*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	-0.03*	-0.09*	0.24*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Female	0.39*	-0.53*	-0.03
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)
White	0.01	0.30*	0.07
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Black	0.87*	-1.15*	-0.11*
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.05)
Asian	0.63*	-0.25*	-0.07
	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.07)
Non-White	0.45*	-0.22*	-0.02
Hispanic	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.05)
Income	-0.00	0.04*	0.01*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Missing	-0.34*	0.25*	-0.02
Income	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Importance of	-0.00	0.25*	-0.35*
Religion	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.01)
Evangelical	-0.13*	0.32*	-0.11*
Protestant	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Church	0.02	-0.05*	0.02
Attendance	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Democrat		-0.13*	1.40*
		(0.04)	(0.02)
Republican		1.66*	-0.68*
		(0.03)	(0.04)
Liberal	3.50*		
	(0.03)		
Conservative	-0.50*		
	(0.06)		
Constant	-1.03*	-2.13*	-0.45*
	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.07)
	Republican	*Vote Clinton*	*Conservative*
Contested	-0.09*	0.14*	-0.08*
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)

Table A.6 – continued

None-dom.	-0.11*	0.03	-0.00
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Age	-0.01*	0.01*	0.01*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	-0.15*	0.19*	0.03*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Female	0.21*	-0.11*	-0.43*
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)
White	0.68*	0.11*	0.04
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Black	-0.49*	0.82*	-0.31*
	(0.10)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Asian	0.72*	0.29*	-0.31*
	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.08)
Non-White Hispanic	0.29*	0.46*	-0.03
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Income	0.02*	0.05*	0.02*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Missing Income	-0.14*	0.08	0.12*
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Importance of Religion	0.24*	-0.11*	0.20*
	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Evangelical Protestant	0.19*	-0.13*	0.53*
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Church Attendance	0.06*	-0.00	0.14*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Democrat		2.11*	-0.27*
		(0.03)	(0.03)
Republican		-0.69*	1.57*
		(0.04)	(0.03)
Liberal	0.20*		
	(0.06)		
Conservative	3.41*		
	(0.03)		
Constant	-2.17*	-1.68*	-1.84*
	(0.11)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Observations	58382	63037	64557
AIC	65500.35	95438.00	113819.69

***Note*: Unstandardized multi-level multinomial logistic regression coefficients with standard errors reported below in parentheses. Baseline categories are Independents for partisanship, Moderates for symbolic ideology, and Other Candidate for Vote Choice.**

***Source*: 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, common content.**

*** p < .05**

Table A.7: Mixed-Effects Multilevel Logistic Regression of Opinion on Various Policy Issues

	Ban ARs	EPA Power	Strong EPA	Gay Marriage	Abortions - Always	Abortion – Only Some	Abortion - Never	Mand. Mins.	Cop Cams	Increase Sentences
Contested	0.21*	0.15*	0.08	0.10*	0.20*	-0.06	0.01	0.01	-0.10*	0.02
	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
None - Dominant	0.24*	0.17*	0.12*	0.19*	0.27*	-0.09*	-0.03	-0.13*	-0.15*	-0.04
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.08)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Age	0.02*	-0.01*	-0.01*	-0.02*	0.01*	-0.00*	-0.02*	-0.00*	0.01*	0.02*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	0.08*	0.02*	0.08*	0.10*	0.04*	-0.10*	-0.11*	0.10*	-0.08*	-0.17*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Female	0.87*	0.43*	0.08*	0.46*	0.19*	-0.43*	-0.09*	-0.24*	0.30*	0.34*
	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)
White	0.20*	0.19*	-0.01	0.21*	0.05	-0.09*	0.19*	-0.04	-0.18*	0.11*
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Black	1.01*	0.66*	0.42*	-0.13*	1.16*	-0.04	-0.02	0.51*	0.65*	-0.49*
	(0.07)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)
Asian	1.07*	0.82*	0.62*	-0.20*	0.47*	0.41*	0.47*	-0.61*	0.04	0.60*
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Non-White Hispanic	0.33*	0.43*	0.33*	0.22*	0.38*	0.18*	0.28*	-0.18*	0.08	0.17*
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.03)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.06)
Income	-0.00	-0.01*	-0.00	0.03*	0.03*	-0.03*	-0.04*	-0.00	-0.02*	0.02*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Missing Income	-0.29*	-0.43*	-0.24*	-0.02	0.05	-0.22*	-0.19*	-0.16*	-0.31*	-0.01
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.02)	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Importance of Religion	-0.08*	-0.08*	-0.14*	-0.37*	-0.37*	0.35*	0.32*	-0.18*	-0.02	0.22*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Evangelical Protestant	-0.19*	-0.09*	-0.12*	-0.88*	-0.55*	0.13*	0.55*	-0.01	-0.01	-0.03
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Church Attendance	0.07*	0.04*	0.03*	-0.19*	-0.15*	-0.00	0.24*	-0.05*	-0.07*	-0.05*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Liberal	1.06*	1.38*	1.16*	1.07*	1.07*	-0.79*	-0.28*	0.90*	0.57*	-0.78*
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Conservative	-0.98*	-1.10*	-0.98*	-1.06*	-0.91*	0.30*	0.61*	-0.45*	-0.64*	0.35*
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.04)
Constant	-1.29*	0.92*	0.71*	2.35*	1.03*	0.01	-2.17*	1.22*	2.20*	0.91*
	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.07)	(0.09)	(0.06)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Observations	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557	64557
AIC	69885.20	66443.39	73888.95	59936.11	66253.74	80521.27	47666.60	75129.70	45969.14	51937.52

***Note*: Unstandardized logistic regression coefficients with robust standard errors reported below in parentheses.**

***Source:* 2016 Cooperative Congressional Election Study, common content.**

*** p < .05**

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