The politicization of religion in the US: A two-way street?

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I investigate the mutually reinforcing mechanism that connects religiosity and partisanship in the US. Much research has established that specific religious populations are affiliated to particular political parties. These studies however do not consider the idiosyncratic nature of religiosity in the US, and empirical analyses insist on treating religion as immune to partisan contexts, i.e. as an ‘unmoved mover’. Herein I examine the evolution of politicized social divisions, and deviate from the established assumption that religiosity drives politics and not vice versa. Based on a partisan social identity approach, the empirical part uses ANES panel data and explores the untested, yet theoretically plausible, hypothesis that religiosity and political identity are linked through reciprocal causation. The question posed is: during the participation of religious communities in partisan politics, should we expect the community itself to be altered? Results indicate that the causal pattern connecting religiosity and partisanship is one of mutual reinforcement. Findings challenge conventional ‘sociological’ explanations of the role of religion as an exogenous shaper in American politics, and point towards the need to recognize the power of politics in influencing social cleavages.
INTRODUCTION

The nexus between religion and politics in violent and non-violent conflicts has generated wide academic attention. American society in particular serves as a proverbial case, where the peaceful but vocal participation of religious populations in the political process is now considered an endemic phenomenon. The relationship has been identified as a cleavage, a concept describing the translation of objective social divisions into political conflicts, which originally aimed at explaining the formation of West European party systems (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). According to detailed definitions of the term, a cleavage is observed as the alignment of three conditions: an ‘empirical element’ (dividing positions in social structure); an ‘identity element’ (values and interests attached to this structure, forming shared identities); and an ‘organizational element’ (the political manifestation of the above) (Bartolini and Mair 1990: 215; Bartolini 2000: 16-17).

I suggest in this paper that the influence of religious divisions on political behaviour - a conventional assumption adopted by most political scientists - is not the only plausible one taking place in the cleavage phenomenon. My hypothesis is that, within Protestant traditions, supposedly exogenous religious variables can be constrained by partisan concerns, a process summarized as ‘partisan religion’. Based on a social psychological conceptualization of partisan attachment (Greene 1999, 2002, 2004; Green et al. 2002), I use panel data from the American National Election Study (ANES) pool spanning six decades, and fit a series of cross-lagged effects models. Results support my expectation.

Specifically, the present analysis challenges common practice of students of American politics, who examine the religious cleavage with reference plainly to demographic differences projected onto politics (for recent examples see Manza and Brooks 1999; Bolzendahl and Brooks 2005). Research of this type has extensively investigated the emerging role of the conservative Protestant bloc within the Republican Party, and Catholic and Jewish traditional support for the Democrats. Since observable demographic characteristics such as religious-group affiliation are easier to operationalize, it is a natural
consequence for researchers to turn to social structure as ‘the’ explanation and take it ‘to be given’ (Sartori 1969: 66).

However, according to definitions of the cleavage phenomenon that move beyond simple structural explanations, the translation of social divisions into politics also entails top-down ignition, construction and organization. Sartori famously elaborated on this point of ‘translation handling’ (1969: 88) by stressing the relevance of political factors, especially parties, in shaping awareness, defining the meaning of ‘objective’ social divisions and organizing options for political participation. This is what Bartolini and Mair refer to when they write on the class cleavage: ‘once cleavages become established and organizationally institutionalised, they develop their own autonomous strength and, in turn, begin to act as an influence on social, cultural and political life’ (1990: 218; see also Zuckerman 1975; Kitschelt 1994; Knutsen and Scarbrough 1995; Kriesi 1998; Bartolini 2000).

Is it possible for the structural basis of the religious cleavage to be subject to similar political influences? If so, in what way? The point that motivates my argument is Sartori’s critique of reductionist, sociological explanations of voting behaviour, and particularly observations similar to the one proposed by Kriesi, who suggested that members of different structural groups ‘come to be mobilized by the political adversaries…and by way of their identification with this opposite camp also reinforce their social and cultural distinctiveness’ (1998: 172, emphasis added).

The justification of partisan effects on religiosity begins with the American religious exceptionalism thesis, and continues by reviewing a recent attempt to revitalize the party identification concept as social identity. The former discussion supports the use of religious variables as endogenous to the political process, while the latter allows for the possibility of partisan effects on social structure. The paper then continues with a review of methodological problems, followed by the presentation of findings.
THEORY

American religion as an exogenous demographic

Based on an assumed equivalence, the use of religious explanations in American political research often reflects an idealized European experience of religion as a politically exogenous, spiritually driven, and stable phenomenon. These three features are treated as good reasons for the use of religious variables as stable demographics. Sociologists of religion however have long agreed on the idiosyncratic nature of American piety, especially among ‘native’ Protestants. First, the civil religion phenomenon (Bellah 1967) challenges the idea that Christian faith in the US merely reflects theological concerns. Civil or general religion is not connected to a specific dogma, but instead represents faith in ‘the American way of life’ and the status of the US as God’s chosen nation. The infusion of religion with secular values provides a first step for recognizing the perplexing meaning of religiosity for American Christians.

Second, the religious market metaphor claims that the existence of a plethora of churches in America (religious pluralism) creates two conditions that reinforce religiosity among the American population (Finke and Stark 1992). On the one hand, with the absence of state endorsement/subsidisation of any religion and the separation of church from state, the various American churches need to compete aggressively and attract effectively believers in order to survive; in Stephen Warner’s words (1993: 1051), it is ‘sink or swim’. On the other hand, this deregulated setting implies that churches also have to tailor/improve their products and even offer less spiritual benefits, in order to increase demand. Again, it appears that the religious package put forward by American churches, especially the less centralized Protestant ones, only weakly appeals to theological concerns.

Finally, the character of the products offered by American religious institutions goes hand in glove with the motives behind the preferences of American believers. In a pluralistic religious market located within a heavily consumerist society, it is reasonable to suggest that the public experience of religiosity is closer to that of voluntary association, and not of passive socialization (Newport 1979). The idea of religion as active, conscious choice sounds
less eccentric when we consider a phenomenon with prominence in the relevant literature: denominational switching (Roof and McKinney 1987). Switching from one church to another, also known as religious mobility, concerns the unstable character of religious ‘choice and consumption’ in the United States, especially for Protestants (Sherkat and Wilson 1995). This type of mobility supports an image of religion as a self-selective, dynamic choice that cannot be treated as ‘set for life’ (Warner 1993: 1081). Overall, the American exceptionalism thesis challenges the use of religious factors as stable demographics, and instead maintains that religiosity is a volatile choice, open to secular influences. Part of these influences can take the form of partisan concerns.

**Religion and American parties**

If the political element in the cleavage functions as more than reflection of sociostructural differences, and if it can shape these differences, what is the channel of such an influence? As implied above, parties and leaders can raise awareness of the objective structural divisions that are most advantageous to them, organize people into classes, or ‘collapse’ different social groups together in their rhetoric so as to break electoral thresholds (see Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Enyedi 2005). An extreme case of such top-down effects suggests that the political process can even transform the social foundations that originally triggered the political conflict (Kriesi 1998). It is possible to expect that political actors do not only make constituencies aware of links between social positions and party choices, but can initiate a feedback effect, in which political influences intensify the structural divisions in the cleavage.

The social identity approach towards party identification provides an example that closely mirrors the aforementioned process. The Michigan school and its disciples have treated identification with a party as a multifaceted concept: evaluation of partisan objects, perceptual screen for interpreting incoming stimuli, and psychological expression of group membership (e.g. Campbell et al 1960; Miller and Shanks 1996). Yet, the concept has been severely challenged as endogenous to policy preferences, ideological predispositions, evaluations of candidates and government performance (Nie et al. 1979; Page and Jones 1979; Fiorina 1981; Abramowitz and Saunders 1998).
Recent theoretical and methodological advances however, have reinstated the traditional view of party identification: this is seen as a long-term predisposition, which affects voters’ evaluations and perceptions of political reality and even their core political values, without being affected by them in the short term (Green and Palmquist 1990; Green et al. 2002; Goren 2005). Miller and Shanks (1996: 121) summarize this view: ‘one of the roles of the church, or the party, is to provide structure to the ordinary person’s understanding of the external world… [and] cues for normative assessments of the outside world’.

Instead then of being treated as a simple attitude towards a political object, party identification can be approached through social identity theory (SIT) as emotional group belonging (for an overview of theoretical and measurement issues see Greene 2002, 2004). The group psychological effects identified by SIT are generally termed ‘social identification’ and ‘self-categorization’. These correspond to a definition of the self according to group characteristics, and to an exaggeration of differences between own group and other groups in order to achieve a positive self-concept respectively (Tajfel 1981; Long and Spears 1997). For SIT, an individual that feels closer to a group tends to internalize group membership by seeing herself through group stereotypes and not through personal characteristics – ‘I am Democrat/Catholic/Hispanic’.

The cognitive process of self-categorization explains how SIT works, that is, through intergroup social classification (Turner 1985; Turner et al. 1987). People assign social objects into *us/them* categories: the *us* category represents the in-group, where people feel they belong, and the *them* group stands for the out-group, where non-members are located. In this process, individuals attempt to make the in-group more distinctive than the out-group by conducting biased comparisons (stereotypes) with members of the out-group.

According to social identity and self-categorization theory then, individuals will a) tend to perceive themselves less as unique units and more as group members; b) cement their impulse for a positive self-image on exaggerated comparisons with out-group members; and c) follow in-group standards in attitude and produce ‘groupy’ behaviour (Hogg and Terry 2000: 121). The three points are interrelated in the sense that self-perceived membership to
the same group expects conformity with shared in-group standards (and against out-group standards) in order to achieve greatest possible perceived inter-group distinctiveness.

The original exposition of the party identification concept in *The American Voter* already contained an emphasis on this ‘belonging’ dimension of partisanship, in the sense of an ‘us’ vs. ‘them’ distinction, besides its function as a ‘perceptual screen’ or political attitude (Campbell et al. 1960: 133-5). The SIT approach towards partisanship has been verified empirically; for instance, citizens who experience greater group identification with fellow partisans (based on specialized scales that measure feelings of belonging to a social group), have been found to internalize in-party and out-party stereotypes, exhibit increased engagement in partisan behaviour, like rally attendance, and exaggerate differences between ‘us’ and ‘them’, even after controlling for the effect of the traditional party identification variable (Greene 2004).

The above open the way for the overlooked effect of party identification on the structural foundations of the religious cleavage. Typically during the course of a campaign, parties raise the salience of social-political links by sending out clear references via election manifestos, candidate speeches and other broadcasts (Knutsen and Kumlin 2005; Dickson and Scheve 2006). These language-based strategies do not preclude the influence of other symbols as discourses. In a candidate-oriented era, these include a politician’s personal characteristics, which can exemplify the connection between social categories and political parties (Kitschelt 2000). For instance, the case of John Kennedy’s Democratic and at the same time Catholic status highlights the New-Deal link between Catholics and the Democratic party. A similar process should occur regarding George W. Bush’s born-again status and Republican candidacy.

The outcomes of such recurring clichés that identify two labels as ‘naturally’ connected (Democrat-Catholic, Republican–evangelical Protestant) can be two-fold. If we focus on the religious group as our building bloc, as political science normally does, the intuitive result expected by this process is that members of specific religious communities will conform to the dominant cues in their in-group (church) – and to other citizens’ reactions to those cues - and move closer to the prescribed party (cf. Green et al. 2002: ch. 6).
Yet, members of religious groups are also attached to partisan groups, an identity which surfaces especially during election periods. If we concentrate on the partisan in-group, self-categorization theory expects that labels used by the in-party will guide its members towards adopting similar meanings of reality and desirable preferences, or actions. If in-group (party) members are Republicans, they will be exposed to the in-group stereotype, which connects, for instance, Republicanism with evangelical Protestantism, and Democrats with Catholicism, or in more recent years, with secularism. In this case, religiosity will be a group (party) norm and according to SIT, party identifiers are expected to follow this religious norm.\(^1\)

The connection of the above with the cleavage discussion lies in the main assumption behind the party identification approach. The role of parties is not simply to reflect social divisions, but also to define identities and establish normative frameworks for citizens to live and think by. This is the ‘learning’ effect of politics (Miller and Shanks 1996: 133), grounded on a view of the political process as the continuing education of citizens by the parties. But the products of this force are not restricted to the electoral realm. The hypothesized mechanism specified here represents a reciprocal causal link between religiosity and partisanship. The two competing expectations can be summarized as: a religious effect on politics and a partisan effect on religion.

**DATA AND METHODOLOGY**

**Modeling reciprocal relationships**

To evaluate the religious influence on partisanship and the parallel partisan influence on religiosity, I use ANES panel data.\(^2\) Four electoral cycles are covered: 1956 to 1960, 1972 to 1976, 1992 to 1996, and 2000 to 2004, with interviews conducted in both pre- and post-

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1. This stereotyping might seem a simplification of reality – for example, not all Republicans are evangelicals. SIT stresses the point that members perceive in- and out-groups as homogenous, and not that they actually embody these stereotypes (Huddy 2003).
2. A direct question to citizens such as ‘why do you go to church’ would seem intuitive as a test for partisan religion, but it carries serious disadvantages. First, such questions are rarely, if ever, asked in surveys destined for political science consumption. Second, social desirability effects would lead most respondents to provide a ‘proper’ reason, such as belief in God or spiritual needs, as opposed to secular justifications. The test for disentangling the causal relationship between politics and religion has to be indirect, and multivariate statistical analysis serves that purpose.
election periods for presidential years, and only for the post-election period in off-years. Following common practice, African Americans have been excluded from this analysis, due to their idiosyncrasies in terms of historical and demographic characteristics, and organizational autonomy within the Protestant family (e.g. Lenski 1963). The variable that operationalizes identification with a party is the standard NES partisanship item: a seven-point scale, with high scores showing Republicanism. Religion is defined as church attendance – a four-point scale in the 1956-1960 dataset, and a five-point scale thereafter. High scores show frequent attendance. This variable is used as an imperfect proxy for the structural basis of the religious cleavage. The assumption is that if religious communities reflect the social divide underlying the political conflict, then increasing or decreasing attendance in these communities eventually affects their size (see Appendix for details on the selection of this measure).

Almost all studies of the relationship between religion and politics, in the American case and beyond, propose unidirectional causal effects from religious variables to political ones. In assuming the sole existence of this flow of causality, these studies are content to model cross-sectional data, drawn at a single point in time. Considering the typical conjecture in such research, that religious variables represent fixed personal characteristics exogenous to the political sphere, analyses without a temporal dimension seem to serve the purpose. However, if theory suggests that the causal relationship between the religious and the political sphere is more complicated, research needs to turn to longitudinal data (Finkel 1995: 22-3). Repeated measurement of the same individuals across time offers a way to evaluate reciprocal influences.3

Specifically, systematic accounts of causality require three conditions for variable X to cause variable Y: i) the two phenomena must be related; ii) X must be temporally prior to Y; and iii) no spurious relationship must be present (Asher 1983). Employing cross-sectional data permits the evaluation of the first condition, but only by assumption the second. Cross-

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3 Establishment of causal precedence is possible with cross-sectional data, when simultaneous effects are assumed between two variables (Finkel 1995). This however requires the use of unrealistic modeling options in the form of instrumental variables. According to theory, instruments should be very strong predictors of one endogenous variable, but not related to the second endogenous variable. Instrumental variables are difficult to locate in surveys, unless designers had planned ahead and included such indicators in the questionnaire.
sections provide only a snapshot of the population at a single point in time. They lack a time dimension, which in the final analysis, is imposed by the researcher on the data. Without the actual temporal component, which is offered by panel designs, one cannot assess the second condition, and by extension the assumption of unidirectional causal effects from religious to political variables.  

It is however very unusual for panel data to be used in reciprocal models containing endogenous religious variables, at least in political science. Most studies remain innocent to what happens to religious characteristics once they are exposed to partisan politics. Still, the causal relationship proposed in this paper identifies two mutually reinforcing effects: a religious effect on politics (the orthodox assumption in political science), and a political effect on religion. This combination constitutes a feedback effect.

The causal link between religiosity and party identification is specified as a cross-lagged effects model (Finkel 1995), with the following structure:

\[
\text{PartyID}_t = \beta_1 \text{PartyID}_{t-1} + \beta_2 \text{Religion}_{t-1} + \epsilon_1_t \tag{1}
\]

\[
\text{Religion}_t = \beta_3 \text{Religion}_{t-1} + \beta_4 \text{PartyID}_{t-1} + \epsilon_2_t \tag{2}
\]

Coefficient $\beta_1$ in equation (1) represents the impact of PartyID$_{t-1}$ on PartyID$_t$. This is the stability coefficient, showing how volatile partisanship is in the course of two consecutive presidential elections, net of the influence of Religion$_{t-1}$. An equivalent logic applies to $\beta_3$ regarding Religion as the dependent variable in equation (2). Coefficient $\beta_2$ is the cross-lagged effect of Religion$_{t-1}$ on PartyID$_t$, net of the effect of partisan stability. The equation then predicts changes in partisanship. The same applies to $\beta_4$ regarding Religion as the dependent variable.

To my knowledge, Hout and Fisher’s work (2002) is the only published quantitative effort that suggests political pressures on individual religiosity. The study centres on religious apostasy, i.e. the phenomenon of Christians dropping out of church. The authors argue that the conservative religious politicization of the 1990s caused the following backlash: ideologically liberal and moderate Christians abandoning conservative denominations. Hout and Fischer interpret this movement as a reaction against the Religious Right’s political agenda, and the prominent place occupied by conservative Protestantism in GOP ranks (2002: 181, 185). The authors however provide only an indirect test of their expectation, using cross-sectional data.
The two effects underlying the politicization of religion are: first, religiosity shapes partisanship; second, partisanship influences religiosity, i.e. the ‘partisan religion’ effect. If the latter is correct, we should observe $\beta_2 > 0$ in equation (1), but also $\beta_4 > 0$ in equation (2). Alternatively, if only the ‘sociological’ view that dominates electoral studies is true, we should just observe $\beta_2 > 0$ in equation (1), and $\beta_4 = 0$ in equation (2). Finally, there is also the extreme possibility that the partisan effect is very strong, while the religious effect is explained out by control variables or is too weak. This case suggests that $\beta_2 = 0$ in (1), while $\beta_4 > 0$ in (2). Models were estimated with AMOS 6.0 and full-information-maximum likelihood (Arbuckle 2005).

The hypothesis of lagged instead of synchronous effects between the main variables (partisanship and religiosity) defines the recursive (unidirectional) character of the model, and makes identification simple. A specification with synchronous effects would suggest that the two factors influence each other at a single point in time. Such models break the condition of independent variables being uncorrelated with the residual, since the cause is at the same time influenced by its effect (Finkel 1995: 32). In this case normal regression estimates would be biased, therefore analysis must turn to the use of instrumental variables (see footnote 3). Due to heroic assumptions and the gradual nature of most social psychological effects, I consider such non-recursive models a less plausible scenario. In any case, researchers that employ feedback models of NES data suggest that the selection of lagged over synchronous effects makes no difference to the estimation of causal relationships (Goren 2005; Carsey and Layman 2006).

Finally, I have specified additional elements in the cross-effects models, in accordance with the methodological literature. First, error terms in equations (1) and (2) are correlated. This allows estimating whether the two dependent variables at time $t$ share at least one omitted independent variable (Kline 1998: 101). If the disturbances were left unrelated, that would represent the less plausible assumption that the two dependent variables do not share any common, unobserved, causes (Asher 1983). This is especially unwarranted, when one considers that both partisanship and religiosity are outcomes of the same pre-adult

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$^5$ In reality, this simultaneous effect represents a very short time-lag between cause and outcome, relative to the temporal distance between panel measurements.
socialization process. Standard demographic controls were added as predictors of PartyID\textsubscript{t} and Religion\textsubscript{t} (see tables 1 - 4).

The impact of context

A central element in SIT is that social identities are dynamic, i.e. their strength and influence depends on temporal and social context (Hogg and Terry 2000; Greene 2004). Huddy’s overview of SIT (2003) emphasizes situational influences, which result in the variable salience of identities relative to settings. In essence, context can result in individuals switching from one social identity to another. Two examples clarify this point (Huddy 2003: 533, 543). First, consider the case of a politician who openly stresses differences between two ethnic groups during her campaign. Here, identification with ethnic groups is likely to become the dominant identity among the public. In another instance, the participation of an in-group member as a candidate in elections also raises the visibility of the in-group and out-group demarcation. The point of context-dependent identity salience guides the selection of multiple-group estimation, discrete time-lags, and emphasizes the importance of presidential election campaigns in highlighting the religion-political nexus. In the following, I justify these three features of the models.

First, cross-lagged effects were estimated separately for each major religious subculture in the US. The classification of churches into three major religious groups (Catholic, mainline and evangelical Protestant) follows a standard categorization scheme, which allocates denominations into broader religious families (Steensland et al. 2000). Contextual differences among the three groups make this decision essential (cf. Layman and Green 2005). For instance, the lack of political mobilization processes within Roman Catholicism is one element setting this religious tradition apart from the rest in the US, making the expectation of effects between religion and politics implausible. Moreover, religiosity in the Catholic case is more habitual and hierarchically defined (Verba et al. 1995), hence less open to secular influences. Regarding discrimination between mainline and evangelical Protestant churches, I also expect that politicization takes place to different extents and in different periods. Research generally agrees that the initially superior socioeconomic standing of mainline Protestants has led to a different timing of the political mobilization phenomenon.
for the two constituencies (Roof and McKinney 1987; Finke and Stark 1992). Therefore, a separate estimation of the hypothesized relationships is justified.  

This strategy unfortunately encounters practical obstacles, which render it susceptible to criticism. ANES panels normally measure denominational membership only in their first wave, under the obvious assumption that switching does not take place – or that the phenomenon is irrelevant to politics. The present analysis then assumes that Catholics in the first wave of a panel remain members of their religious community for subsequent waves. In other words, stratification of the sample into religious traditions assumes stability in religious preferences across waves, an expectation seriously challenged by the switching phenomenon. It would have been more reassuring to define each religious group by selecting respondents that consistently belonged to the same church across panel waves, but this was only feasible for the 1972-1976 dataset, and partially for the 1956-1960 panel. Therefore, it is a possibility that some participants defined as Catholics or evangelicals in the first wave may have already dropped out of religion by the following wave or converted to a different denomination. 

Second, the time distance between measurements is crucial to the detection of causal effects. The problem of specifying the most plausible, if any, ‘delay’ between cause and effect does not have a straightforward solution (Finkel 1995: 13; Bollen 1989: 61-65; Asher 1983: 27). It depends partly on theoretical conception of the causal effects and partly on data restrictions. The use of NES three-wave panel data constrains my selection of time-intervals between cause and effect, since the first and final waves are administered close to presidential

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6 The effects reported in this paper hold even with alternative, more homogenous stratifications. For instance, if models are estimated within born-again evangelicals, the ‘partisan religion’ effect is intensified. I do not emphasize this result however, for three reasons. First, subsample size further decreases. Second, the ‘born-again’ item, asked in the 1992-1996 and 2000-2004 panels, is a subjective measure, less reliable than denominational membership. Third, concentrating on the mainline-evangelical distinction promotes consistent classification across decades.

7 The existence of repeated measurement for church membership in the 1972-1976 panel offers the opportunity to evaluate this stability assumption. Of 303 white Catholics in 1972, 19 had abandoned their church by 1976. Of 478 white mainline Protestants in the 1972 wave, 75 had dropped out of their church by 1976. Out of 302 white evangelicals in the 1972 wave, 58 switched to a different denomination or dropped out of institutional religion altogether. In the 1956-1960 dataset, I define religious groups using the 1960 measurement; this is the point when the detailed denominational scheme was introduced by the ANES, while the 1956 wave still uses the crude, tripartite distinction between Protestants, Catholics and Jews. In this panel, out of 285 white Catholics in 1956, just 8 move out of the community. Of 908 Protestants in 1956, 83 abandon the Protestant tradition in 1960. These movements can be considered alarming, yet they are embedded in the ANES survey design and cannot be corrected in secondary analysis.
elections, while the middle one is collected in a mid-term election. One obvious strategy is to specify the effects as continuous across time (Finkel 1995: 16). It seems plausible to hypothesize that the effect of religiosity on partisanship takes place evenly distributed across time, and not during some arbitrarily defined time intervals, for instance, every two or four years. Yet, this apparently reasonable specification expects too much on behalf of citizens. The idea that voters actively follow political affairs, and continuously update their views in meaningful ways loses most of its plausibility against empirical reality (Zaller 1992).

An alternative choice is to model discrete time-lags, with the expectation that citizens tend to reassess the link between religion and politics only in specific temporal contexts. Election campaigns appear to be ideal as such. In Edelman’s words (1964: 3) ‘elections are rituals and draw attention to common social ties’. During these periods, candidate speeches, advertisements and every day discussions bring the component parts of the political process to the forefront; voters become actively engaged, while partisan identities obtain increased salience (Campbell et al. 1966; Clarke and Stewart 1998). One practical implication is that it is reasonable to suggest that the partisan religion phenomenon is an evaluation triggered by specific situations during specific periods, and does not take place constantly across time.

Third, the focus on presidential elections is similarly supported in the literature. In justifying the exclusion of the mid-term panel wave from the analysis, I argue that citizens re-evaluate the relationship between party identification and religious commitment mainly in presidential election contexts and not in mid-terms. The differences between presidential and congressional electoral settings are an old concern in American political science (e.g. Campbell 1960). Presidential election campaigns urge citizens to reflect on ‘general politics’, i.e. more abstract considerations of parties and social concerns (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2007: 36). In contrast, congressional elections urge citizens to think about ‘specific politics’, local issues and candidacies, while candidates adjust their strategies based on the specific electoral context in each constituency, often parting from orthodox partisan message (Davidson and Oleszek 2004).

Mid-terms do not seem like an ideal environment for voters to reassess vague links between social groups and parties. Even in the case in which citizens reflect on more general
concerns, these normally refer to presidential performance and the economy (Tufte 1975). Certainly, this description of congressional elections does not apply perfectly across time, with the 1994 ‘nationalized’ mid-term contest being an obvious exception. Yet, in an attempt to make valid comparisons across more than half a century of American electoral history, I avoid using data collected in midterm waves.

Finally, a related point regards methodological consistency. Mid-term measurement for religious attendance is absent for the 1992-1994-1996 NES panel. Therefore, it is practically impossible to estimate a three-wave model for this panel. In order to achieve comparability across decades, the same lag (two consecutive presidential elections) was selected for all datasets. All things considered, results from the three-wave models with latent variables, which take measurement error into account, produce an identical picture of causal relationships.  

RESULTS

Model fit for the cross-lagged specification is acceptable for all panels. Regarding the religious-political connection, the late 1950s are defined by the Catholic candidacy of a Democratic politician, John F. Kennedy. The stability of partisanship and religiosity in the 1956-1960 dataset (Table 1), as shown in the standardized coefficients, reveals that party identification among Catholics is moderately stable across the two presidential elections (.723); church attendance is rather less stable for this subsample (.544). This finding is strengthened by the fact that two-wave models do not correct for measurement error in the subjective indicator of partisanship. On the relationship between exposure to Catholicism and partisanship, the cross-lagged effects are insignificant. The model suggests that when

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8 In some cases, AMOS produced inadmissible estimates, e.g. negative variances. I attribute this to low subsample sizes, which possibly hindered the efficient estimation of more complex models.

9 Goodness-of-fit is assessed with the following criteria: the $\chi^2$ test / degrees of freedom ratio, in which values less than 5 are desirable (or 3 for stricter evaluations); Bentler’s comparative fit index (CFI), which accounts for small sample sizes and should be greater than .90 (or .95 for stricter evaluations); finally, the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA), where values should be lower than .10 (or .08 or even .05 for more conservative evaluations).
controlling for other factors, attending a Catholic church is not related to changing partisanship and vice versa.10

The story is rather different for the two Protestant traditions, where partisanship and attendance appear to be much more stable (compare unstandardized coefficients across the three groups). In light of the anti-Catholic feeling of that period, there is also evidence of feedback effects for both traditions, a phenomenon not attributable to other social characteristics. Mainline Protestants seem to adjust their religiosity on the basis of their party identification (b=.035, p < .05). In substantive terms, we may be witnessing the following effect: mainline Protestants, a typically Republican category, find an additional channel of expressing their partisanship by attending church more frequently. This happens possibly because the Kennedy candidacy intensified the perceived New-Deal link between Democrats and Catholics and produced a reinforcing effect: JFK was both Catholic and Democrat, providing therefore the stimulus for Republicans belonging to Protestant churches to differentiate themselves from Catholics and Democrats alike, as predicted by SIT. At the same time but not as strongly, lagged religiosity also affects partisanship, as traditionally expected by structural definitions of the cleavage phenomenon (b=.091, p < .10).

Evangelical Protestants, a more Democratic constituency until the Southern realignment, also mix religion and politics. The ‘sociological’ effect of lagged religiosity on partisanship is insignificant in their case, indicating that exposure to cues in evangelical churches did not have an impact on congregants’ partisan leanings. Yet, evangelicals do adjust their attendance based on their partisanship. The effect of lagged party identification on changing religiosity is statistically significant, with a one point difference in party identification in 1956 predicting a .056 point difference in attending an evangelical church by the next presidential election (p < .01). This means that instead of updating their partisan leanings and perhaps becoming less Democratic (the traditional assumption) due to a Catholic heading the Democratic ticket, evangelicals seem to stick to their party. One interpretation would be that evangelicals prefer to resolve the dissonance (i.e. a religious and a political signal that run in

10 A discussion of stability would normally use standardized coefficients (with a value of 1 showing a perfectly firm variable). For comparisons of the same coefficient across groups (for example, b1 for Catholics vs. b1 for evangelicals), one should use unstandardized coefficients, since standard deviations – the basis for the calculation of standardized estimates - vary across subsamples (Asher 1983: 49).
opposite directions: Protestants supporting a Catholic Democrat) by minimizing the religious signal, and inculcating themselves from religious cues. In this specific case, partisanship is a stronger component of self than religiosity.

The mid-1970s are marked by the first presidential candidacy of a born-again Christian, southern Democrat Jimmy Carter. Regarding the stability of the two variables in the 1972-1976 period (Table 2), unstandardized coefficients reveal that party identification among Catholics, mainline, and evangelical Protestants is moderately stable across the two presidential elections (.724, .779 and .705 respectively); church attendance is rather less stable for the three subsamples. Concerning religious politicization among Catholics, the cross-lagged effects are again insignificant, as in the 1956-1960 panel.

Mainline Protestants differ once more from Catholics. Being Republican (Democrat) in 1972 predicts increased (decreased) exposure to this religious context by 1976 (b=.066, p < .01). Perhaps, the more Republican increased their participation in higher status mainline churches in reaction to Jimmy Carter’s candidacy, who was at the same time a lower status evangelical and a Democrat. On the other hand, exposure to a mainline Protestant environment in 1972 has an inverse, but statistically weaker, effect on partisanship in 1976 (b= -.073 at p < .10). In other words, higher attendance in mainline churches in 1972 would move congregants towards the Democratic party. This seems to be an accurate reflection of the ‘Social Gospel’ tradition and the mainline religious elite’s movement towards the Democrats, exemplified in the period preceding this electoral cycle (Wald and Calhoun-Brown 2007). In this case, pro-Democrat cues within the church could have possibly affected congregants’ partisanship in that direction.

In the case of evangelical Protestants, the politicization phenomenon is driven only by the impact of religious context. Where mainline Protestants allow their religiosity to be

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11 The negative weight exists due to a suppressor effect, where two variables are positively correlated, but direct effects are negative or vice versa. Suppression occurs for two main reasons (Smith et al. 1992). First, it can be the result of the presence of multicollinearity, an inherent problem in cross-lagged models, which use repeated measures of the same, sometimes very stable, concept. Second, it happens when an additional predictor is entered in the model, i.e. the true relationship between the variables is in the opposite direction than the one indicated by their correlation. In the second case the effect can be retained. Although the first possibility cannot be excluded in the analysis at hand (correlation of party id 1972 with party id 1976 for mainline Protestants exceeds .80), the second explanation sustains a plausible interpretation of the results.
influenced by partisan elements, evangelical Protestants only appear to base their partisanship on religious concerns. In their case, lagged attendance positively constrains partisanship in 1976, with higher attendance predicting greater attachment to the Republican Party ($b=0.135$, $p < .05$). This seems to be an intriguing result, considering Carter’s evangelical candidacy for the Democratic Party, which should bring the evangelical population closer to the Democrats (i.e. the coefficient should bear a negative sign). I attribute this result to the gradual movement of evangelicals towards the GOP, a movement which commences during the 1970s on the basis of moral issues. A possible explanation is that frequent church-goers became susceptible to the GOP’s conservatism and were appalled by the perceived extreme Democratic liberalism, in the aftermath of Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, and the divisive 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago. Therefore, they remained indifferent to Carter’s personal status.

The 1990s represent a setting of extreme cultural polarization and salient partisan identities. Yet, firm conclusions become harder for the 1992-1996 panel (Table 3), due to small sample sizes post stratification (higher probability for a Type II Error). Regarding the stability of the two variables, a comparison of unstandardized coefficients across groups reveals that party identification between 1992 and 1996 remained stable among Catholics, but only moderately stable among mainline and evangelical Protestants. Religiosity was less stable for mainline Protestants, compared to the other two communities. Politicization is still absent among Catholics, with cross-lagged effects failing once again to reach statistical significance. The same applies to mainline Protestants. The absence of politicization could be a product of low sample size, demographic controls, or could simply represent the irrelevance of partisan politics for this religious group in the period covered by the data.

Evangelical Protestants seem to experience another round of religious politicization. The traditionally assumed impact of lagged evangelical attendance on changing partisanship is both substantially and statistically significant, with a one point change in the attendance scale in 1992 predicting a .156 point change in partisanship in 1996 ($p < .05$). The substantial implication of this effect is that in a period of increasing connections between the GOP and conservative Protestantism, frequent exposure to conservative Protestantism seems to move congregants closer to the Republican Party, while less frequent evangelical attendees are
moving towards the Democrats. In an equally strong causal relationship however, lagged partisanship also affects attendance ($b = .110$, $p < .05$). Thus, as expected in this paper, the more Republican among evangelicals were driven towards participating more frequently in their churches – and the more Democrat were urged to participate less.

The 2000-2004 political period features an equally salient connection between the GOP and conservative Protestantism, with a prominent reborn Christian heading the Republican ticket in an atmosphere of cultural polarization. Sample sizes are once again low for this dataset, a potential concern (Table 4). Regarding the stability of the two variables between waves, unstandardized and standardized coefficients reveal that party identification remains very stable among all three religious groups, compared to church attendance. Politicization is still absent among Catholics, with changing partisanship being influenced by factors other than church attendance and vice versa. In the mainline Protestant constituency, changes in party identification seem to be affected by lagged attendance ($b = .144$, significance barely exceeds the cut-off point at .052), confirming the structural effect of religious context on political behaviour.

Among evangelical Protestants, the same ‘sociological’ effect is prominent, with lagged attendance explaining – other things being equal - changing partisanship in 2004, but in this case the relationship is very strong ($b = .247$, $p < .01$). However, religious politicization is also present among evangelicals in the form of a ‘partisan religion’: the lagged effect of partisanship on religiosity is .079 (even with a low sample size, significance barely exceeds the benchmark of $p < .05$, at .053). As in the case of the polarized 1990s, results support a Republican drive behind increasing attendance in evangelical churches.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{12} To test whether interactions are significant, i.e. whether effects differ across religious communities, I fit two models for each panel: first I allow all parameters to differ across groups. In the second case, I constrain cross-lagged effects to be equal across groups. Since the second model is nested within the first, the two assumptions can be evaluated with a $\chi^2$ difference test, i.e. the difference in $\chi^2$ values between the two hypotheses. This will indicate which model fits the data better (Bollen 1989: 292). Results are as follows: for the 1956-1960 data, $\chi^2 = 10.885$, $p < .05$; for the 1972-1976 data, $\chi^2 = 11.068$, $p < .05$; for the 1992-1996 data, $\chi^2 = 6.562$, $p > .10$; in the 2000-2004 panel, $\chi^2 = 9.403$, $p < .10$ (significance is marginal at .052). Thus, only for the 1992-1996 panel can we decline the assumption of significant differences across groups, possibly because of very small subgroup sizes. Yet, even in this case, model fit for the unconstrained model (different effects across groups) is still marginally better than the fit of the constrained model (equal effects across groups). I run an additional test on the 1992-1996 data, to verify the distinctiveness of evangelicals, as follows: again using the $\chi^2$ difference test, I first estimate an unconstrained model within each group, with both cross-lagged effects estimated freely. I compare this to a constrained model which posits that the only effect within each group flows from religiosity to
CONCLUSION

The mobilization of religious constituencies in American elections, fuelled by abortion and other policy-related concerns that emerged in the 1970s, is now considered a permanent component of the political system. The above analysis added an alternative explanation for the development of the religious-political link, one that moves beyond reductionist accounts of the cleavage phenomenon. As a caveat, it should be noted that the present argument does not suggest that political actors shape social structure independently of objective social conditions. It is implausible to expect that exposure to diverse socialization processes, surrounding cues, collective identities and peer pressure will be without consequences to politics or that these can be entirely manipulated by political actors. This coincides with what has been branded as ‘religious politicization’ in the literature, an attempt to provide religious explanations of political behaviour.

Yet, it is equally implausible to expect that the participation of religious communities in political conflicts leaves these communities unaffected. The link between social groups and parties, when salient, creates an effect that shapes the very nature of the social basis of the religious cleavage. Partisan politics play a crucial role in defining and organizing mass perceptions and choices, and can plausibly alter the cohesion of the community. In an ignored process, which shadows the traditional effect of social structure on politics, partisanship ‘constructs’ religious communities, by boosting structural divisions. To cite a topical example, in the 1990s evangelicals tended to move closer to the Republican Party, but in turn Republican identifiers within evangelical churches tended to increase their commitment to those churches. Commitment to a conservative church could eventually function as a symbolic expression of Republican partisanship, whereby one goes to church because one sees this practice as confirmation of party attachment and as demarcation from the out-group (e.g. secular Democrats).

Apart from offering a more accurate reflection of reality, the ignored ‘partisan religion’ has substantial implications for our understanding of religion in modern society and the future of partisanship (this is nested within the unconstrained model). Only for evangelicals do I find that the feedback assumption obtains a better fit than the unidirectional assumption ($\chi^2 = 4.395, p < .05$).
partisan polarization in the US. The addition of this masked effect provides a more comprehensive account of what follows when a social division becomes translated into a political conflict. In relation to religion, it appears that American piety is partly shaped by this-worldly components. By focusing on surface micro-level indicators, research usually ignores this phenomenon and instead concludes that secularization is evidently not taking place in the United States, with its high religious observance and the resurgence of religious conservatism in recent political periods. Even so, the findings in this paper indicate that the basis of Christian faith in America is exposed to secular/partisan concerns.

Regarding parties, religious social differences could be treated as politically endogenous, following the logic of a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’: a socio-political link maintained through social and political processes. In the final analysis, when political conflicts dividing social groups become extremely volatile, as in the recent cultural polarization example in the US, religious fanatics or ‘godless’ extremists are not the sole actors in the game. It seems that parties play a concealed role in reinforcing these cleavages, not simply because they can prescribe attitudes, and definitely not as passive reflections of social divisions. Parties appear able to help create – and, by extension, to help dismiss - the opposing camps in the battlefield.

APPENDIX

Religion is commonly treated as a multidimensional concept containing three facets: believing, behaving and belonging (Stark and Glock 1968). The variable selected to operationalize religion at the individual level is church attendance. While the obvious choice to define religious social structure would be to use a denominational membership indicator, this is not possible with the present data. Group membership indicators are normally dichotomous in nature (member/non-member) making SEM estimates particularly problematic (Bollen 1989: 433). Also, as mentioned above, ANES panel designs rarely contain repeated measures of membership, assuming that this characteristic remains constant across waves. Thus, the estimation of lagged effects is impossible. Religious attendance is perhaps the only religious variable consistently asked in repeated survey designs, and one of few asked with minimal wording changes across decades. Maintaining consistency in testing
causal relationships across decades of survey data is a considerable task per se. Keeping discrepancies to a minimum therefore is an urgent need, and using the same variables across time is one way to reach this goal.

The choice of self-reported religious behaviour, and particularly church attendance, was influenced by additional considerations, practical and theoretical. Worship attendance has been the most popular indicator in sociology of religion (Greeley 1989). A common first step in studies of secularization is to examine whether the number of church-goers is declining or remaining stable in a country. Among political scientists, researchers have also recently discovered that religious attendance shapes partisan attachment and vote, independently of religious tradition (Miller and Shanks 1996; Green 2004; Olson and Green 2006).

Data quality problems further support the use of church attendance over subjective indicators, like doctrinal beliefs. Church-going is a behavioural, even if self-reported, individual feature. By being anchored to an objective reality, it is expected to be more reliable than survey questions on beliefs or religious salience. Unlike behavioural items, these measures are more open to the nuanced logic of psychological indicators, and depend greatly on the interviewee’s understanding of abstract terms.

Research aims are also best served by a religious indicator that allows space for secular influences. This point will be supported through a discussion of Allport and Ross’s (1967) distinction between extrinsic and intrinsic religiosity. Extrinsic religious people attend church because of non-religious motives. Intrinsically religious people are those who attend church because of the spiritual dimension in Christianity. The church attendance indicator carries such multilayered motives. The same distinction cannot be made for beliefs on biblical literalism. The search for partisan effects on religion needs to focus on these extrinsic elements. While doctrinal belief is much more likely to be related to theological concerns, religious practice can reflect motives ranging from the pious to the profane. For theoretical reasons, I also decided not to use the prayer item, which refers to the private dimension of religiosity. As a solitary religious activity, it is not relevant to the social psychological processes investigated here.
Survey measurement of religious attendance however, is not without problems. The main weakness of the item lies in misreporting. Being religious is a norm in American society, therefore going to church is socially prescribed. Sociologists have followed various approaches to this problem, with the relevant literature being vast. Presser and Stinson (1998) find that once the social desirability effect of the face-to-face setting is minimized – for example via postal surveys - weekly worship attendance is reduced by one third. Hadaway and colleagues (1993) also consider actual attendance to be one-half compared to self-reported levels in Gallup samples, and propose the use of ‘head counts’, i.e. estimates of church-going produced by the church. The authors do however acknowledge that church compiled statistics also tend to be unreliable. In a more optimistic study for the quality of the self-reported measure, Hout and Greeley (1998) turn to GSS data to validate self-reports by asking respondents’ spouses to verify the reported behaviour. The researchers conclude that church-going as gauged in surveys is only weakly exaggerated by a ratio of 1.1 rather than 2.0, as found by Hadaway and colleagues. Such a solution is not a possibility in the present case, since NES data do not contain cross-examination questions of respondents’ reported behaviour.

Finally, the interaction effect guides the decision to build the analysis around the church-attendance variable. Models are run separately for different religious subcultures, because the political and religious cues within each setting are expected to be different. Different religious constituencies are expected to become politicized in different contexts. Therefore one needs to avoid using an indicator that depends on constituency characteristics. The attendance question helps overcome this danger of selection bias. Had I defined religion within groups as doctrinal belief, I would have faced the risk of employing a constant indicator within each religious subculture. Most Catholics should be similar in what they believe, as would most evangelicals and so on. Yet, attendance is an indicator that still varies, even within relatively homogenous groups.

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13 One could even go as far as claiming that whether people actually go to church or just report doing so does not matter to the feedback hypothesis. There are two possibilities in the event of partisan religion. If reports are sincere, Republican identifiers follow the group norm and increase their attendance. If reports are exaggerated, Republicans follow the group norm by reporting what is desirable, i.e. a high attendance record.
REFERENCES


Table 1: The religious-political link in the 1950s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Mainline</th>
<th>Evangelical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 Party id → 1960 Party id</td>
<td>.633*** (.723/.036)</td>
<td>.835*** (.817/.026)</td>
<td>.849*** (.856/.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 Attendance → 1960 Attendance</td>
<td>.556*** (.544/.053)</td>
<td>.641*** (.616/.035)</td>
<td>.675*** (.664/.048)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-lagged effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956 Party id → 1960 Attendance</td>
<td>-.020 (-.052/.019)</td>
<td>.035** (.079/.017)</td>
<td>.056*** (.119/.021)</td>
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<td>1956 Attendance → 1960 Party id</td>
<td>-.030 (-.013/.100)</td>
<td>.091* (.038/.054)</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<td>515</td>
<td>309</td>
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<td>χ² / df</td>
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<td>2.813</td>
<td>1.591</td>
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<td>CFI, RMSEA</td>
<td>.961, .053</td>
<td>.966, .059</td>
<td>.986, .044</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1956-1960 NES panel
Maximum likelihood estimates. Parentheses contain standardized coefficients/standard errors. Controls included for age, gender, education dummies, union membership, marital status dummies, region dummies, children, and income.
* p < .10       ** p < .05     *** p < .01
Table 2: The religious-political link in the 1970s

<table>
<thead>
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<td>1972 Party id → 1976 Party id</td>
<td>.724*** (.734/ .038)</td>
<td>.779*** (.790/ .029)</td>
<td>.705*** (.718/ .043)</td>
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<td>1972 Attendance → 1976 Attendance</td>
<td>.652*** (.654/ .044)</td>
<td>.672*** (.676/ .035)</td>
<td>.627*** (.632/ .051)</td>
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<table>
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<th>Cross-lagged effects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972 Party id → 1976 Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972 Attendance → 1976 Party id</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary statistics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$ / df</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI, RMSEA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 1972-1976 NES panel
Maximum likelihood estimates. Parentheses contain standardized coefficients/standard errors. Controls included for age, gender, education dummies, union membership, marital status dummies, region dummies, children, and income.

* p < .10    ** p < .05    *** p < .01
### Table 3: The religious-political link in the 1990s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Mainline</th>
<th>Evangelical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stabilities</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-lagged effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1992 Attendance → 1996 Party id</td>
<td>.026 (.020/.073)</td>
<td>-.014 (-.011/.088)</td>
<td>.156** (.121/.072)</td>
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<td><strong>Summary statistics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<td>121</td>
<td>119</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$/df</td>
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<td>1.287</td>
<td>1.388</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFI, RMSEA</td>
<td>.979, .043</td>
<td>.976, .049</td>
<td>.973, .057</td>
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</table>

Source: 1992-1996 NES panel

Maximum likelihood estimates. Parentheses contain standardized coefficients/standard errors. Controls included for age, gender, education dummies, union membership, marital status dummies, region dummies, children, and income.

* p < .10       ** p < .05     *** p < .01
Table 4: The religious-political link in the 2000s

<table>
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<th>Mainline</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stabilities</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 Party id → 2004 Party id</td>
<td>.924*** (.847/.047)</td>
<td>.903*** (.857/.053)</td>
<td>.903*** (.817/.045)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000 Attendance → 2004 Attendance</td>
<td>.686*** (.670/.058)</td>
<td>.764*** (.746/.057)</td>
<td>.738*** (.752/.049)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-lagged effects</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 Party id → 2004 Attendance</td>
<td>.025 (.032/.038)</td>
<td>.009 (.013/.041)</td>
<td>.079* (.096/.041)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 Attendance → 2004 Party id</td>
<td>-.003 (-.002/.071)</td>
<td>.144* (.094/.074)</td>
<td>.247*** (.187/.054)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summary statistics</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>(\chi^2 / df)</td>
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<td>1.280</td>
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<td>CFI, RMSEA</td>
<td>.940, .073</td>
<td>.981, .044</td>
<td>.957, .074</td>
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</table>

Source: 2000-2004 NES panel
Maximum likelihood estimates. Parentheses contain standardized coefficients/standard errors. Controls included for age, gender, education dummies, union membership, marital status dummies, region dummies, children, and income.
* p < .10       ** p < .05     *** p < .01