

JESUS Q. POLITICIAN:

EXPLAINING THE POLITICIZATION OF RELIGION IN
THE UNITED STATES, AUSTRALIA, AND CANADA

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Abstract: The religious sociologist Peter Berger once said that if India is the most religious country and Sweden the least, then the United States is a nation of Indians ruled by Swedes. This metaphor is inaccurate, at least with regard to Australia, Canada, and the United States in the latter half of the 20th century. The United States actually comes closer to being a nation of Indians ruled by Indians, while Australia a nation of Swedes ruled by Indians, and Canada a nation of “Swindians” ruled by Swedes. This essay will provide evidence for these descriptive claims, and use these claims to assess various theories as to what causes the politicization of religion. Although size of the religious population, the rights revolution, and the openness of the political institutional structure may help explain some degree of religious mobilization, the paper argues that the voting behavior of one key voting group, Catholics, plays a part in the politicization of religion, and that it is the legacies of previous rounds of Catholic incorporation, along with the logic and opportunity of coalition building with Catholics, that explains whether there is a political incentive to adopt religious discourse and policy favorable to religious interests.

It is no secret that in recent decades religious discourse in politics in the United States has increased to a degree not seen before in the 20th century. Religious rhetoric in presidential high-state speeches reached a high point with George W. Bush’s administration. In recent presidential elections, Catholic Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry had to prove he was “Catholic enough” in the face of pro-life criticisms of his abortion stance, while one of the most controversial moments of Barack Obama’s presidential campaign centered on whether his former pastor, Jeremiah Wright, and his condemnations of American racism were really authentically Christian. This raises the question: how does the United States stand comparatively in the politicization of religion? Anecdotal evidence suggests that the politicization of religion is fairly advanced in Australia, and comparatively low in Canada.

The 2004 electoral defeat of the Australian Labor party, which was led by an avowed agnostic in that election, has influenced current Labor leader, Kevin Rudd, a former Catholic,

now an Anglican, to embrace religious rhetoric. He has described Australia as “Christian country” firmly stemming from a “strong Catholic-Protestant Christian tradition”¹ and has held strategy meetings among Labor MPs to deal with the Liberal-National coalition’s attempt to monopolize religion.² He has also published a 5,000 word essay, “Faith in Politics,” upholding as a model for balancing religious conviction and politics the Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who opposed the persecution of Jews in Nazi Germany and worked to undermine the regime. In concluding his discussion of Bonhoeffer, Rudd labeled him “the Protestant Thomas More,” the Catholic saint venerated by the Catholic church for refusing to support the regime of Henry VIII, who had broken with the Roman Catholic church.³ By likening Bonhoeffer to More, Rudd deftly suggested that a single Christian tradition was essential to politics.

In Canada the newly reorganized Conservative Party under Stephen Harper has been much more public about its religiosity and the importance of the Christian tradition to Canada’s tradition. However, the response on the left, unlike the response on the left in Australia, has been more tepid. Liberal Catholic Prime Minister Jean Chretien several times affirmed that religion and politics shouldn’t mix. In his biography, *Straight from the Heart*, he recounted the story of one Catholic bishop who attempted to deny his father communion because his father was a Liberal. The bishop, referring to the colors associated with the Conservative and Liberal parties, told his father “Heaven is blue, and Hell is red, rouge.”⁴ After 9/11, Chretien also claimed that one of his best decisions was not to have a minister speak at the memorial service for the victims

¹ Jeremy Roberts, “Leader puts Christianity out in front,” *Weekend Australian*, December 16, 2006, p. 4

² Matt Price, “New deity dawns for faithful Labor,” *The Weekend Australian*, November 27, 2004, Local section p. 4. One attendee remarked: “I couldn’t believe how many people turned up, especially given there were free caucus drinks in the whip’s office at the same time.”

³ *The Monthly*, October 2006. Available at: <http://www.themonthly.com.au/tm/?q=node/300>

⁴ Jean Chretien, *Straight from the Heart*, Toronto, Ontario: Key Porter Books, p. 12.

of the attack.⁵ Chretien's successor Paul Martin also emphasized the separation of religion and politics, and few articles appeared in the media associating Stephane Dion, the Catholic leader of the Liberals from 2006 to 2008, with religious rhetoric.⁶ Michael Ignatieff, who is currently the leader of the Liberals, has written an essay entitled "Keeping Faith in Politics," which sounds surprisingly close to the essay Rudd wrote in Australia, but which conveys a very different message. Ignatieff's essay explicitly says the faith that needs to be kept in politics is faith in the capacity of humans to understand and change the world, not religious faith. "Politicians cannot allow themselves the privilege of claiming to know what God has in store for us," Ignatieff writes. "We separate religion and politics... and because we do Canada has escaped the religious and ethnic strife that defaces other countries."⁷

These differences among the three countries suggest that a modification needs to be made to a claim by the religious sociologist Peter Berger, who once said that if India is the most religious country and Sweden the least, then the United States is a nation of Indians ruled by Swedes.⁸ In a comparative sense, this metaphor is inaccurate, at least with regard to Australia, Canada, and the United States in the latter half of the 20th century. The United States actually comes closest to being a nation of Indians ruled by Indians, while Australia a nation of Swedes ruled by Indians. Canada comes closer to being a nation of "Swindians" ruled by Swedes.

These descriptive claims will be backed by analysis of political speeches and policy favorable to religious interests in the three countries. In particular, the essay will compare

⁵ Jane Taber, "PM Likes to Keep Church and State Separate," *National Post* (Canada), May 2, 2002, p. A6.

⁶ On Paul Martin, see Shawn McCarthy, "Believe It: Faith's a Factor," *Globe and Mail*, May 3, 2003, p. F3.

⁷ Michael Ignatieff, "Keeping Faith in Politics." Speech available online at: http://www.michaelignatieff.ca/en/about/speeches/983_keeping-faith-in-politics. Accessed March 23, 2009.

⁸ Tracking down when Berger said this has proven to be elusive, but for a recent formulation of this, see Peter Berger, Grace Davie, and Effie Fokas, *Religious America, Secular Europe? A Theme and Variations*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008, p. 12. From the Pew Forum event, "Religion in a Globalizing World," Key West, Florida, December 4, 2006, Berger uses the phrase again, and his use indicates that he includes levels of unbelief as part of his meaning of secularity. Available online at: <http://pewforum.org/events/?EventID=136>. Accessed September 28, 2009.

presidential high-state speeches in the United States with throne speeches and governor general speeches in Canada and Australia. The essay will also look at the relatively well established tradition of maiden speeches of parliamentarians in Canada and Australia to explore in more fine detail the differences between these two countries.

Exploring why these differences emerge gives us clues as to the conditions under which religion becomes politicized. To aid readers in evaluating the argument of the essay, **Figure 1** provides an overview of differences and similarities between the three countries and can be referred to throughout the essay. Three potential explanations for the high salience of religion to politics are the size of the religious population; backlash to activist judges and the rights revolution; and the relative openness of the political structure. While these factors may explain conservative religious mobilization, they are not sufficient to explain whether politicians in the three countries actively seek to adopt religious discourse and pass faith-based policy to court religious groups. The essay shows that the divergences are correlated with divergences in the voting behavior of one key voting group, Catholics. This suggests that it is the legacies of previous rounds of Catholic incorporation, along with the logic and opportunity of coalition building with Catholics, that partly explains whether there is a political incentive to adopt religious discourse and policy favorable to religious interests to construct conservative Protestant-Catholic coalitions.

Variations in the Politicization of Religion: How Religious are the Ruled and the Rulers?

Assessing the comparative validity of Peter Berger's claim requires two measures: how religious are the ruled, and how religious are the rulers? To assess the former, this essay will look at measures of the general population's religious belief and behavior. To assess the latter,

the essay will look at the use of religious rhetoric by politicians, particularly in presidential and throne speeches, and use of religious rhetoric in maiden speeches.

Single-country measures of weekly churchgoing show that in the contemporary period, Australia lags behind Canada and the United States over the last half of the twentieth century (see **Figure 2**). Comparing Canada and the United States demonstrates that up until about the 1960s, weekly churchgoing in Canada exceeded that of the United States. Since the 1980s, weekly churchgoing in the United States has exceeded that of Canada. In the entire post World War II period, churchgoing in the United States has exceed that of Australia. Surveys with cross-country designs, such as the World Values Survey, also show that in the contemporary period, Canada lies between Australia and the United States in terms of weekly churchgoing (see **Figure 3**). Other measures of religiosity confirm that Canada is typically somewhere in between the United States and Australia in terms of religious belief and practices (see **Figure 4**). The data conflict on whether Canada is closer to the United States or Australia in its relative religiosity. Looking at the single-country polls on weekly churchgoing, Canada appears somewhat closer to the United States. Looking at measures such as belief in heaven and born-again experiences, Canada appears somewhat closer to Australia. Hence, in terms of the ruled, the United States is closer to India, Australia to the Swedes, while Canada might be described as in between, or “Swindian.”

Having now some sense of the religiosity of the ruled, how about the religiosity of the rulers? At least one way Berger’s notion of the relative Swedishness or Indianness of the rulers can be operationalized is by looking at the amount of religious rhetoric used by its politicians.⁹

⁹ Other operationalizations may be appropriate. For instance, one might think that the porousness of the church-state boundary may qualify as showing how much religion is important to the rulers. Berger’s aphorism, however, suggests that he did not operationalize his conception of the importance of religion this way. Sweden has an

Analysis of religious rhetoric in US presidential speeches shows a significant increase since the 1980s. Domke and Coe have shown that the average number of references to God in Inaugural and State of the Union addresses averaged about two from Franklin Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter, then reached nearly six with Ronald Reagan, about four with George H.W. Bush, three with Bill Clinton and five with George W. Bush.¹⁰

Analysis of the use of religious rhetoric in political speeches in Australia and Canada confirms that use of religious discourse by politicians is not as prominent in those two countries. Throne speeches in Canada and addresses by the Governor General in Australia are given at the beginning of every session of parliament. Typically delivered by the governor general in both countries, the speech is crafted by the governing party, outlining that party's legislative agenda.¹¹ In terms of frequency, the throne speech is more frequent than inaugural addresses but less frequent than state-of-the-union addresses. Between 1950 and 2008, there have been 51 throne speeches in Canada, reflecting 51 different parliamentary sessions. In the same time period there were 13 inaugural addresses and 58 state of the union addresses in the United States. In Australia, there were 28 Governor General's speeches given at the start of each parliamentary session from 1956 to 2008.

There are some differences between throne/governor-general speeches and presidential high-state speeches. One might argue that because the president cannot assume the party in power in Congress will enact his agenda, the president may be more inclined to use the speech as a means of pressuring Congress to enact the president's policy agenda. By contrast the parliamentary system in Canada and Australia ensures that the prime minister typically has a

established church, yet Berger considered Sweden the most secular country, because of the lack of religious belief and behaviour among its population.

¹⁰ David Domke and Kevin Coe, *The God Strategy: How Religion Became a Political Weapon in America*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 34.

¹¹ In some cases, the throne speech could be delivered by the Queen or King of the United Kingdom.

governing majority, or at least a plurality, in parliament. Still, throne speeches and governor general's addresses contain more than a dry list of policy goals. They also often include invocations of peoplehood and the unique character of Canada and Australia. Conservative and Liberal platforms often diverge in their emphases, so that they can be considered political documents that are intended to attract support for their programs. For instance, while in general mention of aboriginals has increased in all throne speeches, the tendency is much greater among the Liberal party rather than the Conservative party in Canada. These broad differences are often magnified in the debates that follow the speeches. Soroka has noted that issues change over time in throne speeches, so this suggests that at least the throne speeches are picking up transformations in politics.¹² Soroka has also noted that throne speeches are often not comprehensive, and that controversial policies that a party may intend to enact may be left out of the throne speech. However, presidential state-of-the-union addresses also are not comprehensive and often policies are sketched in broad, nonspecific strokes.

From 1950 to 2008, Canadian throne speeches contain very little religious rhetoric. Of the 51 throne speeches between 1950 and 2008, 15 of those were given when the Progressive Conservative/Conservative party was in control of parliament, 36 when the Liberal party was in control. Each speech does end with "May divine providence guide your deliberations," but the use seems more a matter of custom. In Australia, as with the Canadian throne speeches, there is no use of religious rhetoric in the speeches except for the variation of the phrase, "May divine providence guide your deliberations" used to close each speech. The one difference is that this phrase disappears in the 1973, 1974, and 1977 speeches, then disappears permanently after 1983.

The use of religious rhetoric in political speeches may appear to be greater in Canada than Australia, but only if great importance is set to the disappearance of the phrase "May divine

¹² See Stuart N. Soroka, *Agenda-Setting Dynamics in Canada*, Vancouver : UBC Press, 2002, pp. 64-66.

providence guide your deliberations” in Australia. However, it is debatable whether the continued use of the phrase in the Canadian context reflects a commitment to religion or simply a commitment to tradition. What seems more important is that in the body of the texts of throne and governor general speeches, there is no mention of religious rhetoric at all, whereas such rhetoric exists in the body of US presidential speeches.

A more fine-grained look at religious rhetoric can be found by looking at maiden speeches of parliamentarians—the speech they make when they are elected for the first time. Although there is no comparability with the United States, where the tradition is not nearly as strong, comparing Australian and Canadian maiden speeches is highly revealing in demonstrating differences between those two countries.

The convention surrounding maiden speeches are roughly similar in Australia and Canada. Members typically congratulate the Speaker, mention previous holders of their seat, describe their electorate, and try to keep their comments somewhat noncontroversial, since maiden speeches are not to be interrupted by other members.¹³ Still, significant philosophical differences often appear in the maiden speeches, especially since many are direct responses to throne speeches and governor general’s speeches, which set the overall legislative agenda. That questions of religion and politics can become important and crystallized in maiden speeches is reflected in this quote by Senator John Herron of Queensland: “Religion wasn’t a reason for my entering Parliament, but [preparing for] the maiden speech makes you think, ‘What will be the basis for my actions while I’m here?’”¹⁴

¹³ There are notable exceptions, such as Pauline Hanson’s maiden speech, which criticized growing multiculturalism in Australia.

¹⁴ Marion Maddox, *God Under Howard: The Rise of the Religious Right in Australian Politics*, Crows Nest, New South Wales, Australia: Allen and Unwin, 2005, p. 37.

Among all freshmen parliamentarians in the House of Representatives in Australia, religious rhetoric has increased in the past few decades (see **Figure 5**). Liberal and National party members have been more willing to use religious rhetoric than the Labor party, but the use of religious rhetoric has increased in Labor as well. These variations suggest that at least the maiden speeches are picking up salient political differences in the way in which religion matters to political representatives. As Labor MP Maria Vamvakinou, a Greek Orthodox, put it, "I'd hate to think people thought the Labor Party was bereft of faith and that we weren't interested in religion at all. I don't think the Liberal Party should be seen to have a monopoly on God.... Religion and faith are mainly private matters, but if I see an opportunity, in parliament or in public, I will speak more openly about my Christian beliefs."¹⁵

One sees a particularly sharp increase in 1996, when the conservative Howard government assumed control of the Australian government. In that year 10 out of 52 maiden speeches in the Australian House mentioned "God."¹⁶ When the analysis is broadened so that speeches that contain two or more religiously inflected words (i.e use of the words "bible," "pray," "church," "religion," "Catholic," "spiritual," "Jesuits," "divine," or "bless"), 19 out of 52 maiden speeches contained such rhetoric. As numerous commentators have pointed out, appealing to religious conservatives was a major strategy of the Howard government. Maddox believes that in prime ministerial utterances, this was largely achieved through use of "coded" rhetoric and appeals to imagery of a 1950s Australia of "white picket fences" and family values. The strategy is perhaps similar to some of President George W. Bush's "coded" religious

¹⁵ Matt Price, "New deity dawns for faithful Labor," *The Weekend Australian*, November 27, 2004, Local section p. 4.

¹⁶ Two of these are questionable, but even if they are left out, that is still 8 of 10, and 17 out of 52 representatives using some kind of religious rhetoric.

rhetoric, as when his speechwriters include phrases like “wonder making power.”¹⁷ Yet in the maiden speeches of parliamentarians, one finds a great deal of direct use of religious rhetoric.

It is useful to compare 1996 in Australia with 2006 in Canada. This year can be considered crucial in that the Conservative party in Canada was led by Stephen Harper, who emphasized both his belief and the importance of the religious right to his coalition, relying heavily on a promise to revisit the issue of homosexual marriage, which had recently been allowed in the Canadian federal parliament.

One important comparative consideration is that there is less adherence to the maiden speech as a tradition in Canada, as not all freshmen parliamentarians give a formal maiden speech. Of the 74 freshmen parliamentarians in the 39th parliament, only 51 were identified with maiden speeches. Another consideration is that the Canadian House is significantly larger, so the maiden speeches are shorter. The speeches in the 1996-98 Australian parliament averaged approximately 3000 words per speech, whereas the Canadian maiden speeches averaged roughly 1250 words. With these caveats in mind, only 3 out of 51 freshmen parliamentarians in the 39th parliament mentioned God at all, and there were no other parliamentarians who included two or more uses of religious rhetorical words beyond “God.” The lack of religious rhetoric compared to Australia is surprising not only because of the media attention given to the connections between Harper and politicized religion, but also because Canadian weekly churchgoing rates in 2006 are higher than that of Australia.

The lack of use of religious rhetoric in maiden speeches in 2006 in Canada reflects a more consistent pattern. When one looks at maiden speeches from the 35th Parliament through the current 40th Parliament (1994 to 2008), three things stand out (see **Figures 6 and 7**). First, the overall use of religious rhetoric is low. Second, there is not as steep a pattern of increase from

¹⁷ David J. Kuo, *Tempting Faith: An Inside Story of Political Seduction*, New York: Free Press, 2006, p. TK.

the 1990s to the 2000s, as there is in Australia. Third, although there may be a slight increase in use of religious rhetoric in maiden speeches in Canada, this rise is occurring in 2006, whereas a rise in religious rhetoric in maiden speeches in Australia is apparent in the mid-1990s.

What does it mean that parliamentary freshmen are resorting to religious rhetoric to a greater degree in Australia than Canada? It could be that the longer form of the speech in Australia allows for greater opportunity to use religious rhetoric, especially given the greater latitude in the Australian speeches for members to talk of their personal biography. There is some validity to this observation. Still, it should be noted that six of the references to “God” in the 1996 Australian speeches came in simple and short references of thanks to God for being allowed to serve, whereas only one of the references to God in the Canadian speeches is a similar expression of gratitude (the other two are a blessing to Canadian troops and a quote from a Native American chief saying they used to pray to a God they didn’t believe in under British rule). Various expressions of thanks are common in maiden speeches in both countries, so it does not seem likely that it is the length of the speech alone that is driving the usage of religious rhetoric.

If it is not simply the result of differing speech conventions, the greater use of religious rhetoric could mean that the salience of religion is greater in Australia than Canada because of the greater politicization of religion. Or, it could mean that a greater number of parliamentarians with religious backgrounds are being elected in Australia than Canada. This too would indicate a greater degree of politicization of religion in Australia than Canada.

The trends in religious rhetoric is complemented by data on the policy in Australia and Canada. Since 1963 federal funding has been available to all denominational schools in Australia. In 1996 Australia abolished the Commonwealth Employment Service and embraced

principles of faith-based social provision by redirecting \$700 million in contracts to churches performing job placement services. This was followed in 2004 with another \$365 million over 4 years to churches for programs for early intervention for at-risk children.¹⁸ In 2004 Australia affirmed that marriage is between a man and a woman. By contrast, in Canada, state funding for religious schools is still primarily limited to Catholic schools. Moreover, Canada has affirmed gay marriage rights. Compared to the United States, Australia is even more remarkable. Australia, the most secular of the countries in terms of proportion of the population that claims no religious belief, is one where funding to faith-based groups has advanced nearly as much as in the United States.

It is for this reason that it seems appropriate to revise Berger's phrase and describe Australia as coming comparatively closer to a nation of Swedes whose policies suit Indians. Of the three countries, the United States looks more like a nation of Indians ruled by Indians. Canada might be described as a nation of "Swindians" ruled by Swedes. These characterizations can be used to evaluate whether size of the religious population, degree of judicial activism in relation to religious issues, and institutional structure are related to the adoption of religious rhetoric by politicians.

Size of the Religious Population?

Is high political salience of religion simply a result of the size of the religious population?¹⁹ If size of the religious population were the most important determinant of use of religious rhetoric by politicians, then one would only find nations of "Indians ruled by Indians,"

¹⁸ Maddox, *God Under Howard*, p. 235.

¹⁹ For an example of this type of attribution, see: Shawn McCarthy, "Believe It: Faith's a Factor," *Globe and Mail*, May 3, 2003, p F3. See also quote in Charles Lewis, "Learning God's Ways," *National Post*, October 13, 2007, p. A8.

and “Swedes ruled by Swedes.” The fact that there are mixed categories (“Indians ruled by Swedes,” “Swedes ruled by Indians,” and “Swindians” ruled by Swedes”) strongly suggests that the size of the religious population is not a decisive factor.

The intercountry comparisons are also supported by intertemporal comparisons. Intertemporal comparisons do not show a relationship between use of religious rhetoric and size of the population that goes to church on a weekly basis. The size of the US population that claims to go to church on a weekly basis has not changed significantly since World War II. If anything, the number of regular churchgoers has slightly dropped from a high in the late 1950s, yet religious rhetoric in political discourse has increased.²⁰ Moreover, Canada and Australia had higher proportions of their populations going to church around mid-century (around 50 to 60 percent in Canada) yet the Throne and Governor General’s speeches do not pick up any increase in religious rhetoric at those times.

Judicial Activism and the Rights Revolution?

The descriptive characterizations not only shows that the politicization of religion is not necessarily related to the size of the religious population, but also throws into question the sufficiency of the “rights revolution” and religious backlash thesis in explaining use of religious rhetoric in politics. Several scholars have suggested that it is primarily court decisions and a new emphasis on rights that has mobilized religion in the United States and increased the use of religious political rhetoric. In *The Search for American Political Development*, for instance, Orren and Skowronek argue that it was primarily Supreme Court decisions that sparked a shift in the religious order, making the liberal/conservative distinction in religion the major faultline, as

²⁰ See for example Robert Putnam’s summation of weekly churchgoing trends in *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000 p. 71.

opposed to denominational differences. Orren and Skowronek trace the court's turn in the 1960s as a reaction to the early New Deal, when the courts ceded authority over economic policymaking but vowed to reassert authority over cultural issues.²¹ Similarly, Gary Wills has argued that the religious right has mobilized primarily in response to a rights revolution starting in the 1960s. Although the courts are not the sole purveyor of this rights revolution, they are a strong component. Wills writes, "Between 1961 and 1971, ten cases hit the Evangelicals blow after blow.... This concentration of cases, suddenly accepted and ruled on by a Court that had not been much interested in the subject before, convinced Evangelicals that the Court was now waging a war on God."²² These include decisions on school prayer, sabbatarianism, contraception, and abortion. Moreover, Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg has suggested that in *Roe* the Supreme Court was too activist. The court should not have adopted the trimester approach, and instead should have merely struck down the abortion regulation and let the various state legislatures have a role in determining the appropriate abortion regulations.²³

Other scholars however have suggested that there have been triggers besides the rights revolution that mobilized the religious right. Smith has argued that it was primarily issues of taxation and threats to the autonomy of fundamentalist and evangelical independent institutions that sparked mobilization of the Moral Majority.²⁴ The data on religious rhetoric in political speeches in Canada, the United States, and Australia supports the notion that the rights revolution is not as crucial in the politicization of religion as previously believed. Canada,

²¹ Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, *The Search for American Political Development*, New York : Cambridge University Press, 2004.

²² Garry Wills, *Head and Heart: American Christianities*, New York: Penguin, 2007, p. 482-83. See also Hugh Hewitt, *Painting the Map Red: The Fight to Create a Permanent Republican Majority*, Washington, DC: Regnery, 2006, p. 84.

²³ Ruth Bader Ginsburg, "Speaking in a Judicial Voice," 67 *NYU L. Rev.* 1185 (1992), cited in Louis Fisher, *American Constitutional Law* (5th ed.), Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2003, p. 950.

²⁴ Citation to Rogers Smith talk at Philomathean Society, University of Pennsylvania, 2008. Also see William Martin, *With God On Our Side: The Rise of the Religious Right in America*, New York: Broadway Books, 1996, p. 173.

compared to Australia, has come much closer to the United States in experiencing a “rights revolution,” yet in comparing throne/governor general speeches, the amount of religious rhetoric in both countries is about the same, while in comparing maiden speeches, the amount of religious rhetoric in Australia exceeds that of Canada.

The rights revolution can be construed broadly (as led by social movements, legislatures, and courts) or narrowly (as led by high courts). In Epps’ original formulation, the “rights revolution” was seen as primarily a judicially led phenomenon that sparks social movements to take their case at the judicial level.²⁵ Other commentators have argued that a rights revolution can be promoted by other institutional venues, such as the legislature.²⁶ The section looks at both the narrow and the broader conception of the rights revolution to see how they affected religious interests. When the rights revolution is construed narrowly as a court-led phenomenon, Canada appears to have experienced a deeper rights revolution. When the rights revolution is considered more broadly, then Canada and Australia appear similar in this regard. Either way, then, the rights revolution cannot explain why it is in Australia that politicians have resorted to religious rhetoric to a greater degree. Although a rights revolution may spark conservative religious mobilization, this does not necessarily translate into politicians adopting religious rhetoric.

The rights revolution in relation to religion in the United States has been well documented in the academic literature, so this section will focus primarily on the Canadian and Australian cases. Although not as sweeping as in the United States, the Canadian rights revolution has put religious groups, which once enjoyed a privileged position in the public

²⁵ Charles R. Epp, *The Rights Revolution : Lawyers, Activists, and Supreme Courts In Comparative Perspective*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1998.

²⁶ Brian Galligan and F.L. Morton, “Australian Exceptionalism: Rights Protection Without a Bill of Rights,” in Paul Howe and Peter H. Russell (eds.) *Judicial Power and Canadian Democracy* (pp. 17-40), Montreal and Kingston, Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001, p. 17-18. Galligan and Morton argue that a rights revolution led by legislatures is more likely to be influenced “by interests with large or mass memberships that can influence electoral outcomes with votes and financial contributions” whereas judicially led rights revolutions are more influenced “by interests with large numbers of lawyers or whose policy objectives and social values are shared by elite groups.”

sphere, on the defensive. Canadian Confederation in 1867 did not include a bill of rights as in the US founding. A bill of rights was adopted in 1960 under the Diefenbaker government, but these rights only applied at the federal level, and its terms were ambiguous enough that its provisions seemed useless to legal observers.²⁷ The idea for a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms stems back in origins to the late 1960s. Negotiation over the proposed package of rights was difficult, and settled only by the inclusion of the “notwithstanding clause,” an ambiguous provision that could allow provincial and federal legislatures to override the terms of the charter after the first five years of its existence. Since the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom came into effect in 1982, the notwithstanding clause has rarely been invoked, so in essence, the Charter has acted equivalent to a bill of rights. The historian Mark Noll writes, “The most consequential long-term effect of the new Charter was to push Canadian jurisprudence into an increasingly American pattern where activist judges became the promoters of social change.”²⁸

From 1984 to 2001 the Supreme Court of Canada issued over 350 decisions related to the Charter, and there have been a number of decisions at the provincial level based on the Charter.²⁹ Many of these decisions have affected religious interests. The freedom of religion enumerated in the Charter was used to strike down sabbatarian legislation in *R v. Big M Drug Mart* (1985). The ruling in *Big M. Drug Mart* found that the Lord’s Day Act primary purpose was religious, not secular, in nature, thus violating a fundamental freedom. This may not have been a terrible blow to religious interests however, as the court decided in *Edwards Books and Arts v. The Queen*

²⁷ Frederick Vaughan, “Judicial Politics in Canada: Patterns and Trends,” in Paul Howe and Peter H. Russell (eds.) *Judicial Power and Canadian Democracy* (pp. 3-26), Montreal and Kingston, Canada: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2001.

²⁸ Mark Noll, “What Happened to Christian Canada?” *Church History*, 75 (2) June 2006, pp. 258.

²⁹ Christopher Manfredi, *Judicial Power and the Charter: Canada and the Paradox of Liberal Constitutionalism*, 2d Ed., New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. ix.

(1986) that the Retail Business Holiday Act in Ontario was constitutional because it was primarily secular in nature, to provide a common day of rest for workers.³⁰

More damaging was *Zylberberg v. Sudbury Board of Education* (1988), in which the Ontario appeals court ruled that school prayer in Ontario, even with an opt-out provision for the nonreligious, was unconstitutional because it placed an undue burden on the children who would be stigmatized for opting out. In 1989, in *Russow and Lambert v. Attorney General of British Columbia*, the British Columbia Supreme Court followed Ontario in striking down a similar prayer and Bible reading act with an opt-out provision. In the *Elgin County* ruling in Ontario in 1990, the Ontario appeals court also struck down a provincial law that allowed fundamentalist Christians to teach in Ontario public schools. One judge would later note that *Elgin* represented “the end of an era of majoritarian Christian influence, and marks the beginning of a period of secularism in education, based on an awareness of a changing societal fabric and Charter protection for minority rights to freedom of religion.”³¹

Equally, if not more, harmful to conservative religious interests was the Canadian Supreme Court decision to strike down federal regulation of abortion in the 1988 *Morgentaler* decision. The Canadian parliament in 1969 had passed a law allowing abortions if deemed medically necessary by a hospital’s Therapeutic Abortion Committee. This allowed substantial variations in access to abortion across Canadian communities, as access to a hospital was not easy, particularly in rural communities, and hospitals were not required to have such committees—only 15 percent of hospitals had such committees.³² Four separate opinions were issued in *Morgentaler*, with two mainly focusing on the unconstitutionality of the committees, which

³⁰ Manfredi, *Judicial Power*, pp. 54-6.

³¹ Justice Winkler in the 1995 *Bal* decision. Cited in Terri A. Sussel, *Canada’s Legal Revolution: Public Education, the Charter, and Human Rights*, Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications Ltd., 1995. See note 48 on p. 157.

³² As noted in the opinion in *Morgentaler* written by Dickson. See Ian Bushnell, *The Captive Court: A Study of the Supreme Court of Canada*, Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, pp. 464-65.

unduly limited women's ability to protect their health if they needed to perform an abortion for that reason; another opinion affirmed a fundamental right to an abortion for women, while the last opinion dissented. Unlike the US Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which imposed a trimester approach to the legality of abortion, the Canadian Supreme Court left it open to the legislature to devise abortion regulations absent the need for abortion committees. Since *Morgentaler*, there has only been one attempt to pass a law regulating abortion. The bill passed in the House but failed in a tie vote in the Senate, an unelected body in Canada. Pro-life politicians joined with abortion supporters to oppose the bill because the bill would have allowed abortions for health considerations, including mental health. Since then, the federal government has largely avoided the abortion issue, which has meant in practice that there is no legal regulation of abortion access throughout Canada beyond a requirement that a doctor perform the abortion. Access of women to clinics and hospitals can be restricted by provincial decisions to limit funding of such clinics and hospitals, but provincial governments have not sought to deny such funding, though efforts to cut costs in healthcare in general may lead to deprioritization of such funding. Following *Morgentaler*, the number of abortions in Canada has increased, with a slight dip in the late 1990s, perhaps because of funding decisions.

Although the Canadian Supreme Court was not as "activist" as the US Supreme Court in *Roe*, it was more activist in other decisions. *Daigle v. Tremblay* in 1989 explicitly concluded that a fetus was not a person with rights under the Charter, a step that goes beyond judicial decisions in the United States, which have not ruled on the status of the fetus as a person.

Finally, courts and the "rights revolution" have been instrumental in protecting homosexual rights in Canada. In *Egan v. Canada* (1995) the plurality decision ruled that limitation of benefits to a spouse, defined as a person of opposite sex, in the Old Age Security

Act was constitutional, but it did establish sexual orientation as a classification requiring greater scrutiny. Since then, the court has moved in a more progressive direction. In *Vriend v. Alberta* (1998) the Supreme Court ruled that sexual orientation could not be left out of Alberta's Individual Rights Protection Act. In *M v. H* (1999) the Supreme Court ruled that common-law definitions of spouses could not exclude homosexual couples. Anger over these decision led the religious right to pressure provincial governments to use the "notwithstanding clause" to prevent these judicial decisions on gay rights.³³

Canadian courts have also been active in protecting gay marriage rights. In 1999 the House passed a bill overwhelmingly supporting a definition of marriage as between a man and a woman. Yet a mere six years later, on June 28, 2005, parliament defined marriage to include same-sex couples. What happened in between these two votes was that in the provinces, nine provincial courts supported gay marriage based on the Charter, leading to Prime Minister Chretien's decision to draft legislation at the federal level to affirm the legality of homosexual marriage.

In Australia the rights revolution has not received as much attention because the Australian constitution lacks an enumerated bill of rights. Attempts to create a bill of rights failed in the 1970s and 1980s.³⁴ However, there are some "rights" clauses in the constitution, such as section 116, which contains a guarantee of the freedom of religion. Moreover, rights have been granted through legislative and administrative means. Even with these caveats in mind, restricting examination of the rights revolution with regard to religious matters shows no significant activism among the courts in comparison with Canada and the United States.

³³ Bob Harvey, "Canada's Religious Right Flexes Its Muscle," *Ottawa Citizen*, October 28, 1999, p. A4.

³⁴ Jeffrey Goldsworthy, Introduction, in Tom Campbell, Jeffrey Goldsworthy, and Adrienne Stone, *Protecting Rights Without a Bill of Rights: Institutional Performance and Reform in Australia* (pp. 1-16), Burlington, VT: Ashgate, p. 3.

After the passage of state aid to denominational schools in 1963, the courts refused to read into the Constitution's religious freedom clause any notion that this violated separation of church and state. In the 1981 state aid case that reached High Court, *Ex rel Black v. Commonwealth* (1981), the court rejected the idea that the religious freedom clause in section 116 of the constitution contained an implicit separation of church and state.

Comparing abortion policy the difference between Australia and Canada emerges more starkly. In Australia each state has its own separate abortion laws. State courts played a part in determining the scope of abortion rights in some states. In Victoria in the *Menhennit* ruling in *R. v. Davidson* (1969), the court's decision turned on the meaning of Victorian statutory law (section 65 of the Crimes Act, based heavily on British common law) which read,

"Whosoever... with intent to procure the miscarriage of any woman whether she is or is not with child unlawfully administers to her or causes to be taken by her any poison or other noxious thing, or unlawfully uses any instrument or other means with the like intent, shall be guilty of a felony, and shall be liable to imprisonment for a term of not more than fifteen years."

The court deemed that "unlawfully" in this text meant where the miscarriage was not intended to protect the mental and physical health of the mother. Since the ruling, abortions have increased in the province, and prosecutions against abortion providers have been minimal. In reaction to the decision, the provincial legislatures could have changed the wording of the law, but the province has not done this.

Courts played a significant role in determining abortion reform in two other states. In New South Wales the *Levine* ruling in *R. v. Wald* (1971) followed the *Menhennitt* ruling in its reading of statutory law (section 83 of the Crimes Act of 1900) as deeming abortion lawful if the

woman believed it was necessary for physical and mental health. The New South Wales court also included social and economic stress as legitimate factors. In Queensland the district court decision in *R. v. Bayliss and Cullen* (1986) resulted in the legality of abortion under criteria similar to the Menhennitt ruling. As in Victoria, the provincial legislatures have also not changed statutory law.³⁵

Legislatures have led abortion reform in the other states in Australia. South Australia in 1969 and Northern Territory in 1974 amended their abortion statutes to allow for abortions early on for the mother's health or in cases of fetal disability, and later in the pregnancy only to save the life of the woman. Western Australia's criminal code was untested in courts and largely assumed to follow the Queensland precedent until 1998, when the legislature passed a new law allowing abortion after informed consent. In Tasmania the law on abortion is unclear and untested.³⁶ The Australian Capital Territory decriminalized abortion in 2002 in a closely divided vote, becoming the first area in Australia where abortion is unregulated. More recently, in the fall of 2008 Victoria decriminalized abortion up to 24 weeks, after which approval of two doctors is needed, on grounds that it is appropriate for the woman's physical, mental, and social circumstances. At the federal level, there has been no significant legislation. The Australian Labor party introduced a bill to liberalize abortion in 1972, which failed, and an attempt to restrict payments for abortion from Medibank, the Australian national health insurance system, in 1979 also failed.³⁷

³⁵ This can be contrasted with the court decision in *McBain v. Victoria* (2000), which ruled that restricting in vitro fertilization to married couples or women with a partner was inconsistent with the federal government's Sex Discrimination Act of 1984. The federal parliament subsequently sought to rewrite the Sex Discrimination Act in the Sex Discrimination Amendment Bill of 2002. See Maddox, *God Under Howard*, pp. 78-9.

³⁶ Most of the information from Natasha Cica, "Abortion Law in Australia, Research Paper 1 1998-99," August 31, 1998. Available at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/rp/1998-99/99rp01.htm>. See also Karen Coleman, "The Politics of Abortion in Australia: Freedom, Church, and State," *Feminist Review* 29 (Summer 1988), pp. 75-97.

³⁷ K. A. Petersen, The Public Funding of Abortion Services: Comparative Developments in the United States and Australia, *The International and Comparative Law Quarterly*, 33(1) January 1984, pp. 158-180.

To summarize, in Australia some state-level courts did interpret existing statutory law in a liberalizing manner in the late 1960s and early 1970s, though in other provinces abortion liberalization was led by legislatures. From 1970 to 1988, one could argue that abortion was liberalized to a greater degree in Australia, because of the limited access in Canada to therapeutic abortion committees. Since 1988 though, abortion has become completely decriminalized in Canada, and abortion rates in that country have narrowed the gap with Australia and the United States.³⁸ Yet abortion has not become a defining issue in Canadian party politics, and the mobilization of religion has not translated into a heavy use of religious rhetoric in political speeches.

Finally, with regard to gay marriage rights, there has been no decision on the part of courts in Australia. The federal parliament has gone in the reverse direction of Canada, restricting the definition of marriage to one man and one woman, though civil unions have been recognized at both the state and federal level.

In summary, neither a narrow nor a broad interpretation of the rights revolution can explain the politicization of religion in Australia and the relative lack in Canada. One could argue that perhaps in the US case, judicial backlash in conjunction with a large religious population might contribute to the politicization of religion, and that judicial/rights revolution backlash might not matter where the religious population is small. Detailed examination of the Australian and Canadian cases shows that this is not likely. State and provincial level decisions, whether motivated by lower level courts or legislatures, are as likely to promote backlash as much as centralized decisions.

³⁸ Search for more sources. Around 1995-1996, Australia had a rate of 22.2 abortions per 1,000 female population between 15 and 44. The corresponding rates were 22.9 for the US, and 15.5 for Canada. The rate per 100 live births was 26.4 for Australia, 22.0 for Canada, and 25.9 for the US. Stanley K. Henshaw, "The Incidence of Abortion Worldwide," *International Family Planning Perspectives* 25, Supplement (Jan. 1999), pp S30-S38.

Degree of Openness of the Institutional Structure?

In contrast to Ruth Bader Ginsburg's suggestion that decentralization of abortion policy would help deflate conflict over moral issues, one might consider the opposite argument. A few scholars have argued that elites are insulated from mass politics to a greater degree in Canada because of fewer veto points and the parliamentary system. The greater separation of powers in the United States may allow for more avenues of influence for socially conservative groups, keeping such groups mobilized.

It would be difficult, however, to argue that the separation of powers is greater in Australia than it is in Canada. Both share a federalist structure. Both also divide federal government between upper and lower chambers, and courts. Australia's Senate is elected, while Canada's Senate is appointed, so perhaps religious groups in Australia have greater access to senators. But, as already discussed, courts in Canada have had more power than courts in Australia, due to the presence of an enumerated bill of rights in the Charter, so it seems that in terms of access points, the comparison between Canada and Australia is a wash.

Another possibility is that the Australian preferential voting structure might allow minor parties to have a greater lifespan in Australian politics, thus allowing constituencies organized along single-issues to maintain mobilization. Yet historically, Canadian politics have featured many long-lived, regionally based minor parties without having such a preferential voting structure.

There is also the possibility that the party discipline exerted by a parliamentary system may make it more difficult for moral causes to exert influence, whereas in the United States, candidate-centered elections and weaker party discipline may make it easier for individual

politicians to seize upon moral issues.³⁹ The fact that Australia and Canada share a parliamentary system, however, does not suggest that the parliamentary system plays a role in the politicization of religion. In addition, party discipline in the United States has considerably tightened over the past few decades, as measured by polarization measures, and the effect has been the reverse: a substantial increase in religious rhetoric.

Politicizing God: Coalition Politics

Given the inability of size of the religious population, judicial/rights revolution backlash, and openness of institutional structure to explain the patterns of the politicization of religion, this essay now turns to accounting for the variation. The essay argues that the voting behavior of Catholics plays a part in the politicization of religion, and that it is the legacies of previous rounds of Catholic incorporation, along with the logic and opportunity of coalition building with Catholics, that explains the politicization of religion. In short, where Catholics have proven amenable to shifting their allegiances from left-leaning parties to conservative parties, then one might find that in reaction to this political incentive, politicians will employ religious rhetoric to capture this vote.

To make this case, the voting patterns of Catholics are analyzed to show when conservative Catholics have been amenable to a cross-Christian coalition with Protestants and other conservative churchgoers. Wuthnow has influentially argued that over the course of the 20th century, differences between religious denominations have become less important, while the

³⁹ See George Moyser (ed.), *Politics and Religion in the Modern World*, New York: Routledge: 1991, p. 276-77. Mildred A. Schwartz, "Politics and Moral Causes in Canada and the United States," *Comparative Social Research* 4, 1981: 65-90. John H. Simpson (1986) "Some Elementary Forms of Authority and Fundamentalist Politics," in Jeffrey K. Hadden and Anson Shupe (eds.) *Prophetic Religions and Politics, Vol. 1*, New York: Paragon House, pp. 391-409. Miriam Smith, "The Politics of Same-Sex Marriage in Canada and the United States," *PS* April 2005, pp. 225-228. Kenneth D. Wald, Adam L. Silverman, and Kevin S. Fridy, "Making Sense of Religion in Political Life," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2005. 8:121-43, p. 138.

difference between liberal and conservative strands of religion within denominations have become more important.⁴⁰ What is striking in comparing the three countries is that there is great variation in the emergence of this liberal-conservative split, when measured by the timing of the appearance of the split, and by which church groups have been most affected by the split.

Catholics have been less willing to move to right parties in Canada than in the Australia and the United States.

One way to compare the countries is to look at the magnitude of the difference between Protestant and Catholic voters. In all three countries, Catholic voting patterns still diverge from Protestant voting patterns, no matter the degree of success of right parties in attracting the Catholic vote. Brewer has argued that Catholics tend to support left parties because Catholics have a more communitarian ethos that conflicts at times with the individualist bent of some strands of market conservatism.⁴¹ Other academics have supported the idea that there is a distinctive Catholic communitarian ethos. Though it may emphasize subsidiarity—self help among community groups—the church also emphasizes alleviating poverty and inequality, and state action to address such issues.⁴² Contrary to those conservative strategists who want to make abortion, gay marriage, and stem cell policy the primary issues for Catholics, the Vatican has insisted on a wider range of issues which must be taken into account when voting for a particular

⁴⁰ Robert Wuthnow, *Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

⁴¹ Mark D. Brewer, *Relevant No More? The Catholic/Protestant Divide in American Electoral Politics*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003.

⁴² Joshua M. Zeitz, *White Ethnic New York : Jews, Catholics, and the Shaping of Postwar Politics*, Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 2007. Judith Brett, *Australian Liberals and the Moral Middle Class: From Alfred Deakin to John Howard*, New York : Cambridge University Press, 2003. John DiIulio, "The American Catholic Voter," Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society Report 02-2. Available at: http://www.sas.upenn.edu/prruc/pdfs/PRRUCS_AmerCath.pdf. Access December 20, 2008. Interestingly, Blais also finds evidence of such a communitarian orientation but he disregards its importance. In examining a series of issues upon which Canadian Catholics differ from Canadian Protestants, he finds that attitudes on taxation and inequality are significant, yet he does not discuss this difference's importance. See Andre Blais, "Accounting for the Electoral Success of the Liberal Party in Canada—Presidential Address to the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario, June 3, 2005," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38:4 (December 2005) 821-840. See p. 828.

party or when making a legislative decision. Recent political guides from the Vatican appear almost as complicated as regression equations with the numerous factors any individual Catholic voter must take into account.

Looking more closely, however, shows the difference between Canada and the other two countries. The United States and Australia are not particularly different. As can be seen in **Figures 8 and 9**, in the 1990s in both countries the degree of difference between how Protestants and Catholics vote is roughly 10 percentage points.⁴³ By contrast, the gap between Protestant and Catholic voters has remained larger in Canada. This is true with Quebec Catholics, where voting for the Bloc Quebecois has made the Catholic vote particularly distinctive. But the difference also matters outside Quebec, where the difference between Protestant and Catholic voters tend to differ by about 20 percentage points, roughly double the difference in the United States and Australia (see **Figure 10**).

Figures 8, 9, and 10 also show why analysis should focus on Catholics. In the three countries, particularly the United States and Australia, the movement of Protestants from left to right parties over time has been much less marked than the movement of Catholics from left to right parties.

By two other measures of Catholic voting can one see a difference between Canada and the other two countries. In both the United States and Australia, majorities of Catholics have given victories to center-right parties. The 1996 victory of the Coalition Party and John Howard

⁴³ Catholics have not abandoned the Democratic party in the United States and become mostly similar to Protestants, as some commentators have argued. Such arguments were made based on evidence of Catholic behavior in presidential elections. Brewer has noted two problems with this data. Presidential elections are much more volatile, so it is beneficial to look at House elections and partisan identification as well. In addition, when comparing Catholics to Protestants, it is necessary to look only at white Protestants, since black Protestants vote heavily Democratic. With these two insights, Brewer shows that there has not been a significant decline in Catholic support for Democrats and that divisions between Catholics and Protestant voting behavior are still relevant, most likely because Catholics embrace a communitarian ethos while white Protestants tend to embrace a more individualistic ethos.

was the first election in which the Liberal-Nationalist Coalition Party captured a majority of the Catholic vote, a feat which was repeated in 2001 and 2004 (but not in 1998). This is slightly misleading however. When adding Democratic Labor Party votes to Liberal/Country votes, majorities of Catholics favored right-leaning parties as early as 1967 (when the first Australia Political Attitudes survey was taken).⁴⁴ In the United States, Eisenhower won a majority of white Catholic voters in 1956, the first Republican to do so in the post-World War II period. This feat was repeated by Nixon in 1972, Reagan in 1980 and 1984, and George W. Bush in 2004. At the congressional level, which is more directly comparable with Australian and Canadian parliamentary elections, Republicans only first captured a majority of Catholic voters in House elections in 1996, according to the ANES. Comparisons with Canada are a little trickier, because of the multiparty environment. Since the 1980s, conservative parties have not been able to win a majority of the Catholic vote. Although the Conservative party outpolled the Liberal party in 2006, when one adds in the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Quebecois to the Liberal party's total, a majority of Catholics continued to favor left-leaning parties.⁴⁵

A final way to compare the countries is by looking at the difference in the voting patterns of regular churchgoers versus irregular churchgoers and nonchurchgoers, both in the population at large and among Catholics in particular. In Australia the Liberal and Country/National parties have done better among regular church attenders going back to the 1960s. This split includes Catholics, at all income strata.⁴⁶ Bean notes that in 1967, 1984, and 1988, regular churchgoers

⁴⁴ This is justified because the DLP often directed that its members direct their second preference votes to the Liberal/Country coalition.

⁴⁵ In the 1980s, scholars have identified a distinctive left-right difference between the Progressive Conservative and Liberal parties in Canada. This difference may not have existed in the 1960s.

⁴⁶ Based on Religion in Australia survey, 1966, and the Social Stratification Survey, 1965, analyzed by Hans Mol, *Religion in Australia: A Sociological Investigation*, Melbourne: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1971, pp. 291-6. Mol, *Faith of Australians*, Sydney; Allen and Unwin, 1985, cites 1979-1981 Melbourne Age surveys that show cross denominational divergence between regular and irregular churchgoers.

of all denominations have preferred the Liberal-National parties.⁴⁷ This preference has continued in some recent elections, though not all.⁴⁸

According to Mark Brewer's regression analyses, in the United States, statistically significant difference between regular and irregular churchgoers occurs in the 1958, 1960, 1964, 1974, and 1980 House elections, then becomes a more lasting feature of elections since 1988. Brewer also shows that Catholic political behavior is divided according to the salience of religion, measured by weekly church attendance and responses to attitudinal questions such as, "how important is religion to you."⁴⁹ Since the 1990s, Catholic weekly churchgoers are more likely to support the Republican party rather than the Democratic party.

The pattern for Canada is again distinctive. As in the United States and Australia, regular churchgoing Protestants have begun to support more conservative parties, though not as fervently as in the United States.⁵⁰ However, unlike the United States, Canadian Catholics have resisted this trend. Inside Quebec, regular church attendance boosts both the Liberal and the Conservative vote, rather than just the Conservative vote. This is most likely because in Quebec the success of the highly secular Bloc Quebecois means that both the Liberal and Conservative parties can capture a share of the religious conservative vote by contrasting themselves against

⁴⁷ Bean, "The Forgotten Cleavage: Religion and Politics in Australia," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 32(3), September 1999, pp. 559-61.

⁴⁸ In 2004 55 percent of regular church attenders voted for the Coalition, compared with just 46 percent of those who never attend church. From John Warhurst, "Religion in 21st Century Australian National Politics," Australian Senate Occasional Lecture Series, May 5, 2006, Available at: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/pubs/occa_lect/transcripts/050506.pdf. Accessed January 5, 2009. Rodney Smith points out that there are some elections in which there has been no divergence, such as the 1993 election. See Rodney Smith, "Religion and Electoral Behaviour in Australia: Searching for Meaning," *Australian Religion Studies Review* 11(2), pp. 17-37.

⁴⁹ Mark D. Brewer, *Relevant No More? The Catholic/Protestant Divide in American Electoral Politics*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003.

⁵⁰ According to Riemer, 72 percent of US respondents in Riemer's Core Evangelical Sample in 1995 voted Republican; 56 percent of Canadian respondents voted for Progressive Conservative and Reform parties. Sam Riemer, *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide: The Conservative Protestant Subculture in Canada and the United States*, Montreal ; Ithaca : McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003, p 127.

the Bloc. Most importantly, outside Quebec, regular Catholic churchgoers display greater favorability to the Liberal party, rather than the Conservative or Reform parties.⁵¹ (**Figure 11**)

Reviewing this evidence is crucial in part because the politicization of religion is intimately tied to the strategy of constructing a cross-denominational Christian alliance. An attempt to politicize religion emphasizing an exclusive Protestant alliance has no chance of winning in the contemporary era beyond isolated localities. Such a strategy was often attempted nationally and regionally prior to World War II, and, as shown in my dissertation, had very mixed results, with Protestant order shored up only along the margins where it intersected with the interests of other orders (e.g. race, class). In the contemporary era, the bar is even higher. Not only did the Holocaust and the subsequent Cold War cast racial ideologies in jeopardy, it also cast exclusivist religious ideologies in jeopardy. The decline in memberships in Protestant churches in Canada and Australia also do not help any attempt to emphasize exclusive Protestantism. Hence, one would expect that an attempt to politicize religion is tied to an attempt to appeal to Catholics, and to a lesser extent Jews. Where the ability to appeal to Catholics is limited, the politicization of religion is likely to be limited.

One way of finding an answer to why religion has become politicized in the United States and Australia but not in Canada is to figure out why appeals to Catholics have been successfully made in the United States and Australia but not in Canada. Examining the factors that are present in those countries that are not present in Canada will help bolster the case that it is the legacies of

⁵¹ Andre Blais, "Accounting for the Electoral Success of the Liberal Party in Canada—Presidential Address to the Canadian Political Science Association, London, Ontario, June 3, 2005," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 38:4 (December 2005) 821-840. See p. 826.

previous rounds of incorporation and the logic of coalition-building that explains the varying patterns.⁵²

Australia

Catholics began moving to the right much more quickly in Australia than in the United States and Canada. There are two potential factors that explain this. First, unlike Canada, state funding was not extended to Catholic schools in the early half of the 20th century. Second, although there are distinctive differences between the Australian states, in no instance has the cleavages been as prominent as the South in the United States and Quebec in Canada. As a result, there are not significant regional differences based on distinctive religious/racial orders to impede a national-level religious coalition.

Catholics began their turn away from the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in the 1950s. The most important triggering event was the split of the Democratic Labor Party (DLP) from the ALP in 1955, largely over the fears of the DLP that the unions and the ALP were being taken over by communists. In the 1960s the DLP also took conservative positions on moral issues such as abortion, homosexuality, and pornography. This split was disastrous for the ALP, which had controlled Australian politics for much of the period from the Great Depression to the beginning of the Cold War. Under the leadership of B. A. Santamaria, the DLP typically garnered between 10 and 18 percent of the Catholic vote, mostly from white-collar Catholics who went to church

⁵² One hypothesis has been that it is merely socialization that has prevented Catholics from moving away from Liberal partisanship. However, Johnston has shown that this explanation is inadequate and that social context must be taken into account in explaining patterns of partisan identification. The divergent experiences of the United States, Australia, and Canada confirm the inadequacy of the socialization hypothesis, as in all three countries, Catholics tilted in their partisan attachments to left parties prior to the Cold War period. Richard Johnston, "The Reproduction of the Religious Cleavage in Canadian Elections," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 18(1), March 1985, pp. 99-113.

regularly. Moreover, the DLP directed most of its voters to give their second-preference votes to the Liberal-Country coalition, in an explicit attempt to keep the ALP out of power.

Another important factor in the movement of Catholics away from the left was concerted appeals on the right to Catholics on the issue of state funding to schools. Robert Menzies, the founder and leader of the Liberal party, signaled as early in the 1940s that he considered religion an important element in the making of the Australian people and early on supported state aid to denominational schools.⁵³ In the 1950s he gradually included measures to extend various kinds of indirect state funding to denominational schools.⁵⁴ In 1963, over the protests of some Protestants still committed to a secular public school order, Menzies orchestrated the extension of direct state funding to denominational schools. As B. A. Santamaria noted on the granting of state aid:

“The difference between his expressed attitude in 1960 and his practical programme from 1963 onwards depends on a single reality; it became politically feasible, and, after this near defeat in the 1961 Federal election, politically necessary. The ‘split’ in the Labor Party, the emergence of the DLP, the dislodgement of many Labor votes from their traditional loyalty, the backing given to the DLP, by a large group of Catholic votes, the necessity to consolidate DLP preferences for the Liberals—this was the major factor in the 1963 ‘breakthrough’.”⁵⁵

The combined influence of the DLP and moves by the Liberal party to entice Catholic voters influenced the Catholic vote. The percentage of the Catholic vote for the ALP dropped from around 70 percent after World War II to under 50 by the 1970s. Not all of this drop was

⁵³ See for example, “Menzies See Threat to Church Schools, Advocates State Aid,” *Catholic Weekly* (Australia), Feb. 25, 1943, p.1, 5; and “Religion in Education Upheld; Mr. Menzies Lauds Work of Church Schools; Deplores Cultural Decline,” *Catholic Weekly*, Aug. 2, 1945, p. 1.

⁵⁴ See Michael C. Hogan, “The Catholic Campaign for State Aid to Non-State Schools in N.S.W. and the A.C.T. 1952-1972,” Doctoral dissertation, University of Sydney, 1977.

⁵⁵ Santamaria, BA, “*State Aid*” in *Perspective*, Melbourne: The Hawthorn Press, 1966, pp. 2-3.

accounted for by the lost DLP votes. Catholic support for the Liberal and Country parties increased 10 points over this same time period. As a result of this realignment of the Catholic vote, the difference between the Catholic and Protestant votes for the ALP declined from about 30 percentage points during the previous period to about 10 percentage points. Labor was not able to come into power until two decades later, in the 1970s.

The realignment of the Catholic vote shows the importance of earlier rounds of incorporation on later ones. First, the mutual coalition between Catholics and Labor that had been established since World War I had demonstrated that the protection of an exclusive Protestant order was a lost political cause. The right had to compete for Catholic votes if it was to survive, as Menzies had decided as early in the 1940s. Second, the initial alliance of Catholics and Labor contributed to unionization. It was in this context that the threat of Communist influence within the Labor party became a central issue. Third, preferential voting, initially devised to help conservatives unite their rural and urban voting blocs, proved useful in helping another minor party, a faction within the Labor party most concerned about international order and the threat that Communists posed to the Catholic church, establish itself. Fourth, the previous round of incorporation of Catholics had been successful in preventing federal funding to Catholic schools. This allowed right-leaning parties in the post-World War II period to offer such aid as a tool in increasing their share of the Catholic vote.

That Australia experiences the presence of the conservative-liberal divide in religion in a lasting manner before the other two countries demonstrates that there is some movement by conservative religious towards right-leaning parties occurs in the late twentieth century regardless of how activist high courts have been. The Liberal and Country parties were

successfully appealing to the most religious sections of the electorate prior to court decisions on abortion and other matters concerning the hegemony of religion.

Australian Liberal and Country/National Party coalitions were able to rule for over 30 years between 1945 and 1983. After the DLP disappeared from federal politics in 1978 and as the ALP became more competitive in federal politics, capturing government for 8 years beginning in 1983, the political right again pondered whether to use religion as a way to secure political power. Liberal leader John Hewson emphasized economic conservatism but social centrism. As Maddox quotes Hewson, “I do not have any problem myself with issues that relate to women’s rights or gay rights as they are called, to seeing abortion as a matter of choice for a woman in conjunction with her family and her doctor, to supporting legislation in relation to privacy or anti-racial vilification.”⁵⁶ John Howard ascended to leadership of the Liberal party in the 1990s partly by attacking Hewson.

During the Howard prime ministership from 1996 to 2007, the government has been keen to demonstrate the party’s commitment to values of the religious right. According to professor of Australian religion and politics John Warhurst,

“More than any other federal government the senior members of the Howard government have been active, in word and deed, in emphasizing (or at least being open about) its religious credentials and beliefs and in emphasizing the positive contribution of Christian values to Australian society. One has only to compare the publicly Christian approach of the Howard-Anderson-Costello-Abbott team, for instance, to the privately Christian, even

⁵⁶ Marion Maddox, *God Under Howard*, p. 36.

secular approach of the Fraser-Anthony-Lynch team in the 1970s to see that this is true.”⁵⁷

The Federal government overturned a euthanasia law passed in the Northern Territory in 1995 with the Euthanasia Laws Act of 1997, and has presented bills on the use of RU-486 and stem cell research. As already mentioned, the Howard government orchestrated a major faith-based funding initiative for social service provision, with the replacement of the Commonwealth Employment Service with the privatized Job Network.⁵⁸ The Howard government also controversially appointed Anglican Archbishop Peter Hollingworth as Governor General in 2001, the first clergyman to be appointed to the post. The success of Howard in appealing to the churches and Catholic votes has led to a determination by Kevin Rudd and the ALP not to let religion become monopolized by the right, a move which has further increased the use of religious rhetoric in the Australian context.

United States

As in Australia, the Cold War helped to realign Catholic votes towards the right. In the 1950s the gap between Protestant and Catholic voters narrowed from the era of Franklin Roosevelt. As a hegemonic world power, one would expect that the issue of anti-Communism would affect the United States to a high degree. One also finds that the use of religious rhetoric, particularly by Eisenhower, was strong.

The ability of the Cold War to permanently realign the Catholic vote however was limited. Unlike in Australia, Catholic incorporation had not proceeded to the same degree in the

⁵⁷ John Warhurst, “Religion in 21st Century Australian National Politics,” Australian Senate Occasional Lecture Series, May 5, 2006, Available at: http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/pubs/occa_lect/transcripts/050506.pdf. Accessed January 5, 2009.

⁵⁸ Maddox, *God Under Howard*, p. 235.

United States, and there was still lingering suspicion of Catholic motives, as witnessed by the controversy over Paul Blanshard's critiques of Catholicism. Hence, when John Kennedy ran for the presidency, he was able to win back Catholic votes to the Democratic party.

From 1960 to 1980, Catholic voters would slowly move back to the Republican party. Up until the 1990s, Catholic-Protestant cooperation would largely be orchestrated by political elites rather than grassroots leaders. One factor limiting such outreach was the ability of regionalism to disrupt potential Christian coalitions.

Because the politicization of religion began to increase in the 1980s, there has been a tendency to look at the Supreme Court decisions in the 1960s and 1970s as the primary triggers. This essay has already suggested why one might be skeptical that these decisions were the primary triggers. What also corresponds to the timing of the politicization of religion is the realignment of the South, which has opened up the possibility for a cross-national religious coalition.

When the South was still tied to Jim Crow and a distinctive racial order, this created important differences. For one conservative Christians in the North would still be wary of identifying themselves with conservative Christians in the South. Northern Protestant denominations' cooperation with southern Protestant denominations was limited by the racial divide. Southern difference also meant the defense of state's rights against federal power. This limited the potential domain of a moral coalition. For instance, the South was disproportionately opposed to the child labor law in 1916 (which was subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court), as well as the attempt in the 1920s to pass a constitutional amendment

The importance of Southern regionalism mirrors an earlier period in US politics. Politicians from the south wavered on the question of Mormonism and anti-Catholicism

depending on the stability of the racial order in the South. Once the Jim Crow racial order had been replaced by a one emphasizing a race-blind order (which still had the effect of preserving differential racial outcomes) then southern politics could more easily fit in with a national strategy emphasizing religion.

The end of the order of segregation in the South reduced Southern difference with the rest of the country. As Richard Johnston has noted, the South is looking more like the rest of the country in terms of the way that class influences the vote.⁵⁹ The same factors that have contributed to class becoming a more important predictor of the vote in the South have enabled religious discourse to become more important nationally as a wedge issue as the difference between conservative Protestants in the North and South have narrowed with the removal of the divisive issue of segregation. As Mark Noll has put it, “Stripped of racist overtones, southern evangelical religion—the preaching, the piety, the sensibilities, and above all the music—became much easier to export throughout the country.”⁶⁰

At the same time as the South has begun to look like the rest of the country, the North in the United States has moved toward the South. McGreevey and Gamm have argued that Catholics in the northern states have been heavily affected by struggles for integration.⁶¹ Because the parish is central to Catholic community life, Catholics could not as easily flee from the movement of African Americans to urban areas in the North. By contrast Jews have a less rooted connection to their synagogues and could thus more easily follow the pattern of white flight to the suburbs. This meant that white Catholics in the North disproportionately faced the struggle

⁵⁹ Richard Johnston, *The End of Southern Exceptionalism: Class, Race and Partisan Change in the Postwar South*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.

⁶⁰ Mark Noll, *God and Race in American Politics: A Short History*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008, pp. 156-57. See also Darren Dochuck, “From Bible Belt to Sunbelt,” and “Evangelicalism Becomes Southern, Politics Becomes Evangelical: From FDR to Ronald Reagan” in *Religion and American Politics*.

⁶¹ John T. McGreevey, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North*, Chicago : University of Chicago Press, 1996. Gerald H. Gamm, *Urban Exodus: Why the Jews Left Boston and the Catholics Stayed*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999.

for integration during and after the Civil Rights movement. This has also meant that these Catholics have been receptive to what Smith and King have called race-blind orders (which actually locks in inherited racial inequalities from the past) versus racially-transformative orders (which may actually require greater race-consciousness in transforming the unequal legacies of the past).⁶²

Mockabee has looked at responses to the ANES and shows that from 1972 to 2004 one of the starkest changes in white Catholic ideological positions is a decline in support of the idea that the government should help blacks. His chart also shows that Catholic support for abortion under any circumstances has also increased (though he does not report equivalent numbers of Catholics against abortion, so this could be a sign of polarization, more than increasing support).

Mockabee's multivariate regression analysis of a pooled sample of Catholics in the ANES from 1972 to 2004 show that attitudes towards abortion and the government helping African Americans are correlated with a more conservative vote when the respondent also sees a difference in the parties on the issues.⁶³

Hence, there has been a convergence ideologically between the South and the rest of the nation, allowing people across the nation to embrace religious discourse. The South has been prepared to accept the politicization of religion because religion in the South has increased in importance as race has diminished in explicitness. Religion has become more important in the way that it can overlap with preserving existing racial orders without explicitly being labeled a racial order. At the same time conservative Christians in the north can agree with conservative

⁶² Rogers M. Smith and Desmond King, "Racial Orders in American Political Development," *American Political Science Review* 99: 75-92 (2005). Reprinted in *Race and American Political Development*, ed. Joseph Lowndes, Julie Novokov, and Dorian Warren (Routledge Press, forthcoming 2008).

⁶³ Stephen T. Mockabee, "The Political Behavior of American Catholics: Change and Continuity," in J. Matthew Wilson (ed.), *From Pews to Polling Places: Faith and Politics in the American Religious Mosaic*, pp. 81-104, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. See pp. 88, 94.

Christians in the south as a result of the realignment of the race issue to that of race-conscious versus race-blind approaches.

This process of convergence has only occurred gradually. As in Australia, the process of attempting to unify the country around religion has been centered around politicians. According to one scholar, Nixon emphasized Catholic support for his landslide victory in 1972 to refute the idea that he had won by attracting the votes of racist Southern whites.⁶⁴ Conservative Protestants have been slower to embrace a pan-Christian alliance. Bendyna et al have argued that the Moral Majority was primarily organized around fundamentalist groups. Its ineffectiveness led the Christian Coalition to seek alliances with Pentecostals. It is only in the 1990s, for instance, that an official Evangelical-Catholic dialogue has begun.⁶⁵ If Brewer's regression analyses are correct, Catholic church attendance as a predictor of a greater Republican vote does not emerge consistently as a feature of US elections until the 1990s. By this time, race and the flattening of regional differences had already prepared the ground for this movement of Catholic voters.

Canada

The experiences of Australia and the United States help throw into relief the politics of religion and Catholicism in Canada, and why Catholics have been slower to move over to right-leaning parties. Catholic political incorporation in Canada had proceeded along different lines than Australia or the United States. Quasi-consociational arrangements had been made to represent Catholics in the governing parties. State funding of Catholic primary schools was allowed in some provinces. There was also a regional disparity not found in Australia or the

⁶⁴ Timothy Byrnes, *Catholic Bishops in American Politics*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991, p. 65.

⁶⁵ Mary E. Bendyna, R. S. M., John C. Green, Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox, "Uneasy Alliance: Conservative Catholics and the Christian Right," *Sociology of Religion* 62(1), Spring, 2001, pp. 51-64.

United States, with control over Quebec largely given over to Catholics, who formed a distinctive ethnoreligious order.

These factors shaped Catholic political incorporation in the latter half of the 20th century. In contrast to Australia, sharp regional divides moderated the politicization of religion. In addition, there has been no factor like race in the United States to help move Catholic votes away from the Liberal party. Although there was some question of extending state funding to Catholic high schools in some provinces, the use of this issue in promoting pan-Christian unity at the national level was limited by provincial-level disparities in levels of funding for Catholic schools.

The difference between Quebec and the rest of the Canadian provinces is likely the most important factor in limiting the political utility of religion as a wedge issue. Wedge issues only work to the extent that they split the opponent's coalition significantly more than your own. One reason why religious moral issues don't work as a wedge issue is that Quebec has shifted from being a conservative Catholic stronghold to becoming one of the most liberal provinces in Canada. The lack of ability to mobilize around the conservative-liberal split in religion means that Catholic defection to conservative parties outside of Quebec has been slowed down compared to the United States and Australia.

Quebec, being one of the more populous provinces, has been one of the lynchpins to win federal parliamentary control. Quebec has been akin to the "Solid South" prior to Mulroney government. This in part explains the dominance of the Liberal party in the post-war era, as Quebec constitutes roughly a quarter of all parliamentarians. Up until the emergence of the Bloc Quebecois in the 1993 elections, the Liberal party gained most of its lead over the competing Progressive Conservative party by drawing parliamentarians from Quebec.

When Quebec was still highly religious, the limits to a cross-national religious coalition were clear. The mutual distrust between Protestants and Catholics prevented the emergence of an alignment that would feature conservative Protestants and Catholics allied together against liberal Protestants and Catholics. In addition, the vested interest of Quebec Catholics in preserving their provincial autonomy would also stymie the building of a cross-national moral coalition. Conservative Protestants could not ally with conservative Catholics because of conservative Catholics' commitment to Quebec's provincial autonomy (much as Northern conservative Protestants in the US could not ally with Southern conservative Protestants over commitment to racial segregation).

Since the Charter, the question of Quebec separatism has been one of the dominant issues in Canadian politics. The primacy of this question thus tamped down on public displays of religion. As Mark Noll has put it, "From 1980 onwards economic and political preoccupations have almost completely eclipsed all other contenders, including religion, in dominating Canadian public space."⁶⁶ The Progressive Conservative Mulroney government was able to take power in the 1980s in part by its ability to appeal to voters in Quebec on constitutional issues of provincial autonomy, rather than an appeal to moral conservatism.

Over this time period, Quebec has shifted from being one of the most morally conservative provinces to one of the most morally liberal, which poses additional dilemmas to the building of a cross-national conservative religious coalition. The shift in Quebec corresponds to the "Quiet Revolution," which divested the Catholic church of much of its control over public institutions in the province and caused a dramatic drop in weekly church attendance. It was in Quebec where Dr. Henry Morgentaler first began performing illegal abortions in the late 1960s, and where several juries acquitted him of any wrongdoing. In 1975 Parti Quebecois declared it

⁶⁶ Mark Noll, "What Happened to Christian Canada?" *Church History*, 75 (2) June 2006, p. 261

would not prosecute abortion providers in the province.⁶⁷ The Bloc Québécois has argued against the expression of religion in public, opposing the Conservative Party candidate Nicole Charbonneau Barron because of her membership in Opus Dei. Quebec is also home to one of the most controversial Catholic priests in Canada, Father Raymond Gravel, a former prostitute turned priest who supports abortion and gay marriage rights. Surveys confirm that Bloc Québécois supporters are the most liberal on moral values issues.⁶⁸

In votes on moral issues over the last decade, parliamentarians from Quebec and the Bloc Québécois have been some of the staunchest supporters of progressive positions on moral issues. Hence, although the emergence of the Bloc Québécois has changed the importance of Quebec, shifting the most important province electorally for the Liberal party to Ontario, Quebec's votes in parliament are still important, as the Bloc plus other legislators from Quebec can still prevent moral legislation from passing.

The early 1990s saw the formation of regionally based minor parties organized around conservative religious issues, and contributed to the formation of the new Conservative party. As the political right has reorganized (into successively the Reform, Alliance, and Conservative parties) and incorporated more conservative religious groups on the right, it now faces the dilemma of delivering legislation to that faction within its party. One possibility then is that the Conservative party is unable to maintain its coalition as discontent leads the religious right to bolt from the party, or push for party votes on religious issues that drive its nonreligious faction away. In recent conscience votes on moral issues, conservatives have not been able to win many votes.

⁶⁷ Heather Mallick, "Why Doesn't This Man Have the Order of Canada?," *Globe and Mail*, January 18, 2003, Available online at: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/series/morgentaler/>.

⁶⁸ Citation TK. Chapter in Alain-G. Gagnon and A. Brian Tanguay (eds.), *Canadian Parties in Transition*, 3rd ed., Orchard Park, NY : Broadview Press, 2007.

Although the mainstream media and some pollsters have suggested that the victory of Harper and the Conservatives in 2006 signals a shift toward the politicization of religion as in the United States, there are a few points to keep in mind. Harper's government was a minority one, having only a plurality of parliamentarians to form a government, rather than an outright majority. Even with Harper's gains in the 2008 election, the government is still (barely) a minority government. Second, electoral analysis shows the continuing importance of older patterns. Analysis of the 2006 Canadian Election Study shows that churchgoing is still associated with an increased tendency to vote Liberal outside of Quebec. Third, the Conservative politicians in the Harper era, as shown earlier, have not used as much religious rhetoric as in Australia in the Howard and post-Howard eras. Besides the Unborn Victims of Crime Act, there has not been any notable legislative success for conservative Christians, and Harper has often acted to tamp down on calls for moral legislation. The struggles of the Harper government near the end of 2008 seem to suggest that his coalition will not be long lived. Even if the Harper government is a prelude to a realignment of religious politics in Canada, that realignment has not yet fully occurred and has been delayed relative to the United States and Australia.

Conclusion

The varying patterns in the use of religious rhetoric by politicians cannot be explained fully by the size of the religious population, by the "rights revolution" and a transformation in the role of religion in public life stemming from the 1970s, nor by institutional differences of parliamentary government and separation of powers. Such factors may help mobilize conservative religionists into social movements. However, politicians may not necessarily respond to this mobilization. Rather politicians will respond when there are coalition-building

incentives to do so. The significance of religious rhetoric and policies to politician's calculations can be traced to both the legacies of previous rounds of incorporation, as well as the ability of parties to compete for Catholic votes.

The most important factor is the presence of strong regional identities that pose serious issues of governance and the building of cross-national Christian alliances. Quebec, which has provincial prerogatives stemming from Catholic political incorporation in the early half of the 20th century, poses problems for potential Christian alliances because the Quebec/non-Quebec divide can occupy issue space and "crowd out" other issues. In the United States, the South's own interests in racial order posed a similar problem to cross-Christian alliances prior to the 1960s, though the South has more recently become more aligned with the rest of the United States. In Australia, there has been no such strong regional identity to interfere with a Christian alliance, which helps explain why Australia was the earliest of the three countries to experience a consistent difference between regular and irregular churchgoers.

A second important factor was that due to the earlier round of political incorporation, there was already support for funding of Catholic religious schools in several provinces in Canada, whereas such federal funding did not exist in the United States or Australia. Thus, parties on the right in the US and Australia had an advantage over Canadian conservative parties in being able to entice Catholic voters over to new coalitions. A third important factor is that in the United States the issue of race has played a prominent role in moving Catholics to the conservative party. In Canada there is no large African American population and no equivalent to the integration issues that wracked the United States after the 1960s.

The evidence presented here suggests that the politicization of religion is not an automatic outcome of political development, but rather reflects calculations of political utility,

especially with regard to winning important voters. The paper also suggests that even if some contemporary observers are correct in that conservative evangelicals are losing numbers in the United States, this does not spell the decline of the politicization of religion, as the politicization of religion is not necessarily related to the size of the religious population.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ See for instance Christine Wicker, *The Fall of the Evangelical Nation: The Surprising Crisis Inside the Church*, New York: HarperOne, 2008. See also the recent Religious Identification Survey that seems to document declines in the numbers of the religious. The progressive blogosphere has seized on this as evidence that the culture wars may be ending. If this paper is correct, this prediction is not warranted.

Figure 1. Overview of United States, Australia, Canada, and Potential Factors that Contribute to Politicization of Religion

Factor	United States	Australia	Canada
Percent attend church weekly 2000	40	15	20
Size of Evangelical Population	Around 25 to 35	?	Around 10 to 12
Percent of Population that is Catholic	25	27	45
Judicially Led Rights Revolution	Strong-at federal level, 1960s	Moderate-at provincial level	Strong-at federal and provincial levels, 1990s
Rights Revolution affects Religious Interests	Yes	Yes	Yes
Federalist	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bicameralism	Yes	Yes	Yes (Senate unelected)
Parliamentary System	No	Yes	Yes
Percentage point difference bet. Catholic and Protestant vote for major left party, 2000	Around 10	Around 10	Around 20 (outside Quebec)
First Election in which majority of Catholics supported right-leaning Parties in Lower Legislative Chamber	1996 (acc. to ANES sample)	1960s	Not Yet (possibly 2006 outside Quebec; pending further data)
Decade in Which Churchgoing Catholics Tend to Support Right-Leaning Parties	1990s	1960s	Not Yet (possibly 2006 outside Quebec; pending further data)
Presence of Strong Regional Subidentities that Affect Federal Politics	Yes, South	No	Yes, Quebec
State Aid to Catholic Schools	Indirect	Direct, est. in 1963	Some Provinces have direct funding, est. early 20 th century
Catholics Located Near Stigmatized Minorities	Yes	No	No
Outcome: Politicization of Religion	Strong	Moderate	Weak

Figure 2. Weekly Church Attendance in the United States, Canada, and Australia

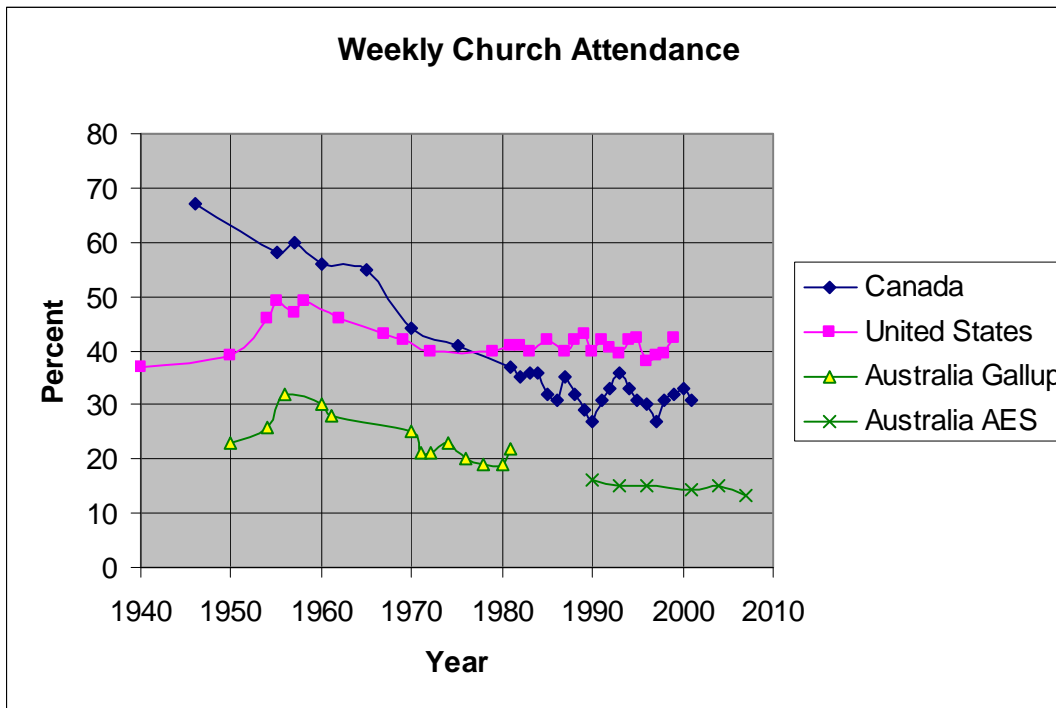


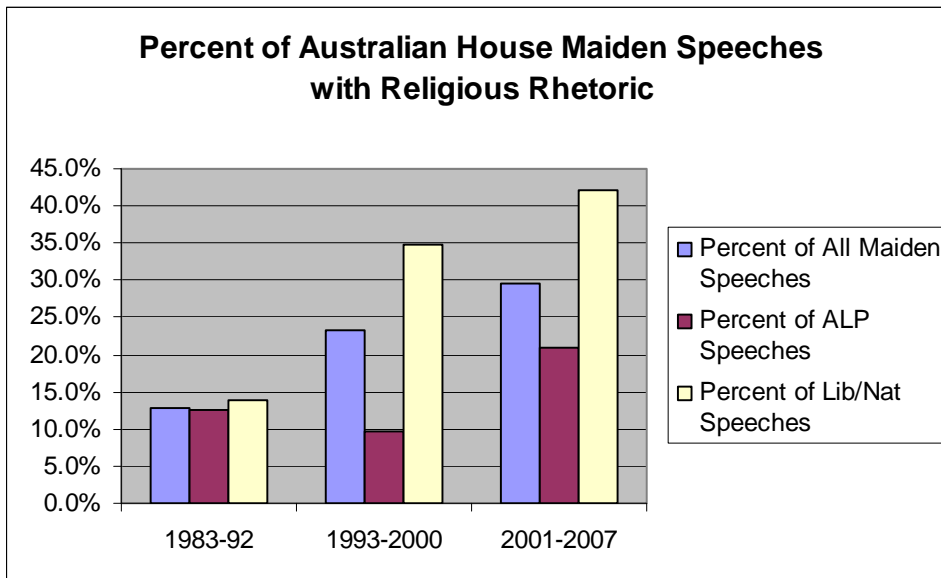
Figure 3. Church Attendance: World Values Survey

		More than Once a week	Once a Week	Once a Month		Once a week or more	Once a month or more
Australia							
1981		17.6	10.1	12.1		27.7	39.8
1995		6.1	10.7	8.3		16.8	25.1
Canada							
1982		7.8	24.5	14.1		32.3	46.4
1990		6.6	20.3	13.1		26.9	40
2000		6.5	18.6	10.8		25.1	35.9
US							
1982		14.2	29.5	16.3		43.7	60
1990		14.6	28.9	14.2		43.5	57.7
1995		11.8	30	13.4		41.8	55.2
1999		16.4	28.8	15.1		45.2	60.3

Figure 4. Other Measures of Religiosity, International Social Survey Program: Religion II, 1998, available at the Association of Religion Data Archives

	Australia	Canada	Canada Outside Quebec	US
Had Born Again Experiences	11.1	16.5		37.8
Believe Bible is Word of God	6.1	9.6	10.5	30.1
Believe in Life after Death	25.6	37.6	38.8	58.6
Believe in Heaven	23.3	36.2	39.8	66.5
Believe in Religious Miracles	15.9	26.3	29	51.4

Figure 5.



Method: Electronic versions of maiden speeches from the Australian House of Representatives were collected for the parliamentary sessions, and keywords were searched for using standard word processing software. A representative was coded as using faith-based rhetoric under two conditions: (1) the speech contained the word “God” (or a close correlate, such as a reference to “the Creator”); or (2) the speech contained two or more of the following words: bible, pray, church, Christ, Christian, religious, religion, Catholic, spiritual, divine, or bless. Although each speech was not read in its entirety, each sentence and/or paragraph in which a keyword appeared was read to make sure that the usage was not colloquial. The criteria of two or more of the non-God keywords is also meant to weed out colloquial usage. In speeches with the word “God,” the vast majority were thanks to God. There were a few ambiguous cases (“Hughes is God’s country; “My god, listen to this...””) which were coded as faith-based rhetoric. References to the anthem, “God Save the Queen,” were not coded as examples of faith-based rhetoric.

On the x-axis, each time period consists of three parliamentary sessions. There is substantial variation within each session, partially driven by the fact that some sessions have relatively fewer numbers of freshmen parliamentarians, which is why it makes sense to group sessions into blocks.

Figure 6. Religious Rhetoric in Maiden Speeches in Canadian Parliament, 1994 to 2008

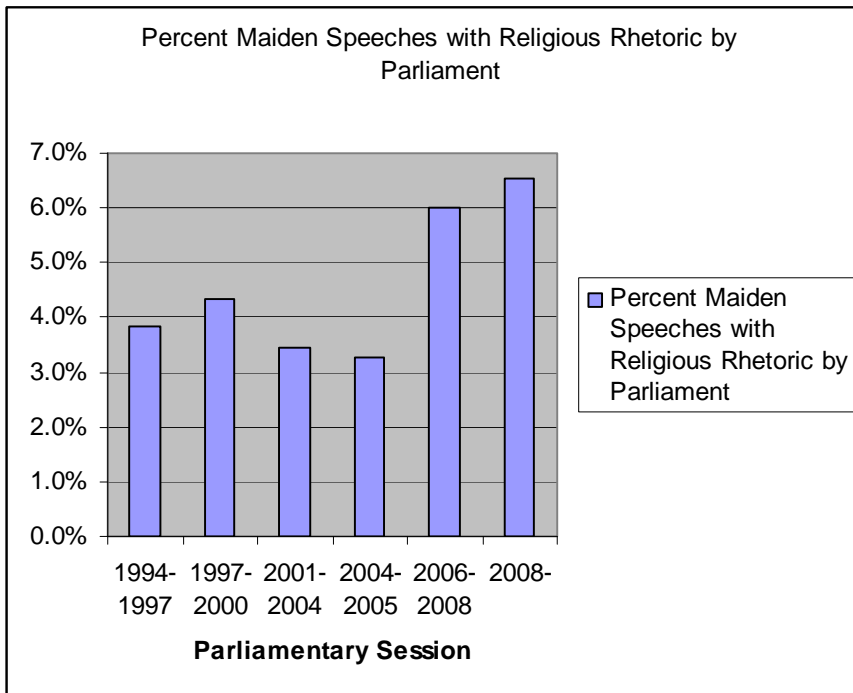
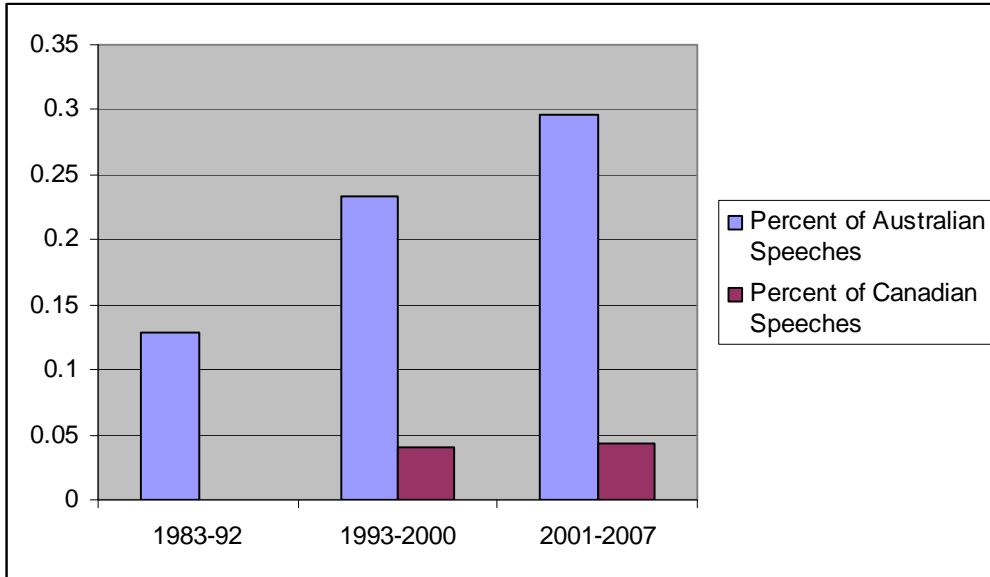


Figure 7. Percent of Maiden Speeches with Religious Rhetoric, Australia and Canada Compared



Note: Dates are approximate. Data for Canada between 1983 and 1992 has not been collected; years included to put Australian increase in perspective.

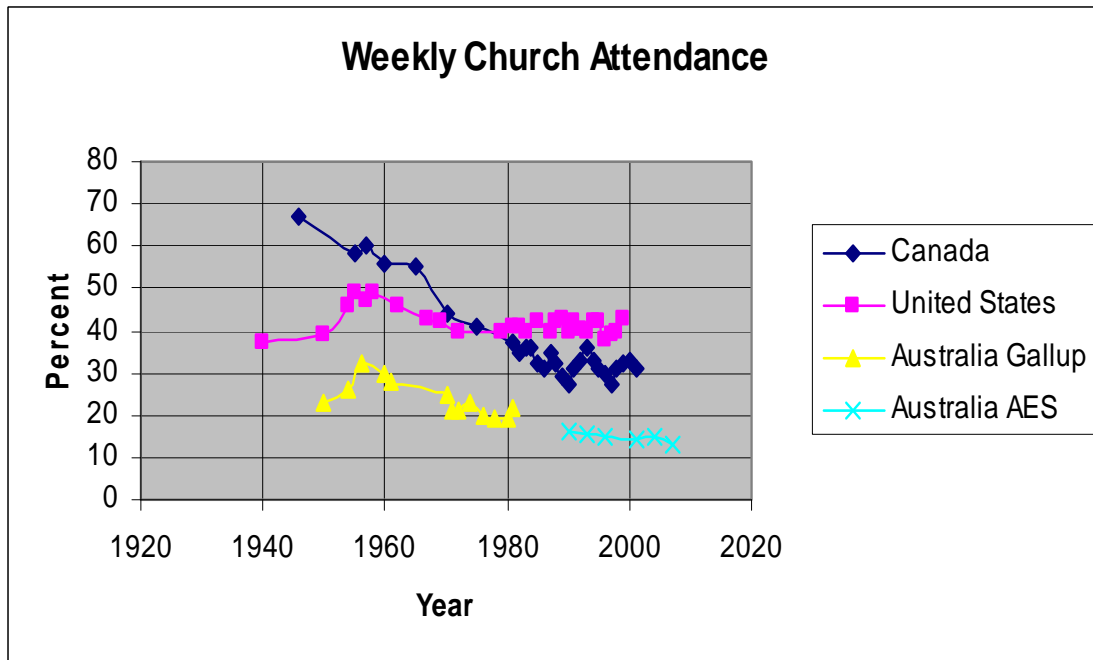


Figure 8. Percentage Point Difference between Catholic and Protestant Vote for ALP

Election Year	Cath Vote for ALP	Prot vote for ALP	Difference	Cath Vote for DLP
From Gallup Data				
1946	73.2	45	28.2	
1951	72.9	43.1	29.8	
1955	59.9	41.3	18.6	8.4
1958	53.3	39.1	14.2	14.8
1961	54.4	45.1	9.3	14
1963	50.9	42.7	8.2	14.5
1966	48.6	39.7	8.9	13.6
From Australian Political Attitudes Survey				
1975	50.8	37.1	13.7	0
1977	49.2	36.2	13	0.5
From Australian Election Studies				
1987	54.9	46.5	8.4	
1990	47.9	37.7	10.2	
1993	59.3	46.4	12.9	
1996	40.4	29.1	11.3	
1998	45.7	34.4	11.3	
2001	42.1	31.1	11	
2004	40.8	31.5	9.3	
2007	48.1	40.2	7.9	

Source: Gallup Polls, Australian Political Attitudes Survey, and Australian Election Studies, all available from the Australian Social Science Data Archive. Where several Gallup polls existed, averages were computed from answers to question asking how respondent voted in federal election prior to the interview date. Missing election years will be added soon.

Figure 9. Percentage Point Difference in Democratic Voting and Party ID Between Catholics and Protestants in the US

Year	Vote President			Vote for House			Party ID		
	Cath	Prot	Diff	Cath	Prot	Diff	Cath	Prot	Diff
1952	51	33	18	55	42	13	68	51	17
1954							64	53	11
1956	45	34	11	60	46	14	59	45	14
1958				72	52	20	66	51	15
1960	82	34	48	79	44	35	73	46	27
1962				75	47	28	68	46	22
1964	78	57	21	72	58	14	69	54	15
1966				67	47	20	63	47	16
1968	55	26	29	60	43	17	63	46	17
1970				56	48	8	63	46	17
1972	36	24	12	56	47	9	62	43	19
1974				72	52	20	62	43	19
1976	55	40	15	61	47	14	61	41	20
1978				63	51	12	65	43	22
1980	40	31	9	58	46	12	54	44	10
1982				65	48	17	65	45	20
1984	44	28	16	59	45	14	52	38	14
1986				66	50	16	55	40	15
1988	51	33	18	66	49	17	49	37	12
1990				63	56	7	58	41	17
1992	48	34	14	61	50	11	55	38	17
1994				49	36	13	53	34	19
1996	54	41	13	49	38	11	55	42	13
1998				49	35	14	51	40	11
2000	47	40	7	51	39	12	46	40	6

Summary by Decade:

Year	Vote President			Vote for House			Party ID		
	Cath	Prot	Diff	Cath	Prot	Diff	Cath	Prot	Diff
1950s	48	34	14	62	46	16	64	50	14
1960s	72	39	33	70	48	22	67	48	19
1970s	45	31	14	64	49	15	63	43	20
1980s	46	31	15	63	48	15	54	40	14
1990s	51	37	14	55	44	11	55	39	16

Source: Mark Brewer's analysis, from ANES. See Brewer, *Relevant No More? The Catholic/Protestant Divide in American Electoral Politics*, Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003.

Figure 10. Percentage Point Difference in Voting for Liberal Party Between Catholics and Protestants in Canada

Year	Cath	Prot	Diff	Cath Outside Quebec	Prot Outside Quebec	Diff Outside Quebec
1965	64	42.3	21.7	70.2	35.3	34.9
1968	68.7	44.4	24.3	73.1	43.0	30.1
1972						
1974	67.9	40.5	27.4	65.4	39.1	26.3
1979	58.2	27.1	31.1	47.2	25.2	22
1980	64.8	29	35.8	53.5	27.9	25.6
1984	33.4	18.3	15.1	36.4	17.4	19
1988	34	24.7	9.3	43.4	23.8	19.6
1993	42.2	41.6	0.6	59.3	40.9	18.4
1997	41.8	33.1	8.7	51.9	31.1	20.8
2000	44.6	32.2	12.4	53.8	30.9	22.9
2004	38.9	30.5	8.4	49.2	30.3	18.9
2006				37.4	24.9	12.5

Source: Canadian Election Studies.

Note: These figures do not include Catholic-Protestant differences in voting for minor parties such as the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Quebecois, hence the differences in column 4 should be interpreted carefully. If voting for minor parties were included, the predisposition for Catholics in comparison to Protestants to support parties to the left of center would be magnified. Even when voting for minor parties are excluded, the difference between Canada, on the one side, and Australia and the United States, on the other, is apparent in the columns covering voting outside Quebec (where voting by Catholics for the Bloc Quebecois is minimal), which shows double digit percentage point differences in voting between Catholics and Protestants.

There may be some objection in considering the Liberal party as a left of center party, rather than as a centrist party. Many observers note that the ideological differences between the Liberal Party and the Conservative party in the 1960s were minimal (Campbell and Christian, p. 94). Yet in the 1980s, there are indications that the orientation of the Liberal party towards welfare liberalism and the orientation of the Progressive Conservatives to business liberalism had increased (see Campbell and Christian p. 94; Goldfarb and Axworthy).

Figure 11. Religiosity and Percent of Catholics Voting for Liberal Party in Canada

1983 CES: Percent of Catholics Voting for Liberal Party by Church Attendance, Outside Quebec

Once a Week	2 or 3 Times a Month	Once a Month	Few Times a Year	Never
40.1	43.5	42.9	31	14.3

1988 CES: Percent of Catholics Voting for Liberal Party by Church Attendance, Outside Quebec

Every Week	Couple a Month	Once a Month	Several a Year	Never
47.4	26.8	44.4	46.6	38.3

1993-2004 CES: Percent of Catholics Voting for Liberal Party by Importance of God to Respondent, Outside Quebec

	God Very Important	God Somewhat Important	God Not Very Impt	God Not at All Impt
1993	64.9	60.1	31.2	no data
1997	52.1	50.2	66.7	50
2000	57.2	52.2	46.9	36.4
2004	49	50.4	33.3	28.6

Source: CES

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