

**Structure and Ideology in the Mobilization of the New Christian Right:**

**A Test of a Model**

by

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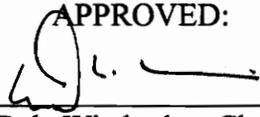
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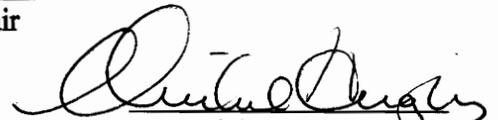
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## **Structure and Ideology in the Mobilization of the New Christian Right:**

### **A Test of a Model**

#### **ABSTRACT**

The mobilization of the New Christian Right (NCR) has been a topic of scholarly interest and research since the early 1980s. This research attempts to explain this phenomenon by analyzing the mobilizing strategies and tactics of its most successful organization, the Moral Majority, toward its target constituency of Evangelical Christians. Resource mobilization theory explain grassroots mobilization by analyzing how social movement organizations (SMOs) use resources to mobilize people to political activity. Studies from this structural perspective credit the Moral Majority's mobilization of televangelists and political preacher in fundamentalist denominations who recruited from among their followers for the rise of the NCR. New social psychological research explains mobilizations by analyzing how people interact in ways that politicize their view of themselves and the world. Studies from this perspective attribute the political conservatism of Evangelicals to various measures of collective identity and politicized religious consciousness. This research constructs a theoretical model that synthesizes both perspectives and then tests this model with data from the 1983 Evangelical Voter Survey. Results of regression analyses offer limited support for the model. Most of the hypotheses that the model advances are confirmed, but unexpected direct effects of structural variables on dependent political variables suggest weaknesses in theory or measurement and suggest avenues for further research.

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## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Although Christianity teaches its believers to overcome their differences, they must live in an adversarial world that sometimes demands their participation in divisive political struggles. Such commitment to one side of a struggle may cause some believers, in the fray of fierce debate, to question the Christianity of their opponents. Among Christians in the contemporary American religious scene, “some conservatives have difficulty believing that anyone could be a Christian and tolerate abortion,” while “some liberals have difficulty believing that anyone could be a Christian and not seek to redistribute the world’s material wealth for the sake of the poor” (Rogers 1995:5). Such political conflicts between liberal and conservative Christians threaten the integrity of American religious institutions.

But religiously-motivated political activism has effects that often extend beyond the church. Because religion provides its believers with a language for talking and thinking about concepts of justice and morality, as well as imagery for envisioning more just social orders, religious people often form movements to act politically on their moral convictions. Whether from the right or the left, the political actions they take can have far-reaching impacts on the organization of American society.

One prominent example of such a religious movement is the “Religious Right” or “New Christian Right” (NCR). In reaction against what they perceive to be permissive legislation and public policies implemented by liberals in the 1970s, many Evangelical

Christians have engaged in political activism to advance an agenda of moral reform. In their view, the laws and policies of a society reflect its moral standards. They have opposed rights to abortion, pornography, and homosexuality on the ground that such practices are in their view immoral and threaten the integrity of the family; and in an effort to protect religious expression in public schools, religious conservatives have opposed the teaching of evolution, sex education, and the ban on school prayer. By applying political pressure in the electoral and judicial arenas, these religious conservatives have attempted to reform American laws to set stricter moral standards based on Judeo-Christian religious principles. As consequences of these efforts, white Evangelical Christians have become a vital constituency of the Republican Party, and the NCR has become a formidable conservative force in the American political scene. To explain why this movement mobilized is the purpose of this sociological research.

Historically, the unpredictable politics of American Evangelical Christianity has been “sociologically mystifying” (Marsden 1983). The term “Evangelicals” refers to a population of approximately fifty million self-avowed Christians who believe in the deity of Jesus Christ and the need for salvation, and who share a moral duty to share this faith with nonbelievers. Most Evangelicals claim to have been “born again.” Contrary to popular perception, however, Evangelicals have never been an ideologically monolithic bloc (Cox 1995). Historically, they have differed along theological and liturgical lines and held political views ranging from liberal to conservative (Cox 1995; Marsden 1983;

Hammond 1985; Roof 1993). Defined by these theological and liturgical differences are three primary subgroups of Evangelicals: Pentecostals, charismatics, and fundamentalists.

Arguably the most distinct subgroup of Evangelicals is fundamentalists.<sup>1</sup> The term “fundamentalist” derives from a short-lived religious movement of theologically conservative Protestants that mobilized in the 1920s against modern trends in the churches and mainstream American society. Fundamentalists protested, among other issues, new developments in theology such as historical biblical criticism, as well as science and the teaching of evolution in public schools. Since then, fundamentalists have been known by their shared belief in inerrancy, a core belief in the literal truth and authority of the Bible over every aspect of life; and their cultural separatism from mainstream society.

Fundamentalists may also be the most politically unpredictable group of Evangelicals. Despite their brief period of political activism in the 1920s, fundamentalists had, until the 1970s, eschewed political involvement (Marsden 1983). As one fundamentalist minister described, “Politics involves compromise; God does not compromise” (Wilcox 1986). In the 1970s, in response to liberal political victories that challenged their conception of the ideal American family, the Evangelical community experienced a political reawakening as evangelicals protested abortion, homosexuality, and

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<sup>1</sup>In the social scientific literature, the term “evangelical” has two meanings in relation to fundamentalism. Fundamentalists are a subgroup of evangelicals, and the term “evangelical” is also used to refer to evangelicals who are not fundamentalists. For clarity, I will adopt Wilcox’s (1990) nomenclature; I will use “Evangelicals” will refer to the population of theologically conservative Christians as a whole and “other evangelicals” to refer to those Christians who are not fundamentalists.

other issues in their local communities. By the early 1980s, four religious political organizations advanced the cause of the New Christian Right nationwide. Of these four organizations, the most successful at building members was the Moral Majority. Its mission was to win the Evangelical community, especially fundamentalists, over to conservative partisan politics (Cox 1984; Diamond 1995; Liebman 1983; Snowball 1992; Wilcox 1992).

In that mission the organization achieved considerable success. White Evangelicals, who as a voting bloc helped elect the “born again” President Jimmy Carter in 1976, tended to be Democrats. The Moral Majority, however, aimed to mobilize apolitical fundamentalists to activism and to persuade them elect the Republican Ronald Reagan to the Presidency (Liebman 1983). As a result, white Evangelicals played an important role in that election, comprising two-thirds of Ronald Reagan’s ten-point margin of victory over Jimmy Carter (Diamond 1995:173). Since then, white Evangelicals have been voting Republican in increasing numbers; and in the 1994 general election, more white evangelicals voted Republican than ever before (Green et al. 1995). To Evangelicals, the Republican Party has become the vehicle of moral reform.

How did the Moral Majority accomplish this mobilization? By what strategies and tactics did the Moral Majority mobilize these Evangelical Christians to conservative partisan politics? The purpose of this research is to find answers to these questions and present an improved explanation over previous research of the initial mobilization of the NCR.

To explain why social movements occur, or why people decide to engage in political action, is a major purpose of social movement theory and research. A fruitful conceptual starting point from which to begin to explain the mobilization of the NCR is resource mobilization theory, the dominant paradigm in social movement theory. This perspective, which explains mobilizations by analyzing how groups of people organize and equip themselves for social movement activity, has informed a body of empirical research on the movement. Forms of structural social organization such as the church (Diamond 1995), friendship networks (Diamond 1995; Liebman 1983; Miller 1986), and televangelism (Hadden 1987; Hadden 1995) facilitated the mobilization of the NCR by organizing and resourcing Evangelicals for social movement activity. As evidenced by these studies, resource mobilization theory is useful for explaining mobilization by analyzing how, on a structural “mesomobilization” level, a person’s relationship to other activists may influence his or her probability of being mobilized to various forms of movement activity. However, this approach fails to explain why, on a social psychological “micromobilization” level, some people who interact with activists become politicized while others do not. Resource mobilization theory needs a social psychology.

For this reason, many social movement scholars now agree that mobilization research must analyze how social processes occurring at both the structural and social psychological levels of analysis influence people to participate in social movements (Ferree 1992; Gamson 1992; Klandermans 1984; Snow et al. 1986; Zald 1992). Research in this new tradition explains mobilization by analyzing how people in face-to-face interaction

discuss shared culture, ideology, religion, grievance and discontent in ways that construct feelings of shared identity and inspire political consciousness and protest. One theoretical approach, framing theory, is useful for describing how relationships between cultural variables such as religion belief and political ideology influence individual political behavior. In their studies of the NCR, several political scientists (Johnson and Tamney 1984; Kellstedt 1988; Wilcox 1992) find the religious beliefs of Evangelicals to have strong direct effects on their political attitudes and behavior. The strength of these studies is their use of survey research, which measures data from the perspective of the individual Evangelical. However, these studies are limited in two ways. First, because they are not grounded in social movement theory, these studies tend to have an individualistic bias that underestimates the structural effects of organized mobilization processes. Second, most of these studies use single-equation models, which estimate only the direct effects of independent variables on dependent variables (Wilcox 1992). What is needed is a reconceptualization of the mobilization process of the NCR that combines the explanatory power of both the resource mobilization and new social psychological research perspectives.

This study aims to do just that. The 1983 Evangelical Voter Survey included a rich variety of items measuring specific religious beliefs and political attitudes and behavior of 1000 American Evangelicals. Many of these items measure important concepts in resource mobilization theory and social psychological movement theory. Several items on the Evangelical Survey asked evangelicals their opinions on several

political issues that were salient to the Moral Majority in 1983, as well as their vote choices for Presidential and Congressional candidates in several elections. These items can be coded to represent dependent variables measuring evangelical political attitudes and behavior (or movement participation in the NCR). From a resource mobilization perspective, fundamentalist denominations, political preachers, and televangelists are resources that a social movement organization such as the Moral Majority might mobilize to win support among evangelicals. Using items from the Evangelical Voter Survey, this study will estimate the structural effects of these independent variables on Evangelical political attitudes and behavior. From a social psychological perspective, “politicized religious belief” is an indicator of political consciousness that measures the extent to which evangelicals base their political attitudes and behavior on their religious convictions. This study will estimate the effect of this social psychological variable on evangelical attitudes and behavior.

My model makes several explicit predictions about the causal relationships among these variables. Theoretically, it hypothesizes that fundamentalist denominations, political preachers, and televangelism were all resources that the Moral Majority mobilized to persuade Evangelicals to take conservative positions on political issues and to vote Republican in elections. Empirically, the structural effects of these independent variables should appear only as indirect effects on the dependent variables. My model also hypothesizes that because Evangelicals were by definition so religious, they embraced political conservatism only because it appealed to their religious convictions. If this were

true, then empirically, the social psychological effect of politicized religious belief should have the only direct effect on the dependent variables. This hypothesis reaches to the heart of the debate between resource mobilization theory and interactionist social movement theory on the variability of social psychological motivations for grassroots participation. This study will use path analysis to test the hypothesized relationships and sort out the direct and indirect effects among the variables. By analyzing the effects of both structural and social psychological variables at the individual level of analysis, my model attempts to combine the explanatory powers of resource mobilization and the new social psychological perspectives of social movement research. Moreover, by using path analysis with multiple-equation models, this study attempts to make a methodological improvement over previous studies of the NCR. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to social movement theory by presenting a more systematic explanation than previous research of the “sociologically mystifying” phenomenon of the initial mobilization of the NCR.

## **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

Why, or by what social processes, do ordinary people define their condition as intolerable or unjust and actively strive to change it? To explain mobilization and participation -- why social movements mobilize, why people decide to participate in social movements, or how social movement organizations (SMOs) mobilize people to various kinds of political activity -- is a major purpose of social movement theory and research. The answers lie in social processes at work on two levels of analysis. On a structural level, the question is "By what strategies and tactics do movement organizations and activists mobilize people?" On the grassroots level, the question is "What motivates people to sympathize with or actively participate in social movement activity?" Until recently, social movement research has tended to betray a structural bias, explaining movement participation primarily as a function of membership in recruitment networks (McAdam 1994). But social movement scholars now agree that movement participation can only be truly understood by analyzing processes at both the structural and grassroots levels of analysis (Gamson 1992; Mueller 1992; Snow et al. 1986). This literature review will evaluate how social scientific research on both levels of analysis has explained the mobilization of the New Christian Right.

### **Social Movement Terminology**

What does it mean to be mobilized by a social movement organization or to participate in a social movement? By mobilization, social movement scholars mean "attempts by a

social movement organization to win participants, of persuading people to support the movement organization by material and nonmaterial means” (Klandermans 1984:586). Klandermans makes a further distinction between two kinds of mobilization: consensus mobilization and action mobilization. Consensus mobilization is “the process through which a social movement tries to obtain support for its viewpoints” (Klandermans 1984:586). In other words, successful consensus mobilization attracts sympathizers. These people “who believe in the goals of the movement” (McCarthy and Zald 1976:1221) are called “adherents.” Action mobilization refers to “the process by which an organization in a social movement calls up people to participate,” with movement participation denoting “activities ranging from signing a petition to sabotage, and from part-time or one-time to full-time activity” (Klandermans 1984:586). In most cases this involves asking people to provide resources to a social movement organization (SMO). Such contributors to social movements are called “constituents.” Altogether, “at one level the resource mobilization task is primarily that of converting adherents into constituents and maintaining constituent involvement.” (McCarthy and Zald 1976:1221). With this terminology in mind, a fruitful starting point from which to begin to explain the mobilization of the NCR is resource mobilization theory.

### **Resource Mobilization Theory**

Prior to the 1960s, social movement theory was social psychological in design and grounded heavily in the collective behavior tradition. These theorists saw social

movements as deviant forms of political expression arising from dislocations in society's major institutions and social movement participants as aggrieved, frustrated people who participated in movements for irrational social psychological reasons (Adorno et al. 1950; Freud 1922; Hoffer 1951; Kornhauser 1959; LeBon [1903] ). In this view, social movements occurred when a larger societal problem alienated enough people to motivate them to political action (Gurr 1970). In the 1960s, however, the mobilization of the highly-organized and rational New Left movements discredited the irrationality of the classical approach to social movements. Sociologists developed resource mobilization theory (RM) to replace the social psychological emphasis of classical theory with a new emphasis on the structural, organizational, and rational features of social movements (Buechler 1993; Mueller 1992; Zald 1992).

According to resource mobilization theory, the social psychology of collective action is not worth explaining. Because, from this view, there is always enough discontent or ideology in society to supply sufficient numbers of people willing to participate in a social movement, the problem deserving explanation is how elites acquire and deploy resources to mobilize pre-politicized groups of people to various forms of political activity (Zald and McCarthy 1976). Grounded in economic and organizational theory, RM analyzes social movements like rational organizations with predictable outcomes. RM "emphasizes the importance of structural factors, such as the availability of resources to a collectivity and the position of individuals in social networks, and stresses the rationality of participation in social movements" (Gamson 1975; Marx and Wood 1975; McCarthy

and Zald 1976; Oberschall 1973; Zald and McCarthy 1979). The central questions RM poses are: “where are the resources available for the movement, how are they organized, how does the state facilitate or impede mobilization, and what are the outcomes?” (Mueller 1992:3-4).

### **Resource Mobilization of the New Christian Right**

Because RM examines how people organize and equip themselves for social movement activity, any understanding of how the Moral Majority mobilized Evangelicals to conservative partisan politics must analyze the relationship between that social movement organization and the heart of the organized Evangelical community: the Evangelical church. Evangelical churches facilitated the initial mobilization of the NCR in several ways.

First, churches provide a supply of pre-organized people: “large numbers of reliable, committed parishioners, who are skilled in tasks such as canvassing and small-scale fundraising” (Diamond 1995:162). In the 1970s, Evangelical churches were home to a population of approximately 50 million Evangelical Protestant Christians (Wilcox 1992). Gallup polls from these years estimated that these Evangelicals, who had high levels of education and employment in prestigious occupations (Roof 1986; Roof 1993), constituted one-third to one-fifth of the American population and had very high rates of church attendance (Diamond 1995:163-4). More importantly, the tightly networked Evangelical community was pre-organized for political activity. Because people are more

likely to participate in movement activities if they have friends who also participate, movement organizations use friendship networks to contact and recruit people for movement activity (Klandermans and Oegema 1987). This explains why Evangelicals who attended church more frequently also tended to be more politically conservative (Wilcox 1992). In their analysis of the 1994 general election, Green et al. (1995) found that, prior to the election, 38% of regular churchgoers reported receiving political persuasion through their church. Partly as a result of this church politicizing, in this election more white Evangelicals voted Republican than ever before. In these ways, Evangelical churches provided a mass population of potential grassroots supporters for the NCR.

Another important resource that churches provide is ministers. Church pastors can be effective leaders of social movements in several ways. Ministers are usually financially independent from the larger society. Pastors also have organizational skills for managing people and resources, arranging events, and insuring completion of tasks (Diamond 1995). Perhaps more importantly, church ministers have communication skills that enable them to persuade and motivate their parishioners. In the 1970s, fundamentalist ministers became increasingly political (Billings and Scott 1994). According to Wilcox (1989), fundamentalists whose pastors were political reported significantly more conservative political attitudes than other evangelicals. This finding suggests that parishioners weigh their ministers' views heavily in formulating their own political attitudes and behavior. Politicized fundamentalist ministers were in these ways important agents in the mobilization of the NCR.

On a structural level, the church also facilitated mobilization by cooperating with other churches within their denominational network. In the 1970s, Independent Baptists were members of a tightly-knit, fundamentalist religious community which placed a heavy “entrepreneurial” emphasis on evangelism and building its membership (Miller 1986). This skill at recruitment made fundamentalists an attractive potential ally to organizers in the secular New Right. Realizing the potential of this growing Evangelical population for a conservative political movement, secular New Right conservatives attempted to mobilize the fundamentalists. They persuaded Rev. Jerry Falwell to establish the Moral Majority and urge other fundamentalist ministers in his network within the Bible Baptist Fellowship to organize their own chapters of Moral Majority, its mission being to build a political coalition of fundamentalist churches (Cox 1984; Diamond 1995; Miller 1986). Because these Fellowship ministers recruited from their own congregations, by the early 1980s a majority of Moral Majority members tended to be fundamentalists from the Bible Baptist Fellowship (Wilcox 1992). Since then, much research has documented the tendency of members of Pentecostal and fundamentalist denominations tend to be significantly more conservative than other evangelicals (Kellstedt 1988; Liebman 1983; Wilcox 1990). Theoretically, then, as recruitment networks denominations such as the Bible Baptist Fellowship or other fundamentalist denominations can be valuable movement resources; and empirically, denominational affiliation can be a useful structural variable for revealing sources of membership for religious social movements (Wilcox 1992).

Arguably the NCR's most important resource for mobilization has been and may continue to be televangelism (Hadden 1987; Hadden 1995). In the 1960s, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a policy directive that permitted individual radio and television stations to sell air time for religious programs while still claiming the public interest "credit" that stations needed to maintain their licenses. This "shift in the opportunity structure of resources" (Hannigan 1991) benefited fundamentalists. Unlike liberal and mainline denominations, fundamentalists were comfortable asking for money over the airwaves. This enabled fundamentalists to capture control of the airwaves for their own religious and political messages, squeezing out liberal and mainline denominations who could not afford to compete (Hadden 1987; Hadden 1995). In the 1970s, this mass media resource enabled increasingly political fundamentalists to reach nearly thirteen million viewers (Diamond 1995) and mobilize what Hadden (1987) appropriately described as a "living room social movement."

Research has tested the effects of televangelism viewing on ideological support for the Moral Majority. In their study of Evangelicals in Muncie, Indiana, Johnson and Tamney (1984) found a significant indirect effect of televangelism viewing on support for the Moral Majority through the direct effect of what they called the "Christian Right orientation," a belief that "America is a Christian nation." Will and Williams (1986) replicated that study with an improved measure of televangelism but found less conclusive results.

### **Resource Mobilization Theory Evaluated**

These resource mobilization studies explain important elements of the mobilization of the NCR. As the nucleus of the organized Evangelical community, the Evangelical church provided and organized a variety of important structural resources for social movement activity. Among these were a pre-organized mass population of potential supporters and persuasive political preachers. Furthermore, fundamentalists enjoyed a monopoly over communication media through which to reproduce and maintain their own culture. In the early 1980s, where and how frequently one attended an Evangelical church dramatically influenced his or her likelihood of being exposed to Moral Majority mobilization campaigns or involved in social movement activities. For these reasons, (1) denominational affiliation, (2) political preaching, and (3) televangelism should be important structural level variables in any explanatory model of the mobilization of the NCR.

While RM insightfully explains how movement organizations and leaders mobilize people, its explanation for why people decide to participate in collective action, however, is conceptually limited. First, RM assumes that peoples' grievances automatically and objectively compel them to social movement participation. The theory also assumes that people's grievances are ubiquitous and constant. These are tenuous assumptions that skirt among other things "the enormous variability in the subjective meanings people attach to their objective situations" (McAdam 1982:34). Aggrieved people may not necessarily know the cause of their grievances, may doubt the legitimacy of collective action, or may

disagree over the efficacy of a particular strategy of protest. For these reasons, Snow et al. (1986) argue that people must be “politicized.” People must interpret their grievances. Empirically, variation in this interpretation should explain variation in participation. Finally, RM assumes individual participation to be a “static dependent variable based in large measure on a single, time-bound, rational decision” (Snow et al. 1986:466). RM ignores important individual level processes in mobilization (Klandermans 1984). While RM views individual participants as rational actors, the theory fails to describe how individuals make these decisions or the interaction between individuals that generates mobilization. Assuming even that participation is rational, structural variables do not explain how an individual rationally decides to participate in a movement while another does not. By overgeneralizing participation, RM studies present an overly mechanistic, deterministic account of individual movement participation. A more explanatory model must combine structural-level variables with individual-level social psychological variables that take individual rationality and meaning into account (Snow et al. 1986).

### **The New Social Psychology of Collective Action**

Although resource mobilization is still the dominant paradigm in social movement research, in order to more fully explain mobilization, social movement scholars have returned to social psychology, which analyzes mobilization processes at the grassroots level (Gamson 1992; Klandermans 1984; Mueller 1992; Zald 1992). Research in this new tradition reconceptualizes among other concepts the social movement actor and the

context of mobilization. Ferree (1992) and Gamson (1992) challenge the “Trojan horse” of the rational actor with a more sociologically informed and empirically grounded conceptualization of the actor as someone socially embedded in group identities and participating with others in culture-making and contextual interpretation of grievances, resources, and opportunities (Ferree 1992; Gamson 1992; Mueller 1992). This research also reconceptualizes the context of mobilization from the organizational to the level of face-to-face interaction. In other words, rather than using an organizational perspective like that of RM to analyze how elites use resources to mobilize sympathetic supporters, this research analyzes how people in face-to-face interaction discuss shared culture, ideology, religion, grievances and discontent in ways that construct feelings of shared identity and inspire political consciousness and protest. Because, as Gamson (1992) writes, “it is not through force or coercion that a regime maintains itself, but through its ability to shape our worldview,” the primary challenge that social movements face is, from this perspective, to persuade people to question conventional assumptions about the world and to view and think about it in different, more critical, ways.

One useful theoretical tool for this kind of analysis is framing theory. Grounded in the symbolic interactionist tradition, framing theory provides a useful conceptual bridge between the structural and social psychological levels for understanding how people and movements construct political consciousness (Gamson 1992). In this context, the concept “frame” is defined as a mental orientation which a person develops through interaction that organizes how s/he perceives, interprets, and defines his/her situation (Goffman

1974). “By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, frames function to organize experience and guide action, whether individual or collective” (Snow et al. 1986:464).

So defined, SMOs attempt to mobilize people through framing processes. These are movement attempts to construct a “collective action frame” in which people see the political situation as intolerable and soluble only through collective action. As Valocchi (1996:119) describes it, framing “calls attention to the grievance, names it as unjust and intolerable, attributes blame and responsibility, and suggests how best to ameliorate the situation.” In short, the purpose of framing is to politicize people.

The challenge of framing is to politicize people with their own beliefs.

Theoretically, the success of a collective action frame depends on how well it “resonates” with the lifeworld of supporters (Snow and Benford 1988). People must see a movement ideology or activity as an extension of their own cultural beliefs and sense of collective identity. The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, for example, was adept at aligning political and religious frames of reference. In his sermons and speeches designed to help mobilize the civil rights movement, King invoked religious imagery such as the “Promised Land” in ways that defined the injustice of racism and stimulated protest within the religious black community (McAdam 1994). In this way, religion can be a “cultural resource” (Williams 1995) that organized religious elites may use to enhance their framing efforts. Situations when a collective action frame resonates, or when people dissent or protest because their politics is a necessary and legitimate application of their pre-existing beliefs are described as “frame alignment” (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988). So conceived, frame

alignment is a necessary condition for individual movement participation. From this perspective, people will not sympathize with or participate in a movement they cannot believe in.

Snow et al. (1986) explicate several distinct “frame alignment processes.” “Frame bridging” is one process by which movement framers attempt to align frames by mobilizing outreach resources such as direct mail or other mass media to potential supporters. As mentioned earlier, RM assumes that these potential supporters are already sympathetic and pre-politicized. The mobilization task is to reach them and get them together. Because these organized outreach efforts are the primary focus of resource mobilization theory, interaction theorists allege that this focus on only one category of frame alignment processes is what limits the conceptual scope of the RM project.

### **Politicizing Fundamentalists**

The power of religion lies in the human imagination. According to religious scholars in the hermeneutic tradition of cultural analysis (Geertz 1973; Greeley 1995), religious people look to religious stories for answers to questions about the ultimate meaning of life. For this reason, issues of culture, ideology, and meaning are critical to any understanding of religious movement participation. Movement organizers must frame political issues in a way that invokes and appeals to peoples’ salient religious beliefs, symbols, and myths.

If frame alignment is the primary mobilization task, in order to mobilize fundamentalists and other evangelicals to conservative thought and action, NCR framers had to construct a collective action frame that appealed to Evangelical religious beliefs. They had to broaden the meaning of Christianity to include conservative political activism and persuade fundamentalists that conservative political activity was not only necessary, but right. How they did this is the key to understanding the social psychology of fundamentalist political consciousness and mobilization.

In attempting to mobilize religious sympathizers or activists, religion can be a “cultural resource” (Williams 1995) available to elites. Sometimes culture can constrain collective action (Hart 1996). Since the turn of the century fundamentalists have shared a belief in premillennialism, an eschatological other-worldly belief not only that the Second Coming is imminent and political action is futile (Hammond 1985; Lee 1991; Marsden 1983), but also that “politics involves compromise; God does not compromise” (Wilcox 1986). For this reason fundamentalists were apolitical. Premillennialism was in this way a religious belief that constrained collective action.

However, if properly politicized by movement framers, religious symbols and myths can be powerful motivations for protest. Fundamentalists also shared a belief in the “myth of dominion” (Cox 1995; Hadden 1987), the idea that “America is a Christian Nation,” or “God’s Chosen Nation” and that “true” Christians have a responsibility to govern worldly institutions until the Second Coming. As liberals brought social issues to national prominence, NCR framers blamed social problems on a conspiracy of liberal

“secular humanism.” Because God had blessed America, they claimed, the country was obligated to uphold biblical moral standards. The challenge posed by liberals to the Christian ideal of the family, however, represented a moral breakdown soluble only if Christians took corrective political action. The fear of falling into disfavor with God motivated fundamentalists to conservative political activism.

From this cultural perspective, fundamentalists became politically active partly because framers made effective use of their cultural resource. By invoking powerful imagery encoded in fundamentalist religious beliefs, NCR framers were able to broaden the definition of Christianity to include conservative political activism. Fundamentalists then adopted conservative attitudes and voted Republican for religious reasons.

With some exception (Oberschall 1993), social movement scholars have not studied the NCR. However, since the early 1980s religious scholars and political scientists have produced a body research on the relationship between various religious variables and the political attitudes and behavior of Evangelicals. Many of these studies are analyses of national surveys, which measure data from the perspective of the individual Evangelical.

The 1983 Evangelical Voter Survey of 1000 American Evangelical Christians contained a variety of items measuring specific religious and political attitudes and behaviors. In several studies using these data, Wilcox (1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1992) analyzes the effects of religious variables on support for the Moral Majority or the political attitudes and behavior of Evangelicals. Throughout these studies, Wilcox (1992) finds religious variables to be the strongest predictors of various measures of NCR support.

Two social psychological religious variables in particular -- self-identified fundamentalism and the “subjective connection between religion and politics“ -- are illuminating indicators of political consciousness.

*Self-identified fundamentalism.* Religious scholars have found that the Evangelicals who support the NCR are not a monolithic bloc, but instead differ along theological and doctrinal lines (Cox 1984; Marsden 1983; Wilcox 1989a; Wilcox 1992). One item in the Evangelical Voter Survey asked respondents, “Are you a fundamentalist?” With this self-report item, it is possible to distinguish two subgroups of Evangelicals. Those who respond affirmatively are “self-identified fundamentalists”; those who reject the label are “other evangelicals.”

In one study, Wilcox (1989a) explores the political significance of the self-report item. Multivariate analyses reveal a statistically significant interaction effect between fundamentalist doctrine, televangelism, and self-identified fundamentalism. Evangelicals who reported a literal interpretation of the Bible and who tended to watch more televangelism tended to identify themselves as fundamentalist. Self-identified fundamentalists, in turn, held significantly more conservative political attitudes on several social issues than evangelicals who did not claim the term but were no more likely than other evangelicals to vote Republican.

Because televangelism was politically charged during the time the survey was conducted, Wilcox theorizes that televangelists imbued the term “fundamentalist” with political meaning. Viewers who shared fundamentalist doctrine such as biblical literalism,

in turn, identified themselves as fundamentalists as a way of sharing a politicized religious consciousness or “collective identity.” From a resource mobilization perspective, this finding that televangelism effectively mobilized ideological consensus among viewers attests to the efficacy of this movement resource. Viewers who shared fundamentalist doctrine were a sentiment pool of sympathetic supporters that televangelists effectively mobilized. From an interactionist perspective, this finding suggests that televangelists could be framers capable of constructing politicized religious consciousness over the airwaves. This finding also illuminates how a social psychological variable such as collective identity can be influenced by larger, structural variables and directly affect political attitudes, in this way mediating the effect of structural variables on dependent political mobilization variables.

*Subjective connection.* The other social psychological variable is what Wilcox calls “the subjective connection between religion and politics.” Several items on the Evangelical Voter Survey asked respondents if and how much they based various political attitudes and behaviors on their religious views. Using another data set, Wilcox (1988) finds that those Evangelicals who reported the strongest subjective connection between religion and politics tended to be fundamentalists, specifically Baptists, who attended church frequently. The strength of this subjective connection, in turn, had a direct impact on political attitudes at both ends of the political spectrum. Self-identified fundamentalists who reported a strong subjective connection held significantly more conservative attitudes than other evangelicals on ERA and abortion. Other evangelicals who reported a strong

connection were more liberal on domestic issues. Again from a resource mobilization perspective, this finding demonstrates the structural effects of denominational affiliation on social psychology. From the interactionist perspective, this “subjective connection between religion and politics” is analogous to frame alignment. Like that of self-identified fundamentalist, this finding illustrates how a social psychological variable such as frame alignment can mediate the influence of larger social structures on political attitudes and behavior.

In two other studies, Wilcox (1989b, 1990) tests the effects of both social psychological variables on political attitudes and behavior. In one study, Wilcox (1989b) tests the effects of several religious variables on support for the Moral Majority. Multivariate logit analyses isolate fundamentalist self-identification, fundamentalist doctrine, televangelism viewing, and the subjective connection between religion and politics as significant covariates of Moral Majority support. One problem with this study is its dependent variable. The items that comprised the Moral Majority support scale asked respondents to evaluate the Moral Majority and Jerry Falwell. Impressionistic support for the Moral Majority or Jerry Falwell, however, fails to appreciate the complexity of social movement participation. The Moral Majority could have mobilized evangelicals to conservative attitudes or Republican voting behavior without winning admiration for itself. More valid measures of Moral Majority mobilization might be conservative attitudes and Republican voting behavior.

In the other study, Wilcox (1990) tests the effects of several religious variables on white Evangelical attitudes about women's issues, foreign policy issues, and education issues. Multivariate analyses reveal that although different religious variables tended to influence different political attitudes, several religious variables predominated. Fundamentalist and Pentecostal denomination, fundamentalist self-identification, televangelism viewing, and the subjective connection between religion and politics were all significant predictors of political attitudes. In most cases, these religious variables influenced Evangelicals to hold more conservative attitudes. One problem with this study, however, is that it analyzes the wrong dependent variables. Wilcox's three political issue scales -- women's issues, foreign policy issues, and education issues -- are really generalized clusters of issues rather than specific issues addressed by the Moral Majority.

From these studies we know that various religious beliefs and practices strongly influence the political attitudes and behavior of Evangelicals. These studies are limited, however, in two ways. First, a problem common to all of these studies is their use of single-equation models which permit only unsystematic explanations of the causes of Evangelical conservatism or Moral Majority mobilization. Their analysis of only the independent effects of the religious variables on the political variables fails to consider how the religious variables may affect the political variables in direct and indirect ways. Path analysis of the same data is needed to sort out the direct and indirect effects.

Second, Wilcox's explanations of NCR support are too individualistic. In Wilcox's view, fundamentalists supported the Moral Majority with the same rationality

that liberals support the Green Party or the Sierra Club. However, in the same way that resource mobilization provides too structural of an account of participation, this cognitive approach overclaims individual agency and glosses the structural effects of organized mobilization efforts in structuring this interplay of ideas. In short, these studies fail to consider how these cognitive connections or politicized religious consciousness are influenced by larger social structures of which an Evangelical is a member. A more improved model of Moral Majority mobilization must therefore analyze how both structural and proximate religious variables influence the social psychology of collective action, and how this social psychological political consciousness influences political attitudes and behavior.

## THEORETICAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES

In order to completely understand the social psychology of collective action, social movement research must analyze how both structural and individual-level variables interact to influence how people interpret their condition in the social world (Gamson 1992). With their model of individual-level mobilization, Klandermans and Oegema (1987) have developed a useful tool with which to attempt this kind of analysis systematically. “At the individual level,” the authors write, “becoming a participant in a social movement can be conceived as a process with four steps: becoming part of the mobilization potential, becoming target of mobilization attempts, becoming motivated to participate, and overcoming barriers to participate” (Klandermans and Oegema 1987:519). If, as their model implies, movement strategists must use different strategies and tactics to mobilize people at different stages of their inclination to collective action, this model is particularly useful for thinking systematically about the effects of resource mobilization and framing processes on the individual. In Figure 1, I integrate RM and interactionist social movement theory with the Klandermans-Oegema model to propose a theoretical scheme of the individual mobilization process.

[SEE FIGURE 1]

The first concept in Figure 1, recruitment network membership, describes what happens in the first two steps in the Klandermans-Oegema model: (1) “becoming part of the mobilization potential,” and (2) “becoming target of mobilization attempts.” Because

people are more likely to participate in social movement activity if they have friends who participate, a person becomes part of the mobilization potential and a target of mobilization attempts if s/he is a member of a recruitment network. People who belong to recruitment networks are therefore more likely than non-members to be involved in social movement activity. Because recruitment networks are important sources of membership for a social movement, viable recruitment networks are an essential structural component of the mobilization process and thereby crucial to successful mobilization campaigns (Klandermans and Oegema 1987).

Given that a person belongs to a recruitment network (mobilization potential) and is a prime target for mobilization attempts, s/he must be politicized and persuaded to participate. The second and third concepts in the Figure 1, frame bridging and frame alignment, are social psychological concepts that measure what happens in the third and fourth stages in the Klandermans-Oegema model: (3) “becoming motivated to participate” and (4) “overcoming barriers to participate.” Framing processes are useful for describing how movement strategists (framers) attempt to motivate people to participate and help people overcome their barriers to participation.

Frame alignment is a measure of popular politicization, or the degree to which people buy into the movement ideology or agenda because it appeals to their pre-existing cultural beliefs. The goal of frame bridging is to in this way align pre-existing cultural and political frames of reference. Theoretically, frame alignment is a necessary condition for participation.

Frame bridging is one specific frame alignment process. Bridging refers to organized forms of movement outreach--such as direct mail campaigns, radio or television broadcasting--by which movement strategists attempt to motivate potential supporters to participate in the movement. In an organized mobilization attempt, people are likely to receive information from a movement organization that attempts to motivate them to participate by maximizing the potential benefits and minimizing the potential costs to participation. People who receive such information are more likely than non-receivers to participate in the movement.

In Figure 1, frame bridging processes precede frame alignment. This hypothesized causal relationship between these two concepts is critical because it speaks to a debate in social movement theory. According to RM, people are already politicized, ready to participate, and merely await organized mobilization. Because social psychological factors are in this way constant, frame alignment is presumed or unnecessary, and frame bridging efforts alone should directly mobilize people. From this perspective, frame alignment, if it belongs in the model at all, should causally precede frame bridging.

According to interactionist social movement theory, people may be discontent but doubt the legitimacy or efficacy of protest. They will not support a movement they cannot believe in. Because social psychological factors in this way vary, frame alignment is a necessary condition for participation, and the goal of frame bridging. From this perspective, frame bridging should causally precede frame alignment.

By positioning frame alignment as an intervening variable between frame bridging and mobilization, my theoretical scheme tests the validity of both propositions. If, as RM claims, people are already politicized and await mobilization, frame bridging variables should have positive direct effects on the dependent mobilization variable. If, however, as interactionist theory claims, people must be politicized, then frame alignment should have the only positive direct effect in the model on the dependent mobilization variable, and frame bridging should influence participation *indirectly*, through the effects of frame alignment. Any effect of frame bridging variables on the dependent mobilization variable should be explained by their aligning effect. Finally, RM assumes that “grievances and discontent may be defined, created, and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations” (McCarthy and Zald 1976:1215). If this is true, then frame bridging should in fact have a positive direct effect on frame alignment.

So conceived, this theoretical scheme integrates, systematizes, and tests key aspects of both RM and interactionist social movement theory on the issue of individual mobilization. While RM directs attention to recruitment network membership which measures individual mobilization potential and targetability, the frame bridging and alignment variables test the constancy of social psychological motivation for participation. The empirical test for this model is the mobilization of the New Christian Right.

[SEE FIGURE 2]

Figure 2 applies the theoretical scheme depicted in Figure 1 to the New Christian Right. Applying the theoretical model to variables specific to the NCR yields a path

model implying a set of several hypotheses for testing the model. The dependent variable of movement participation is measured by two sets of political outcome variables -- political attitudes and voting behavior -- with the implicit social movement organization being the Moral Majority.

In 1983, the Moral Majority worked to educate its constituency on several specific sociomoral issues (Snowball 1992). The most important issues involved national security. The Moral Majority opposed nuclear freeze and worked to build opposition among evangelicals to the issue as well. Another important issue was abortion. The Moral Majority worked to build opposition to abortion among fundamentalists. A third issue was Central America. The Moral Majority supported sending U.S. troops to El Salvador. The Moral Majority also supported prayer in public schools, and strongly opposed homosexuality. Conservative fundamentalist attitudes on these issues can be defined as Moral Majority consensus mobilization. The Moral Majority also tried to persuade its supporters to vote Republican, one of its first goals being to elect Ronald Reagan to the Presidency. With the dependent mobilization variables so defined, the model tests the effects of variables from the social structural, proximate, and psychological levels of analysis on the individual decision to take conservative positions on these issues.

In his research on the membership of the Moral Majority, Liebman (1983) found that the leadership of the organization was composed of clergy from the following fundamentalist denominations: Independent Baptists, Southern Baptists, Assembly of God, and the Church of the Nazarene. Since these ministers recruited from their own

congregations, these denominations were well-represented in the membership of the Moral Majority (Wilcox 1992). With this model, I expect to find the same results. Following the Klandermans-Oegema (1987) process model mentioned above, I will measure recruitment network membership by the structural exogenous variable Moral Majority network membership. Moral Majority network membership is a structural level variable because it measures membership in a group that was the target of Moral Majority mobilization campaigns. Fundamentalists<sup>1</sup> should be more conservative than other evangelicals by virtue of their membership in a denomination in the Moral Majority network. Membership should in this way exert a structural conservatizing effect.

This structural effect, however, should work through specific politicizing or frame bridging processes and influences proximate to the individual. Such proximate influence might include relationships and interaction with other like-minded fundamentalists or political preachers who may be particularly adept at explicating the religious significance of particular forms of political thought and action. In this way, the arrow in the model hypothesizes a direct relationship between Moral Majority network membership to political preaching. Because political preachers comprise the leadership of the Moral Majority network denominations, members of the denominations should be more

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<sup>1</sup>Although these were technically fundamentalist denominations, specific fundamentalist doctrines and beliefs are, in this analysis, assumed rather than explicit. My focus is on the structural effects of membership in the recruitment network.

conservative than other evangelicals by virtue of their exposure to political preaching.

This chain of causal reasoning I will call “the political church.”

The other structural exogenous variable is televangelism. Besides churchgoers, the Moral Majority also recruited its members over the airwaves from the population of viewers of Rev. Jerry Falwell’s television program the “Old Time Gospel Hour.” However, televangelism viewing implies a different kind of structural mobilization than Moral Majority network membership. Denominational membership implies a set of relationships and face-to-face interaction in which fundamentalists might participate with other parishioners in a church setting. While televangelism viewing does not imply face-to-face interaction, it is reasonable to assume that televangelism viewers shared similar religious attitudes and beliefs conducive to conservative political ideology. From a resource mobilization perspective, this similar religious orientation might make televangelism viewers a sympathetic “sentiment pool” mobilizable in the same way as churchgoers; all the Moral Majority needed to do was contact them. By this logic, televangelism viewing represents another structural politicizing influence. Fundamentalists who viewed televangelism should in this way be more conservative than nonviewers. This chain of causal reasoning I will call the “living room social movement.”

The endogenous variable “politicized religious belief” is a measure of frame alignment that mediates the effects of the structural and proximate influences. If fundamentalists act strictly according to their religious beliefs, their religious beliefs should govern their political views and behavior. Religion and politics should be closely related in

their mind. Since the strength of this cognitive connection may depend on the level of politicization to which a fundamentalist has been exposed, fundamentalists who report higher rates of exposure to politicization from political preaching or televangelism should therefore perceive a stronger cognitive connection between religion and politics. The arrows from political preaching and televangelism to politicized religious belief indicate positive direct effects. Fundamentalists who have been exposed to political preaching should be more likely than parishioners with apolitical preachers to base their political views on religious conviction. Similarly, televangelism viewers should also be more likely than nonviewers to practice religiously-based politics.

Interactionist theorists claim that this close cognitive connection is a necessary condition for movement participation. Thus fundamentalists who perceive a stronger cognitive connection between religion and politics than other evangelicals should therefore be more conservative than other evangelicals. Hence the arrows from subjective connection to both measures of conservatism hypothesizing direct positive relationships.

Thus, the process by which the Moral Majority mobilized fundamentalists to conservative partisan politics can be summarized as follows. Fundamentalists were more likely than other evangelicals to hold conservative political attitudes on the issues that the Moral Majority stressed in 1983 and to vote Republican, but only to the extent that these attitudes were shaped by their religious beliefs as influenced by political preachers. Viewers of televangelism were also more likely to hold the same conservative attitudes

and to vote Republican than other evangelicals, but only insofar as their political beliefs were governed by their religious beliefs.

## DATA AND METHODS

### Sample and Data

The data for this study will come from 1983 Evangelical Voter Survey. The 1983 EV Survey is a nationwide random phone survey of 1000 Evangelical Christians. In order to qualify as an Evangelical and to be eligible for the survey, respondents had to report a Christian religious preference and answer affirmatively to the following item: Do you personally believe that Jesus Christ was a real person who lived on this earth and who was also the unique Son of God? In addition, respondents had to answer affirmatively to one of the following two items: (1) In your opinion, does a person need to personally accept Jesus Christ as his or her savior in order to have eternal salvation and to be saved from eternal hell? and (2) Would you call yourself a born-again Christian -- that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ? All 1000 respondents were thus self-described Christians who believed that Jesus was the Son of God and who are either “born again” or believed in the need for eternal salvation.

### Independent variables

Moral Majority network denomination membership. One survey item asked respondents for their denominational affiliation, yielding a list of approximately 70 different denominations. This variable will be coded as a dummy variable in which a value of one denotes fundamentalist denominational affiliation and zero represents all others. Included in the definition of fundamentalist denomination will be the following four groups: (1)

Southern Baptists, (2) Independent Baptists, (3) Assembly of God, and (4) Nazarene.

These were the four groups that Leibman (1983) found comprised the important networks in the initial mobilization of the Moral Majority.

Political preaching exposure. Five items asked respondents about the politicization they received from their ministers. An initial filter question asked respondents if their minister gave his opinion about what he believed the government should or should not be doing. Those who said yes were then asked five constituent items: whether the minister gave his opinion (1) during his sermons, (2) at other times at church, or (3) outside of church; (4) if the minister had ever given his opinion about the moral or religious character of candidates; and (5) if he had ever recommended that the respondent vote for particular political candidates. A final item asked all respondents how they would react to their minister's political recommendation to vote for a particular candidate. Because the filter item and its constituent items enjoy a built-in correlation, and because the last item is badly skewed, the filter item and the last item will be excluded from the analysis. The five constituent items will be coded into dummy variables in which a value of one indicates politicization and a value of zero represents all others. These five dummy variables will then be combined into an additive index of political preaching exposure in which a higher score on the index represents more exposure to political preaching. The alpha reliability coefficient for the political preaching index is .7522. (See Appendix A for items.)

Televangelism viewing. Two items asked respondents about their viewership of religious television programming. One item asked respondents how frequently they

watched religious programs such as the 700 Club, PTL, the Old Time Gospel Hour, Oral Roberts. The other item asked the respondent whether s/he had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these programs and how strongly s/he held that opinion. These two items will be standardized into z scores and then combined into an additive scale of televangelism viewing. This scale will be coded so that a higher score indicates more frequent viewership and approval of televangelism. The alpha reliability coefficient for the televangelism index is .6965. (See Appendix A for items.)

Politicized religious belief. Several items throughout the instrument asked respondents to what extent their political attitudes and behavior were based on their religious beliefs. One item asked whether the respondent's views on abortion were based on his/her religious views. Three items asked respondents how important their religious views were in their voting behavior in (1) the 1980 Presidential election, (2) the 1982 Congressional elections, and (3) the upcoming 1984 Presidential election. A fifth item asked respondents how important they felt the religious and moral views of candidates were in the respondents' decision to vote for the candidate. All of these items will be standardized and combined into an additive index in which a higher score represents a stronger subjective connection between religious and political views. The alpha reliability coefficient for this index is .7980. (See Appendix for items.)

### **Dependent variables**

Political attitudes. The survey asked respondents their views on several political issues that were important to the Moral Majority in 1983: (1) abortion, (2) ERA, (3) homosexuality, (4) prayer in public schools, (5) nuclear freeze, and (6) El Salvador. The Moral Majority opposed abortion, ERA, homosexuality, and the nuclear freeze; and supported prayer in public schools and sending U.S. troops to El Salvador. I will use each of these items as a separate dependent variable coded so that a higher score indicates a more conservative position consistent with that of the Moral Majority.

Voting Behavior. Respondents were asked how they voted in the 1980 Presidential election and 1982 Congressional election and how they intended to vote in the 1984 Presidential election. I will use each of these election items as a separate dependent variable coded as a dichotomy so that a value of one indicates a vote for a Republican candidate and a value of zero all others.

### **Methods of Analysis**

Because the political issue variables are attitudinal and in this way continuous, I will use ordinary least-squares (OLS) regression equations to test the path model. Specifically, I will use an OLS regression equation to estimate the direct and indirect effects of each independent variable in the model on each endogenous (dependent) variable. Because politicized religious belief is an endogenous variable, it will be used as a dependent variable in its own regression equation. Exogenous variables theorized to have only

indirect effects on the dependent variables should have path coefficients of zero. I will then present the path coefficients from the regression equations in both tabular and graphic form. The advantage of path analysis in this case is its ability to show direct and indirect effects. This enables the researcher to test more specific causal chains and thereby revise and construct more reliable and valid theoretical models. Because the election variables will be coded as dichotomies, I will use logistic regression equations to estimate the effects of the independent variables on an evangelical's vote choice in each election.

## RESULTS

### Attitudes on Political Issues

Table 2 presents a modified zero order correlation matrix of the substantive independent and dependent variables. The independent variables (Moral Majority network membership, televangelism viewing, political preaching exposure, and religious politics) are presented in columns. The dependent variables (abortion opposition, ERA opposition, homosexuality opposition, school prayer support, nuclear freeze opposition, and support for sending troops to El Salvador) are presented in rows. Each correlation is based on analyses of 488 cases deleting any cases with missing data and using one-tailed tests of statistical significance.

To test the hypothesized relationships among variables in my theoretical model, a series of ordinary least squares regression equations were used in which each endogenous variable in the diagram was regressed on prior independent variables. The standardized coefficients and R-squares from these equations are presented in Table 3. As in Table 2, the independent variables in Table 3 are presented in columns, the dependent variables in rows. For each dependent variable, two rows present path coefficients corresponding to two regression equations. The top row of path coefficients represents the hypothetical equation, in which the dependent variable was regressed on only the prior independent variables with hypothesized relationships. To allow for untheorized relationships, the bottom row of path coefficients represents the fully recursive equation, in which the

dependent variable was regressed on all prior independent variables in the diagram. Some dependent variables have three rows of path coefficients. This third row represents a final regression equation in which the dependent variable was regressed on only the prior substantive variables shown by the fully recursive models to have statistically significant relationships. With the exception of political preaching, all of the variables are standardized into Z scores, and every regression equation includes demographic controls (not shown) for age, sex, race, income, education, and residence in the South. Figures 1 through 6 are path diagrams that depict the results of the final models in graphic form. Each diagram presents results for one dependent political issue variable. Arrows between variables indicate empirically confirmed relationships significant at .05.

The Basic Model. My theoretical model posits that the relationships between four independent variables -- Moral Majority denominational network membership, televangelism viewing, political preaching, and politicized religious belief -- can reliably explain variation in individual fundamentalist attitudes on several political issues. According to this model, Moral Majority network membership influences political attitudes through the proximate influence of political preaching and politicized religious belief, and televangelism viewing influences political attitudes through the intermediate effect of politicized religious belief. Because the causal relationships among these independent variables hypothetically influence political attitudes in the same ways regardless of the political issue, these hypothetical relationships form a portion of the model that does not change throughout Figures 1 through 6. For this reason, political

preaching and politicized religious belief appear as dependent variables in Table 2 and as endogenous variables in each path diagram, and the path coefficients among these exogenous and endogenous variables do not change throughout the regression analyses and Figures 1 through 6. These causal relationships and path coefficients constitute the “basic model.”

According to Table 2 and the basic model in Figures 1 through 6, all of the relationships hypothesized in the original theoretical model are confirmed. In the “political church” chain, a weak but statistically significant relationship ( $r = .09, p < .01$ ) exists between Moral Majority network membership and televangelism viewing. Moral Majority network membership also has a weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .10, p < .01$ ) on political preaching, and political preaching has the same weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .10, p < .01$ ) on politicized religious belief. This finding confirms my original expectation that membership in these Moral Majority denominational network memberships (see Appendix A) tends to include a politicized religious consciousness among parishioners through the proximate influence of political preachers acting as movement framers. In the “living room social movement” chain, televangelism viewing has a statistically significant moderate effect on politicized religious belief ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ), appearing to confirm my hypothesis that televangelists can also be effective movement framers.

The fully recursive equation with politicized religious belief as the dependent variable revealed an untheorized weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .13,$

$p < .001$ ) of Moral Majority network membership on politicized religious belief.

Fundamentalists from these denominations are more likely than other evangelicals to have political preachers, and parishioners who have been exposed to political preaching are more likely than parishioners with apolitical preachers to have more politicized religious beliefs, but fundamentalists from these denominations have more politicized religious beliefs regardless of the influence of political preaching. Viewers of televangelism are also more likely than nonviewers to have more politicized religious beliefs. Moral Majority network membership, political preaching, and televangelism viewing thus each appear to be independent agents of religious politicization.

[SEE FIGURE 3]

Opposition to Abortion. Figure 3 presents the results of the final model for abortion opposition. If my theoretical model is true, politicized religious belief should have the only direct path to abortion opposition. The results of the first regression equation generally confirm this expectation. In this equation, politicized religious belief has a moderate, statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ) on abortion opposition.

The fully recursive equation, however, yields more interesting results. In the fully recursive model, Moral Majority network membership has a weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = -.12, p < .05$ ) on abortion opposition, although this direct effect is weaker than the indirect effects of this variable through political preaching and politicized religious belief. This direct effect suggests not only that these fundamentalists

in the Moral Majority network were more likely than other evangelicals to oppose abortion, but that these fundamentalists opposed abortion regardless of the influence of their clergy or politicized religious beliefs. The results of this model also suggest some possibility of suppression between Moral Majority network membership and abortion opposition. The original zero order correlation ( $r = -.04$ ) between Moral Majority network membership and abortion opposition is minimal. But with the introduction of other controls, this relationship increases to a larger, statistically significant path coefficient ( $\beta = -.12, p < .01$ ). This finding suggests that the effect of membership in the Moral Majority network on political attitudes appears to have depended on the level of exposure to political preaching or televangelism or politicized religious belief. More interesting and unexpected is the negative direction of this relationship ( $\beta = -.12, p < .01$ ), which implies that Moral Majority membership has a *liberalizing* effect on abortion attitudes. The reasons for this counterintuitive finding are unclear.

One possibility is that Catholics were influencing the analysis. Because abortion was also a salient issue to Catholics, but Catholics have tended to be more liberal than Protestant Evangelicals on most issues, I introduced a control for Catholicism to the fully recursive equation (a dummy variable coded 1 = Catholic; 0 = all others). In this model, the Catholic variable had a moderate statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .17, p < .001$ ), while politicized religious belief had a slightly stronger direct effect ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ) on abortion attitudes. None of the other religious variables were statistically

significant. This finding suggests that abortion was possibly a more salient issue to Catholics than to Protestant Evangelicals.

[SEE FIGURE 4]

Opposition to ERA. Figure 4 presents the findings for opposition to ERA. As expected in my theoretical model, in the fully recursive equation politicized religious belief has the only statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .17, p < .001$ ) on ERA opposition. Because the fully recursive equation revealed no untheorized statistically significant relationships, politicized religious belief mediates the effects of all the substantive independent variables in the analysis. This finding supports the theoretical model.

[SEE FIGURE 5]

Opposition to Homosexuality. Figure 5 presents results of estimates of the final model for opposition to homosexuality. Consistent with the theoretical model, the first regression equation shows politicized religious belief to have a strong statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ) on homosexuality opposition. Interestingly, the results of the fully recursive equation for this variable are almost identical to those for abortion opposition: both politicized religious belief and Moral Majority network membership have statistically significant direct effects on homosexuality opposition. Like the results for abortion opposition, the cumulative indirect effects of this Moral Majority network membership through political preaching and politicized religious belief are stronger than the direct effect of this variable. Unlike the results for abortion opposition, the direction of this direct effect is positive. This finding suggests that although members

of these fundamentalists denominations use sources beyond their clergy or politicized religious beliefs to formulate their opinions about homosexuality, membership in these Moral Majority network denominations exerts its strongest conservatizing effects through the proximate influences of political preaching and politicized religious belief. Like the results for models of opposition to abortion and ERA, the results for models of opposition to homosexuality also support the original theoretical model.

In Figures 3 and 5, Moral Majority network membership appears to be a key variable. The fully recursive models depicted in these figures reveal untheorized direct effects of Moral Majority network membership on opposition to abortion and homosexuality, respectively, but no direct effect from televangelism viewing. Figures 6 through 8 reveal the opposite pattern. In each case, televangelism viewing, not Moral Majority network membership, has an untheorized direct effect on political attitudes.

[SEE FIGURE 6]

Support for School Prayer. Figure 4 presents the results of the final model of support for prayer in public schools. As predicted in the original theoretical model, the first regression equation reveals politicized religious belief to have a weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .12, p < .01$ ) on support for school prayer. Contrary to the theoretical model, however, the fully recursive equation reveals televangelism viewing to also have a weak but statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta .18, p < .001$ ) on support for school prayer, although this direct effect is weaker than the indirect effects of televangelism viewing through politicized religious belief. This finding suggests not only

that Evangelicals who view televangelism are more likely than non-viewers to support prayer in public schools, but that televangelism appears to mobilize the strongest support by convincing viewers that their religious beliefs should have political implications.

[SEE FIGURE 7]

Opposition to Nuclear Freeze. Figure 7 presents the results of the final model for opposition to nuclear freeze. Regression results for this variable offered no support for the original theoretical model. Contrary to the theoretical model, politicized religious belief had no statistically significant direct effect on nuclear freeze opposition in any of the regression equations. According to the fully recursive model, the only statistically significant predictor of opposition to nuclear freeze is televangelism viewing, and this is a very weak direct effect ( $\beta = .07, p < .05$ ). According to these findings, Evangelicals who watch televangelism are more likely than non-viewers to oppose nuclear freeze, but this attitude appears to have nothing to do with how political they feel religion should be. These results disconfirm the original theoretical model.

[SEE FIGURE 8]

Support for Sending U.S. Troops to El Salvador. The results of the final model for support for sending American troops to El Salvador are presented in Figure 6. Regression results for this variable are similar to the results for support for school prayer. As expected in the theoretical model, the first regression equation reveals a statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .14, p < .01$ ) of politicized religious belief on support for sending troops to El Salvador. Fully recursive results, however, reveal an untheorized

statistically significant direct effect ( $\beta = .13, p < .01$ ) of televangelism viewing on troop support, although this direct effect is weaker than the indirect effects of televangelism viewing through politicized religious belief. This finding means that Evangelicals who watch televangelism are more likely than non-viewers to favor sending troops to El Salvador, but viewers who see the political implications of their religious beliefs are more likely than other viewers to favor sending troops to El Salvador.

### **Voting Behavior**

In addition to variation in attitudes on political issues, I also designed my theoretical model to explain variation in fundamentalist voting behavior on three dependent variables: the 1980 Presidential election, the 1982 Congressional election, and the 1984 Presidential election. Because a vote choice between two candidates or political parties can best be measured as a dichotomous variable, logistic regression equations were used to estimate the relative effects of the independent variables on the dependent vote choice variables.

Table 4 presents the results of these analyses. Presented in columns across the top of the table are the three voting variables -- votes for Reagan in 1980, votes for a Republican congressional candidate in 1982, and projected votes for Reagan in 1984 -- each with subcolumns for logistic coefficients, standard errors, and odds ratios. Each dependent variable is a dichotomy coded in the conservative direction. Votes for Reagan in 1980 and 1984 are coded as dichotomies with a value of one indicating a vote for Reagan and a value of zero indicating a vote for the Democratic or Independent candidate.

Votes for a Republican congressional candidate in 1982 is a dichotomy with a value of one representing Republican voting behavior in the 1982 election and a value of zero indicating a Democratic or third party vote. As indicated in the table, the equations were estimated from approximately 488 cases. Over half the cases in the sample were missing because the dependent variables were coded to exclude nonvoters and those who refused to reveal their vote choice. Thus, these results describe only those Evangelicals in the sample who voted and revealed their vote choice.

If the theoretical model predicts voting behavior as well as political attitudes, the religious variables in the model should all be covariates of a Reagan vote. Moral Majority network membership, political preaching exposure, televangelism viewing, and especially politicized religious belief should all covary positively with a Reagan vote and be statistically significant. In the analysis, however, this is not the case. In the regressions for each of the three dependent variables, none of the religious variables is statistically significant.

Instead, several demographic controls are noteworthy. In the 1980 Presidential election, race (coded as zero for non-white, one for white) has a statistically significant logistic coefficient of 1.980. Converted into an odds ratio, this means that whites were about seven times more likely to vote for Reagan than non-whites. The other important demographic covariate in this election was income. The logistic coefficient for income was .171. Translated into an odds ratio of 1.186, each one-unit increase in income (about \$10,000 in total family income) increased the odds of an Evangelical voting for Reagan in

1980 by 18 percent. The results for the 1982 Congressional election reflect a similar pattern. Looking at the odds ratios, whites were six times more likely than non-whites to vote for Republican candidates, and each one-unit increase in income increased the likelihood of voting Republican by 20 percent. Finally, in 1984, gender (coded 1=men, 0=women) joins the list of significant covariates of a projected vote for Reagan over Mondale. While whites were still 7 times more likely to vote for Reagan than non-whites, and each one-unit increase in income still increased the odds of a Reagan vote by 25 percent, the odds of men voting for Reagan were about 72 percent higher than the odds of women voting for Reagan.

Men and women and blacks and whites are differently aggrieved, however. To explore possible hidden effects obscured by analyzing all cases, I estimated separate equations for blacks, whites, working women, women at home, and men. These equations yielded interesting results. Unfortunately, blacks represented too few cases for analysis. In the analyses for all whites, only income was a statistically significant covariate of a Reagan vote, except for Southern residence, which appeared to influence whites to vote Democratic in the 1982 Congressional election.

Table 5 presents the results of the analyses for the voting behavior of working women. In these analyses, race was the most consistent covariate of Republican voting behavior. White women were seven times more likely than non-white working women to vote for Reagan in 1980, 19 times more likely to vote for Republican congressional candidates in 1982, and nine times more likely to vote for Reagan over Mondale in 1984.

Interestingly, political preaching also had some influence on working womens' voting behavior. In the 1980 and 1984 Presidential elections, exposure to political preaching appeared to actually decrease womens' odds of voting for Reagan.

Racial differences in womens' voting behavior extended to the home as well. Presented in Table 6 are the results of the analyses for domestic female voters. In these analyses, domestic white women were 16 times more likely than non-white domestic women to vote for Reagan in 1980, 14 times more likely to vote for Republican candidates in 1982, and six times more likely to help re-elect Reagan in 1984. Domestic womens' Republican voting behavior may also have been influenced somewhat, however, by the Moral Majority. Although the logits are not statistically significant, membership in a Moral Majority network denomination appears to have increased the odds of domestic women voting Republican in 1980 and 1982. In their projected vote for Reagan in the 1984 Presidential election, the logit does achieve statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ).

Finally, Table 7 presents the results of analyses of male voting behavior. These analyses reveal racial, religious, class and regional differences. In 1980, white men were six times more likely than non-white men to vote for Reagan, and exposure to political preaching increased men's odds of voting for Reagan by 34 percent. Race also appeared to have some influence on men's Republican voting behavior in 1982, though the logit is not statistically significant. Finally, in 1984, more income and Southern residence increased mens' odds of voting for Reagan.

Thus, while the initial regression analyses of all cases reveals class, racial, and gender differences, more detailed analyses of these demographic subgroups uncovers more nuanced voting patterns, some of which confirm my theoretical model. Although a dearth of black cases prevented meaningful comparisons between black and white voters, with these data it was possible to compare working and domestic women, and women and men. In the early 1980s, working women, domestic women, and men all voted Republican due in large part to the influence of their white racial identity. However, in 1980, the Moral Majority appeared to have at least some effect on their voting behavior through the influence of their membership in a network linked to the Moral Majority and their exposure to political preaching. Considering that Reagan was a neoconservative who espoused the Republican Party's platform of *laissez faire* economics, which benefited the white middle and upper classes more than other social groups, the effects of race and class on voting behavior is not surprising. But the effect of denominational membership and political preaching offers at least some support for my theoretical model.

## CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to partly explain the mobilization of the New Christian Right by analyzing the strategies and tactics by which the Moral Majority mobilized fundamentalists to conservative political attitudes and Republican voting behavior. In my theoretical model derived from resource mobilization theory and framing theory, I hypothesized that the Moral Majority accomplished this task by mobilizing several major structural resources. First, in a causal chain I termed “the political church,” the Moral Majority employed a denominational network of fundamentalist clergy who recruited from their own congregations. In a causal chain I called “the living room social movement,” I also hypothesized that the Moral Majority mobilized fundamentalists through the work of televangelists. Because fundamentalists are defined by their adherence to certain religious beliefs, my primary hypothesis was that fundamentalists would embrace political conservatism only insofar as they perceived politics to be an extension of their religious identity. Empirical tests generally confirm my model.

First, the results of the regression analyses of attitudes on political issues offer limited support for my theoretical model. As my model predicted, the positive relationship between Moral Majority network membership and political preaching exposure confirms my hypothesis that membership in a Moral Majority network denomination tended to increase the likelihood of fundamentalist parishioners being exposed to political preaching. The positive relationship between political exposure and politicized religious belief, in

turn, confirms my expectation that those fundamentalists more exposed to political preaching were more likely to base their political views on their religious views. Finally, the direct positive effect of politicized religious belief on conservative attitudes on five of the seven political attitudes confirms my expectation that fundamentalists act with reference to their religious beliefs and the interactionist proposition that frame alignment is a necessary condition for participation. Through this causal chain, membership in a Moral Majority network denomination exerted an indirect, structural conservatizing effect on the political attitudes of fundamentalists. The direct effect of Moral Majority denominational network membership and conservative attitudes on most of the political issues is unexpected. However, a possible suppression effect between these variables suggests that exposure to political preaching *amplified* the conservatizing effect of Moral Majority denominational network membership. These positive, statistically significant direct effects confirm the “political church” causal chain in my model.

The findings for televangelism viewing reveal a similar pattern. As my model predicted, the positive relationship between televangelism and politicized religious belief confirms the expectation that viewers of televangelism are more likely than non-viewers to base their political views on religious conviction. The positive relationship between politicized religious belief and conservative attitudes on five of the seven political issues, as mentioned above, confirm my expectation that fundamentalists act with reference to their religious beliefs and the interactionist proposition that frame alignment is a necessary condition for participation. Consistent with resource mobilization theory, the airwaves

were an effective outreach resource that NCR strategists like Jerry Falwell mobilized to win the support of his living room parishioners. These observed relationships confirm that “living room social movement” causal chain in my model. Consistent with the interactionist perspective, televangelists were skillful movement framers who were able to bridge religious and political frames of reference in the minds of their viewers.

What is interesting about this finding is the unexpected effectiveness of this micromobilization context. Much of the recent social psychological research on micromobilization focuses on how people construct grievance, collective identity, and counterhegemonic worldviews in “submerged networks” (Mueller 1997) or *face-to-face interaction*. In this case, though, the same processes appeared to take place over the airwaves. Viewers appeared to take conservative positions on political issues without the benefit of face-to-face interaction or two-way dialogue, but by the charisma of their favorite televangelist(s). This suggests two possibilities: (1) that viewers of televangelism were, consistent with resource mobilization theory, a pre-politicized sentiment pool awaiting organized mobilization; or (2) a blind spot in framing theory deserving of further investigation. All things considered, the “living room social movement” causal chain in my model was, like the “political church,” empirically confirmed.

These two empirically confirmed causal chains are an improvement over previous research. In his analyses of the Evangelical Voter data, Wilcox (1989a, 1989b, 1990, 1992) finds moderate, statistically significant bivariate and multivariate relationships between fundamentalist denomination, political preaching exposure, televangelism, and the

subjective connection between religion and politics (politicized religious belief) and various measures of Moral Majority support.

While this research confirms the causal importance of each of these religious variables in predicting political outcomes, his use of single-equation models obscures any systematic understanding of how these religious variables influence the dependent political variables through specific causal processes. By explicating these causal processes with a demonstration of direct and indirect effects, my use of path analysis in this research promotes a more systematic understanding of the Moral Majority mobilization process. My model also analyzes more appropriate dependent variables. The seven political issues and voting behavior in three elections that I analyzed are more historically relevant and theoretically informed measures of Moral Majority mobilization than Wilcox's analyses of three issue clusters and name recognition and impressionistic support for the Moral Majority.

Although the basic predictions of my model were empirically confirmed, the regression analyses of attitudes on political issues also yielded results that challenged my model. I expected to find the indirect effects of the exogenous variables Moral Majority network denomination membership and televangelism on the dependent variables. More difficult to explain are the untheorized *direct* effects of these exogenous variables: (1) the direct effect of Moral Majority denominational network membership on politicized religious beliefs, (2) the direct effect of Moral Majority network membership on political attitudes, and (3) the direct effect of televangelism on political attitudes. A fundamental

premise of my model was that, if frame alignment is a necessary condition for participation, frame alignment would be especially crucial for religious people to whom religious meaning is important. Because evangelicals and fundamentalists are by definition very religious, religious conviction should have governed their political outlook. In the regression analyses, politicized religious belief should have had the only direct effect on political attitudes. That it did not suggests weaknesses in theory or methodology.

Theoretically, the direct effect of Moral Majority denominational network membership on politicized religious beliefs and political attitudes could be explained by unmeasured causal factors. Moral Majority denominational network membership could have exerted its politicizing and conservatizing effect through other proximate influences. Besides exposure to political preachers, membership could measure relationships with other politically conservative parishioners, exposure to other frame bridging media such as direct mail campaigns from the Moral Majority or other NCR organizations, or participation in a fundamentalist subculture that included other politically conservative influences. From a resource mobilization perspective, this possibility seems especially plausible.

In a related way, these untheorized direct effects could point to a weakness in framing theory. The direct effects of Moral Majority denominational network membership and televangelism viewing on political attitudes mean that many evangelicals took conservative positions on political issues regardless of any opinions they had about religious involvement in politics. That they appeared to take these conservative views

without restraint from their religious convictions challenges the utility of the frame alignment concept. This finding suggests several related possibilities: (1) that religion is not so important to Evangelicals, (2) that in this case the alignment of religious and political frames of reference were not necessary for Evangelicals to embrace political conservatism, or (3) that Evangelicals thought about politics and religion in different ways. These findings also suggest that, consistent with resource mobilization, membership in a Moral Majority network denomination measures group identification with other like-minded, pre-politicized conservative parishioners. Moral Majority network denominations were sentiment pools for whom frame bridging efforts were all that was necessary to mobilize consensus.

Methodologically, these direct effects could also be explained by measurement error or model misspecification. The variable “politicized religious belief,” which measured only the extent to which an evangelical based his or her political views on his or her religious views, was an incomplete operationalization of frame alignment. Unfortunately, the variable could measure neither specific fundamentalist religious beliefs such as premillennialism, the myth of dominion, or cultural separatism, nor how important these beliefs were to the fundamentalist. For this reason, politicized religious belief could not adequately measure a fundamentalist’s pre-existing beliefs. Politicized religious belief also did not measure specific ideological claims made by NCR strategists, such as “America is a Christian nation,” or those involving “secular humanism,” etc. This limited the validity of the variable as an indicator of the collective action frame constructed by the

NCR. Due to these limitations, frame alignment could have been occurring in the mind of the fundamentalist on a phenomenological level not measured by the politicized religious belief variable.

The results of the regression analyses revealed another interesting pattern: a clustering effect between the exogenous variables and the dependent political issue variables. Membership in a Moral Majority network denomination had moderate direct and indirect conservatizing influences on parishioners' attitudes about abortion, the ERA, and homosexuality. Viewing televangelism had moderate direct and indirect conservatizing influences on viewer's attitudes on prayer in public schools, nuclear freeze, and sending U.S. troops to El Salvador. In other words, different mobilization strategies mobilized consensus on different issues.

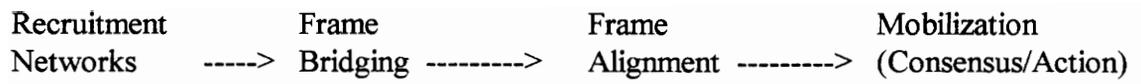
One possible explanation for this is that these different mobilization strategies were stressing different issues. The finding that Moral Majority denominational network membership had a stronger relationship than televangelism viewing to attitudes about abortion, ERA, and homosexuality suggests that these personal morality issues were stressed more in the "political church" than over the airwaves. Conversely, the finding that televangelism viewing had a stronger effect than the political church on attitudes about school prayer, nuclear freeze, and El Salvador suggest that these more "worldly" political issues were more appropriate for and stressed more by televangelists addressing a broader audience than church ministers. More historical research would shed light on this subject.

The results of the analyses on attitudes on political issues, thus, offer both support and challenge for my theoretical model. Both the theorized “political church” and “living room social movement” causal chains in my model enjoy some empirical support. Fundamentalist churches and political preachers appear to have been movement framers who effectively politicized and conservatized their parishioners. The airwaves also appear to have been a valuable movement resource in the way that televangelists also politicized and conservatized their viewers. The unexpected direct effects of these variables on attitudes, however, suggest avenues for further research. An explanation of exactly how and to what extent clergy broadened the meanings of specific evangelical symbols and myths to include conservative ideology and action among their parishioners remains beyond the scope of these data.

The results of the logistic regression analyses of Evangelical voting behavior also offer some support for my model. Although for men, working women, and domestic women a white racial identity was the most significant predictor of a Reagan vote, membership in a denomination linked to the Moral Majority and exposure to political preaching had some effects on voting behavior. The findings that membership in a denomination linked to the Moral Majority increased domestic womens’ odds of voting for Reagan, and that exposure to political preaching helped increase mens’ odds of voting for Reagan in 1980 offer limited support for my theoretical model.

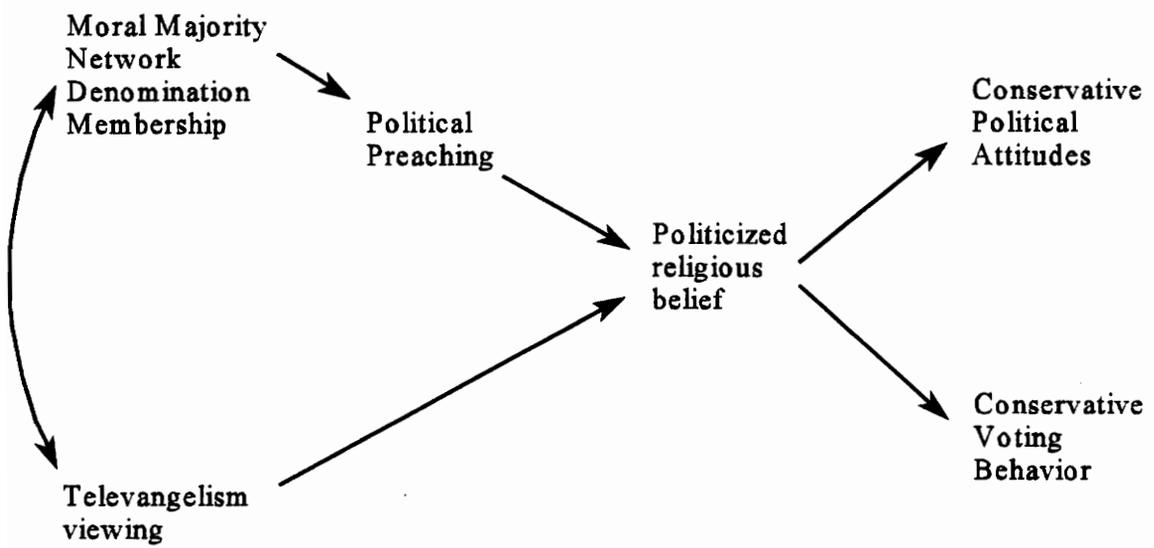
The results of the regression analyses for attitudes on political issues and voting behavior thus offer some empirical support for my model. However, it is important to

acknowledge the limitations of this research and evaluate this study in perspective. To be sure, micromobilization is a complex phenomenon. In a limited way, my model attempts to assess the effectiveness of a only a few many possible organized frame bridging agents, and frame bridging is but one of several frame alignment processes. Moreover, successful frame alignment depends on a variety of situational factors. Organized outreach efforts reflect the influence of social movement organizations such as the Moral Majority. But many other, possibly countervailing, influences and processes were at work in the Evangelical community that could have cultivated a diversity of political perspectives. Finally, surveys are cross-sectional tools which yield data from only one point in time. Research that could more accurately assess the effects of various politicizing agents in the Evangelical community on the political attitudes and behavior of this population would have to be based on longitudinal data collected at different points in time. Despite these caveats, history has demonstrated that the role the Moral Majority played in mobilizing a formidable movement of religious conservatives was significant. This research offers a modest tool with which to understand a few causes of that very complex phenomenon.



**FIGURE 1**

**A THEORETICAL SCHEME OF THE MOBILIZATION PROCESS**



**FIGURE 2**

**THEORETICAL MODEL OF THE MOBILIZATION OF THE NEW CHRISTIAN RIGHT**

**TABLE 1**  
**MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Valid N</i>
Age	45.61	18.01	18	99	1000
Race	.87	.34	0	1.00	1000
Region	.44	.50	0	1.00	1000
Education	2.64	1.13	1	5	1000
Gender	.40	.49	0	1.00	1000
Income	3.16	1.39	1	6.00	910
Moral Majority denomination	.19	.39	0	1.00	1000
Political Preaching	.00	3.54	-1.81	15.93	1000
Televangelism viewing	.00	1.75	-2.59	3.04	996
Politicized religious belief	-.18	4.20	-6.5	10.14	489
Oppose abortion	.00	1.00	-.81	1.62	1000
Oppose homosexuality	.00	1.00	-1.04	1.54	1000
Support school prayer	.00	1.00	-3.85	.44	1000
Oppose ERA	.00	1.00	-1.02	1.66	1000
Support defense spending	.00	1.00	-1.42	1.27	999
Support troops to El Salvador	.00	1.00	-1.16	1.31	1000
Oppose nuclear freeze	.00	1.00	-1.21	1.34	1000

**TABLE 2**  
**ZERO ORDER CORRELATIONS**  
(N = 488)

Dependent variables	Independent variables			
	Moral Majority Denomination	Political preaching	Televangelism viewing	Politicized religious belief
Political preaching	.12**			
Televangelism viewing	.12**	.01		
Politicized religion	.17***	.14***	.22***	
Oppose abortion	-.04	.01	.06	.20***
Oppose ERA	.04	-.02	-.09*	.11**
Oppose homosexuality	.16***	.05	.14***	.30***
Support school prayer	.13**	.03	.22***	.18***
Oppose nuclear freeze	.04	-.05	.02	-.06
Send troops to El Salvador	.10**	-.00	.17***	.13**

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .01

\*\*\* p < .001

Note: Pearson's correlation coefficients (r) using listwise deletion of cases and one-tailed tests of statistical significance.

**TABLE 3**  
**STANDARDIZED REGRESSION EQUATIONS FOR ATTITUDES ON POLITICAL ISSUES**

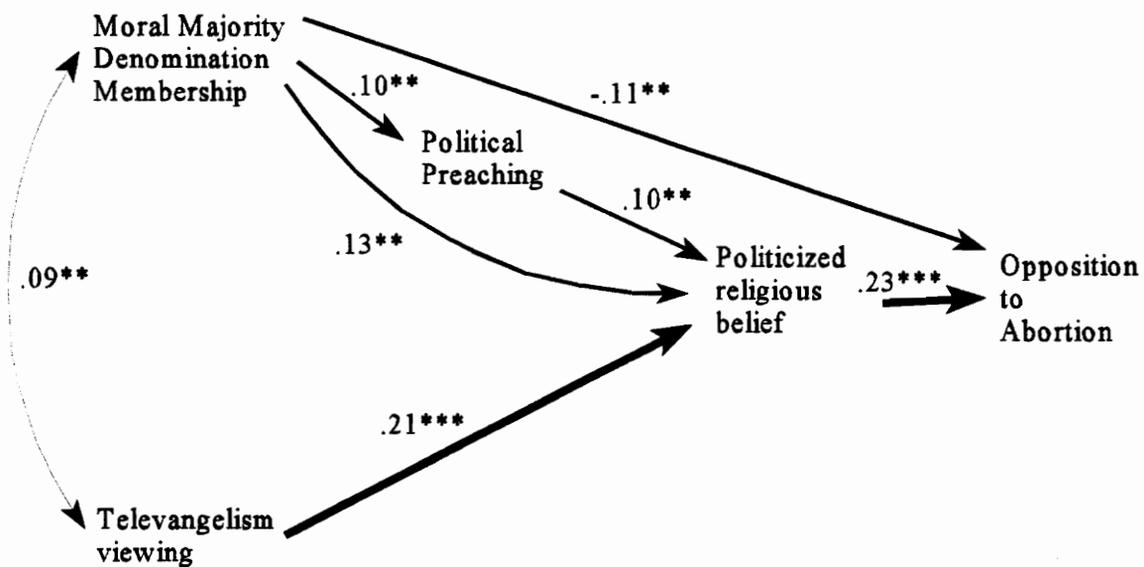
Dependent Variables	Independent Variables				R <sup>2</sup>
	Moral Majority denomination	Televangelism viewing	Political preaching	Politicized religion	
Political preaching	.10**	--	--	--	.05
	.10**	.01	--	--	.05
Politicized religious	--	.22***	.11**	--	.07
	.13**	.21***	.10*	--	.09
Oppose abortion	--	--	--	.21***	.10
	-.12**	-.05	.01	.23***	.11
	-.11**	--	--	.23***	.11
Oppose ERA	--	--	--	.17***	.09
	.03	-.05	-.02	.17***	.09
	--	--	--	.17***	.09
Oppose homosexuality	--	--	--	.29***	.14
	.11*	.04	.03	.27***	.16
	.10*	--	--	.28***	.15
Support school prayer	--	--	--	.16***	.05
	.07	.18***	.02	.11*	.08
	--	.18***	--	.12**	.08
Oppose nuclear freeze	--	--	--	-.04	.04
	.06	.11*	-.06	-.07	.06
	--	.07*	--	--	.03
Send troops to El Salvador	--	--	--	.14**	.06
	.08	.13**	-.03	.10*	.08
	--	.13**	--	.11*	.08

\* p < .05

\*\* p < .01

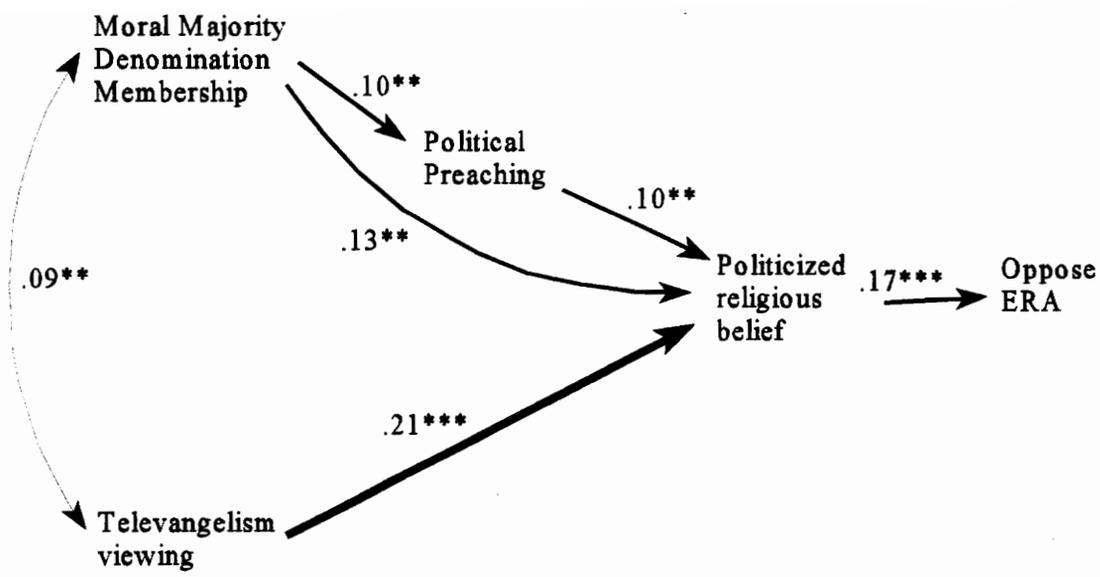
\*\*\* p < .001

Note: For each dependent variable, top row presents path coefficients for the hypothetical model (only prior independent variables with hypothesized relationships); bottom row presents path coefficients for the fully recursive model (all prior independent variables); and third row presents path coefficients from the final model (includes only statistically significant variables). All regression equations include demographic controls for age, gender, race, education, income, and residence in the South.



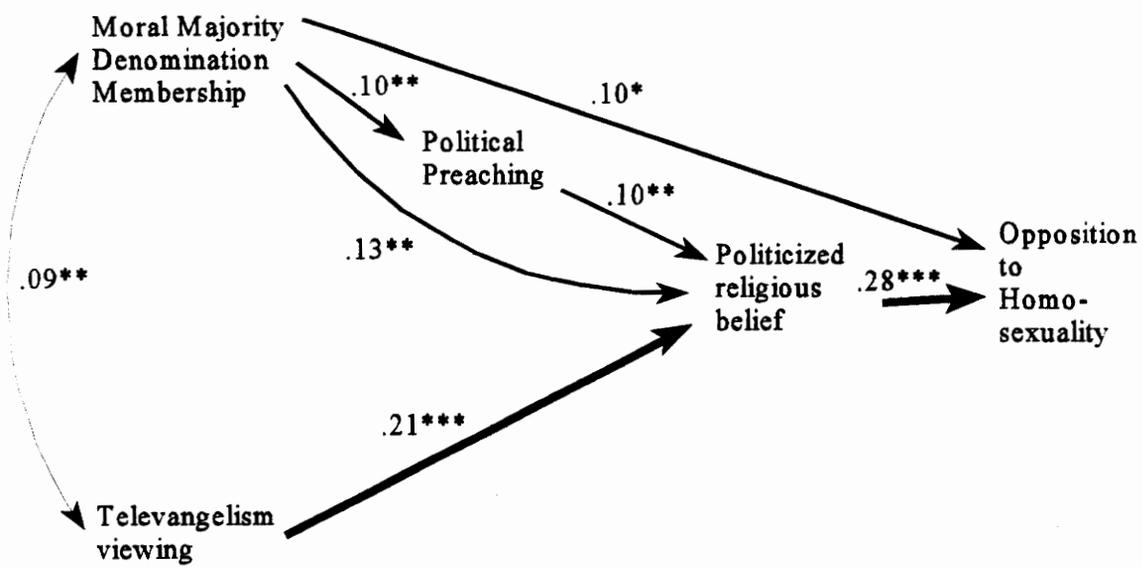
\* p < .05  
 \*\* p < .01  
 \*\*\* p < .001

**FIGURE 3**  
**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF OPPOSITION TO ABORTION**



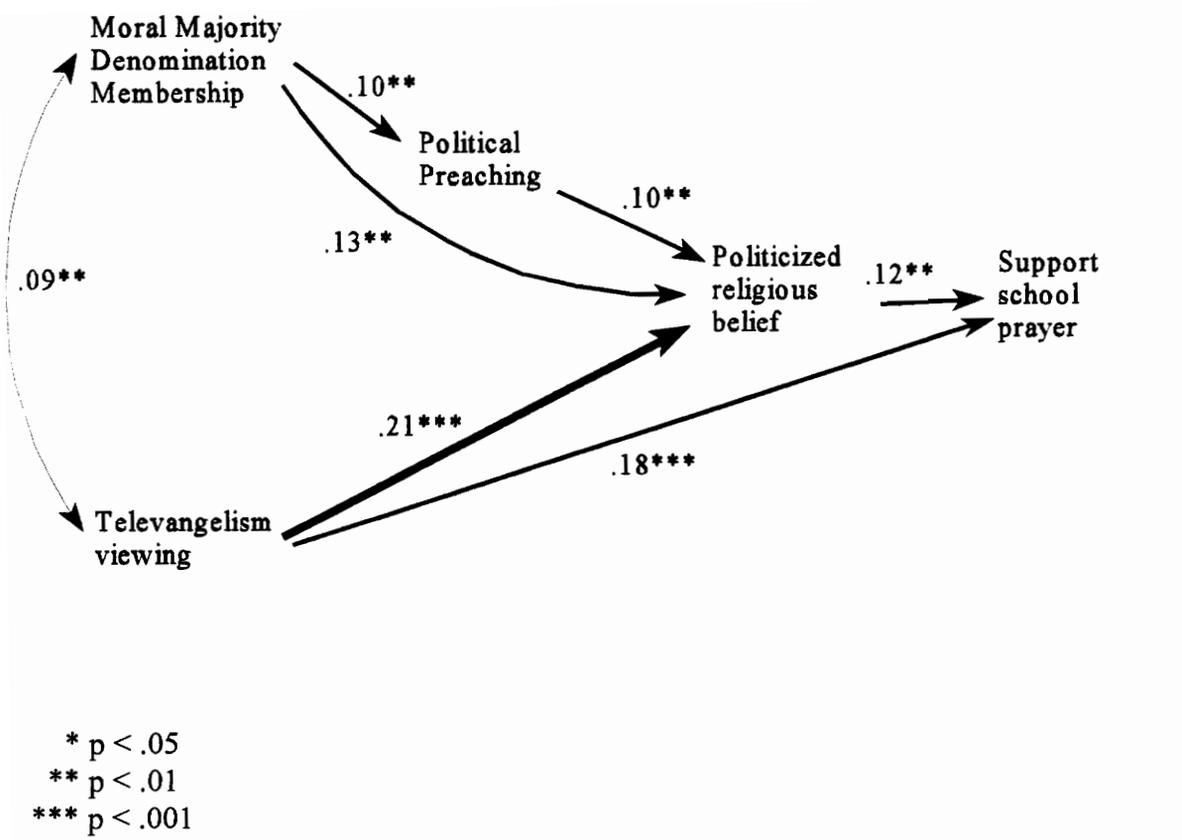
\* p < .05  
 \*\* p < .01  
 \*\*\* p < .001

**FIGURE 4**  
**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF OPPOSITION**  
**TO THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (ERA)**



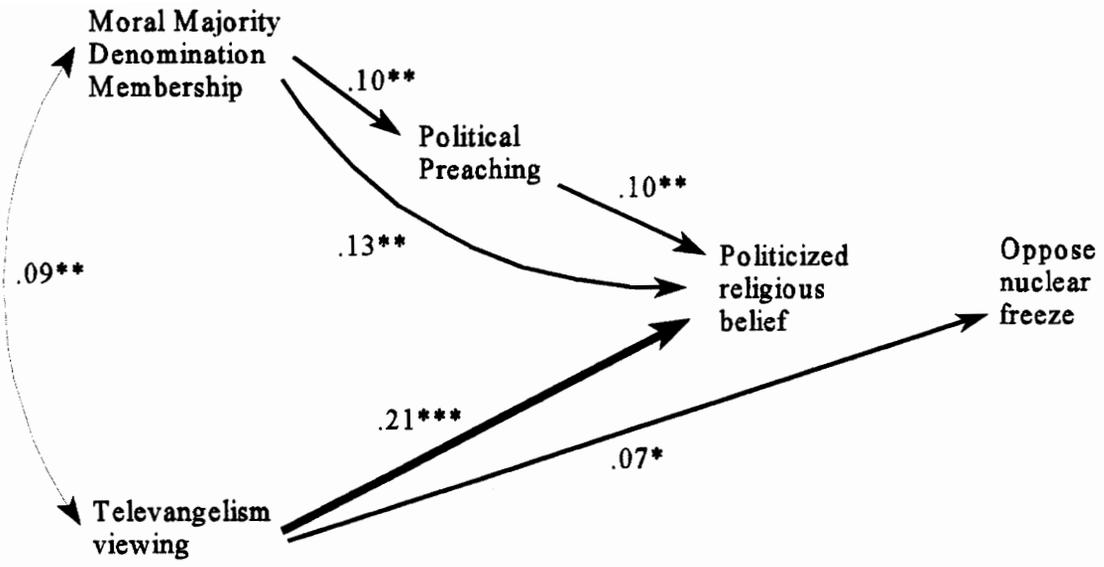
\* p < .05  
 \*\* p < .01  
 \*\*\* p < .001

**FIGURE 5**  
**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF OPPOSITION TO HOMOSEXUALITY**



**FIGURE 6**

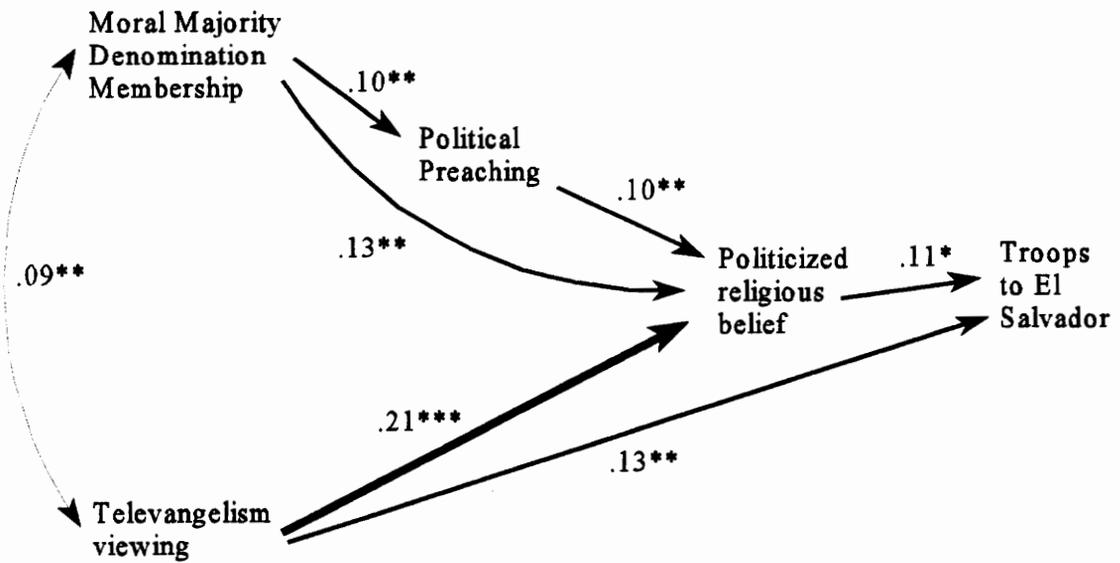
**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR PRAYER IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



\* p < .05  
 \*\* p < .01  
 \*\*\* p < .001

**FIGURE 7**

**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR FREEZE**



\* p < .05  
 \*\* p < .01  
 \*\*\* p < .001

**FIGURE 8**

**CONSENSUS MOBILIZATION OF SUPPORT FOR SENDING TROOPS TO EL SALVADOR**

**TABLE 4**  
**LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF VOTING BEHAVIOR ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**  
**(ALL VOTERS)**

Independent variables	Dependent Variables								
	Reagan in 1980			Republican in 82			Reagan in 83		
	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds
Age	.00	.01	1.00	.01	.01	1.01	-.00	.01	1.00
Sex	.34	.22	1.41	.12	.21	1.13	.54*	.24	1.72
Race	1.98***	.41	7.24	1.85***	.44	6.38	1.98***	.42	7.24
Education	.18	.11	1.19	.16	.10	1.17	.01	.11	1.10
Income	.17**	.08	1.19	.19**	.08	1.21	.23**	.09	1.25
South	-.20	.23	.82	-.37	.23	.69	.28	.25	1.32
M. M. denom	.10	.29	1.10	.25	.28	1.28	.24	.31	1.27
Political	-.00	.09	1.00	-.05	.09	.95	-.06	.09	.94
Televangelism	-.01	.07	.99	-.02	.06	.98	-.01	.07	.99
Politicized	-.03	.03	.97	.02	.03	1.02	.00	.03	1.00
Intercept	-			-3.05***			-2.50***		
Chi-square	54.56**			49.94**			51.08***		
-2 log	507.45			535.96			439.58		
Goodness of fit	418.61			422.58			375.78		
Cases	421			420			377		

\* p < .05      \*\* p < .01      \*\*\* p < .001

**TABLE 5**  
**LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF VOTING BEHAVIOR ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**  
**(WORKING FEMALE VOTERS)**

Independent variables	Dependent Variables								
	Reagan in 1980			Republican in 82			Reagan in 83		
	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds
Age	.01	.02	1.01	.00	.02	1.00	.00	.02	1.00
Race	1.46*	.70	4.32	2.97**	1.1	19.47	2.27**	.88	9.68
Education	.20	.24	1.22	.35	.25	1.41	-.08	.26	.92
Income	.12	.17	1.13	.23	.18	1.26	.29	.19	1.34
South	-.63	.45	.53	-.40	.02	.67	-.38	.50	.69
M. M. denom	.45	.62	1.57	-.12	.69	.90	.51	.74	1.67
Political	-.43	.19	.65	-.30	.21	.74	-.52*	.24	.59
Televangelism	.01	.13	1.01	.01	.14	1.01	.10	.15	1.10
Politicized	-.06	.05	1.51	-.06	.05	.94	-.00	.05	1.00
Intercept	-2.07			-4.44**			-2.44		
Chi-square	21.29**			29.06**			24.863**		
-2 log	131.06			123.29			109.60		
Goodness of fit	106.42			99.03			91.50		
Cases	110			111			97		

\* p < .05      \*\* p < .01      \*\*\* p < .001

**TABLE 6**  
**LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF VOTING BEHAVIOR ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**  
**(DOMESTIC FEMALE VOTERS)**

Independent variables	Dependent Variables								
	Reagan in 1980			Republican in 82			Reagan in 83		
	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds
Age	-.01	.01	1.00	-.01	.01	.99	.01	.01	1.01
Race	2.82**	1.1	16.79	2.65*	1.2	14.11	1.88*	.86	6.58
Education	.19	.22	1.21	.39	.25	1.47	.04	.21	1.05
Income	.21	.16	1.24	.11	.16	1.12	.22	.15	1.25
South	-.46	.48	.63	-.08	.51	.92	-.26	.46	.77
M. M. denom	1.08	.58	2.95	1.21	.64	3.35	.85	.54	2.35
Political	-.10	.19	.91	.10	.22	1.11	.07	.18	1.07
Televangelism	-.09	.13	.92	.01	.15	1.01	-.05	.13	.95
Politicized	.02	.06	1.03	.00	.06	1.00	.08	.05	1.08
Intercept	-3.01*			-2.85			-2.97**		
Chi-square	22.96**			16.98*			14.94		
-2 log	143.45			122.24			156.44		
Goodness of fit	127.50			103.59			127.26		
Cases	124			107			124		

\* p < .05      \*\* p < .01      \*\*\* p < .001

**TABLE 7**  
**LOGISTIC REGRESSION OF VOTING BEHAVIOR ON INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**  
**(MALE VOTERS)**

Independent variables	Dependent Variables								
	Reagan in 1980			Republican in 82			Reagan in 83		
	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds	b	s.e.	odds
Age	.01	.01	1.01	.01	.01	1.01	-.00	.01	1.00
Race	1.94**	.67	6.99	1.08	.63	2.95	1.21	.66	3.37
Education	.24	.16	1.27	.20	.15	1.23	.17	.17	1.19
Income	.19	.14	1.21	.19	.13	1.21	.37**	.16	1.45
South	.26	.38	1.30	-.44	.34	.65	1.09**	.44	2.98
M. M. denom	-.65	.44	.52	.09	.40	1.09	-.43	.49	.65
Political	.29	.15	1.34	.05	.12	1.05	.08	.15	1.08
Televangelism	.03	.11	1.03	-.04	.10	.96	-.06	.12	.94
Politicized	-.04	.04	.96	.03	.0	1.03	.00	.04	1.00
Intercept	-2.88**			-2.59**			-2.23*		
Chi-square	27.16**			15.86			23.08**		
-2 log	209.01			239.04			181.25		
Goodness of fit	186.73			185.23			165.45		
Cases	187			185			173		

\* p < .05      \*\* p < .01      \*\*\* p < .001

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**APPENDIX A -- SURVEY ITEMS**

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**INDEPENDENT VARIABLES**

**Fundamentalist Denomination Dummy (DUMDENOM)**

1 =	INDEPENDENT BAPTIST	N = 30
	SOUTHERN BAPTIST	N = 137
	ASSEMBLY OF GOD	N = 10
	NAZARENE	N = 13
		-----
		190
0 =	ALL OTHERS	810
		-----
		1,000

**Political Preaching Index**

1. **POLSERMN -- POLITICS IN SERMON**  
“Does he talk about politics and give his opinion about government (a) during his sermons?”  
(Yes=1; All others=0)
2. **POLOTHET -- POLITICS/OTHER TIMES**  
“Does he talk about politics and give his opinion about government (b) at other times at church?”  
(Yes=1; All others=0)
3. **POLAWAY -- TALK POLITICS/OUTSIDE CHURCH**  
“Does he talk about politics and give his opinion about government (c) outside of church?”  
(Yes=1; All others=0)
4. **MNSTRMRL -- MINISTER OPINION MORALS POLITICIANS**  
“Has he ever given his opinion about the moral or religious character of politicians or political candidates?”  
(Yes=1; All others=0)
5. **EVERREC -- EVER RECOMMENDED CANDIDATE**  
“Has he ever recommended that you vote for particular candidates?”  
(Yes=1; All others=0)

Alpha = .7522

**Televangelism Viewing Index**1. **RELIGTV** HOW OFTEN/RELIGIOUS TV

“Other than the services of local churches, how often do you watch religious television programs such as the 700 Club, PTL, the Old Time Gospel Hour, Oral Roberts, Jimmy Swaggert, Rex Humbard, and so forth?”

- (1) Never
- (2) Hardly Ever
- (3) Several times a year
- (4) Once a month
- (5) 2-3 times a month
- (6) Once a week
- (7) 2-3 times a week
- (8) Once a day

2. **OPRELTV** OPINION OF RELIGIOUS TV

“And in general, would you say you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of these types of religious programs?”

- (1) Unfavorable/strongly
- (2) Unfavorable
- (3) Unsure
- (4) Favorable
- (5) Favorable/strongly

Alpha = .6965

### Religious Politics Index

1. **ABRELIG** ABORTION BASED ON RELIGION  
 “Is your feeling about abortion based on your personal religious views or not?”  
 (1) Yes/Strongly  
 (2) Yes  
 (3) Unsure  
 (4) No  
 (5) No/Strongly
  
2. **RELIG80** RELIG IN 80 PRES ELECTION  
 “And how important were your religious views and convictions in your voting decision in that [1980 Presidential] election -- extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?”
  
3. **RELIG82** RELIG IN 82 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTION  
 And how important were your religious views and convictions in your voting decision in that [1982 Congressional] election -- extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not at all important?”
  
4. **RELIG84** RELIG IN 84 PRES ELECTION  
 “And how important do you think your religious views and convictions will be in determining your vote in the 1984 election for President?”
  
5. **RELIGCAN** IMPRTNC/RELIGIOUS VIEWS/CANDIDATE  
 Now talking about politics in general, how important are the religious and moral views of a candidate for office in your decision on whether or not to vote for him?  
 (1) More important than almost any other factor I take into account  
 (2) About the same importance as other factors  
 (3) Less important than most other factors I take into account
  
6. **RELIGPOL** STAND ON RELIGION IN POLITICS  
 “Some people feel that religious leaders and groups should confine their activities to specific religious activities, and that they should not get involved in politics. Others feel that religious leaders and groups should take a very active role in politics. Which of these comes closer to your own opinion? (No involvement/Unsure/Active role in politics)  
 Alpha = .7980

**DEPENDENT VARIABLES****Attitudes on Political Issues -- 1983****DEFENSE** VIEW ON U.S. DEFENSE SPENDING

“Do you feel the U.S. should increase the amount of money we spend on defense, or should we decrease this amount of money?” (Decrease <---> Increase)

**FREEZE** VIEW ON NUCLEAR FREEZE

“Do you favor or oppose a freeze on U.S. and Soviet nuclear weapons at current levels, even if that means the U.S. has slightly fewer weapons?” (Favor <---> Oppose)

**TROOPSAL** STAND ON U.S. TROOPS IN EL SALVADOR

“Do you favor or oppose sending U.S. troops to El Salvador and other Central American countries in order to stop the spread of communism?” (Favor <---> Oppose)

**PRAYER** STAND ON PRAYER IN SCHOOL

“At the present time, prayers are not allowed in the public schools. Do you think that voluntary public prayer should be allowed in public schools?” (Favor <---> Oppose)

**ERA** STAND ON ERA

“Are you personally for or against passage of the Equal Rights Amendment?” (Favor <---> Oppose)

**HOMOSEX** GOD IS PUNISHING GAYS

“As you may know, there has been a lot of publicity recently concerning a contagious disease called A-I-D-S or “AIDS.” A large percentage of those with this disease are homosexuals. Would you agree or disagree with the following statement: The fact that AIDS disease has struck largely in the homosexual community is evidence of God’s punishment for homosexuals’ immoral and sinful lifestyle.” (Disagree <---> Agree)

**Voting Behavior****VOTE80** VOTE IN 1980 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

“Think for a moment about the November 1980 national Presidential elections. Jimmy Carter was President and was running for re-election as a Democrat. Ronald Reagan was the Republican nominee. The hostages were being held in Iran, inflation was in double digits, and the country was worried about a crisis of conscience. Do you remember if you voted in that election? Do you happen to remember if you voted for Jimmy Carter or Ronald Reagan?”

(Yes/Carter -- Yes/Reagan -- Didn't vote/don't remember)

**VOTE82** VOTE IN 82 CONGRESSIONAL

“Now think for a minute about the 1982 Congressional elections last fall. Ronald Reagan had been President for almost two years, and while inflation was much improved, unemployment had reached the 10 percent level. Do you remember if you voted in that election? Do you happen to remember if you voted for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate for U.S. Congress in that election?”

(Yes/Democratic candidate -- Yes/Republican candidate -- Didn't vote/don't remember)

**VOTE84** VOTE IN 84 PRESIDENTIAL

“If the election for U.S. President were held today and you had to make a choice between -- (1) Ronald Reagan, the Republican, and (2) Walter Mondale, the Democrat -- who would you vote for?” (Ronald Reagan/Undecided/Walter Mondale)

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