

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

2012 AMERICAN VALUES SURVEY:  
ASSESSING POLITICAL AND MORAL VIEWS ON THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL ISSUES  
IN A SHIFTING RELIGIOUS LANDSCAPE

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**Presentation of Survey Results**

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**Presentation of Research Report**

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. DIONNE: I want to welcome everyone here today including lots of old friends in this audience. I'm E.J. Dionne a Senior Fellow here at Brookings. And on behalf of the Brookings Religion Policy and Politics Project, I want to welcome everyone. My colleague Bill Galston and I have had the pleasure and good fortune over the last several years to collaborate with our friends Robbie Jones and Dan Cox at the Public Religion Research Institute and we are looking forward to sharing the results today of the 2012 American Values Survey. There are some great findings in here that I think will interest every single person in this room. There's a finding for everybody in this survey.

I do want to point out to my friends and colleagues in the press that while Bill and I are very proud to have collaborated on this survey, it should be referred to as a PRRI survey and report. In the first half of this event, Robbie, Bill, and I will present the survey findings and offer some analysis. And then just so you will understand what's going on up here, Robbie will come up, I will sit down because we are bringing down a screen so you can see all this magnificent data for yourself. Then Bill will come up and then I will present a small piece of the report while our distinguished respondents whom I will introduce then, join us on the stage here.

So I will just introduce Robbie and Bill and invite Robbie to come up. Robbie, I think many of you know, is the founding CEO of the PRRI - that would be the Public Religion Research Institute. He's a leading scholar and commentator on religion, values, and public life. He is the author of books, peer reviewed articles, he writes a weekly figuring faith column at the Washington Post on Faith website. He holds a PhD in religion from Emory University where he specialized in the sociology of religion, politics, and religious ethics. In other words, he prepared for years to present this survey to you today. He also holds an MD degree from Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary.

I'm going to interrupt the introductions just to say thank you to a few people. I always try to do it at the beginning because I never want to forget the people who helped us put this together when we get all fascinated by the data and the arguments. Great thanks to Corinne Davis. Where are you Corinne? She's probably doing something helpful to us. Corinne Davis, Christine Jacobs, Ross Tilchen, and of course I mentioned Dan Cox on Robbie's side. Robbie also has some -- thank you. So Dr. Jones will speak first and then comes Dr. Bill Galston. He holds the Ezra Zilkha Chair in the Brookings Government Studies Program.

He's a senior fellow, he is a former policy advisor to President Clinton and numerous presidential candidates, he's a philosopher, he's an expert on domestic policy political campaigns and elections. There aren't many philosophers who combine their philosophical and theoretical approach to campaigns. He's done a lot of work on religion policy and politics and his current research -- Bill doesn't -- you know, he only takes on small projects. His current research focuses on designing a new social contract. He's also doing a lot of work on political polarization which might get in the way of creating a new social contract. But that's for another day. I'm honored to present my friend, Robbie Jones. Welcome Robbie.

MR. JONES: Well thank you, E.J. So as CEO of Public Religion Research Institute, I'm delighted to be here to talk about the findings of the 2012 American Values Survey. This survey is the fourth American Values Survey which the PRI team conducted in 2008 and then annually beginning in 2010. We have some folks joining us via webcast and the phone and you can find the full report -- the American Values Survey how Catholics and the religiously unaffiliated will shape the 2012 election and beyond and a full top line questionnaire on our website at [publicreligion.org](http://publicreligion.org).

MR. DIONNE: Robbie?

MR. JONES: Yeah?

MR. DIONNE: I forgot to say -- if you would say that people can also follow along on Twitter.

MR. JONES: Yes.

MR. DIONNE: And the hash tag is AVS2012.

MR. JONES: Great. So if you're live tweeting here today, it's AVS2012 is the hash tag and at public religion is also a way you can tweet at us if you want to tweet at us while we're going. So again, thanks for all of you who are joining us via the web and via Twitter. So a couple of thanks of my own before jumping into the findings. First, I just want to say thank you to E.J. Dionne and Bill Galston and the team at the Religion Policy and Politics section here at Brookings. E.J. and Bill are coauthors on the survey report and if you'll look at the end of the report have contributed an insightful essay at the back of the report and they'll be talking about that in a moment.

And I'm deeply grateful for what is now a multiyear partnership with E.J. and Bill and Brookings that's dedicated to conducting nonpartisan research to advance an understanding of the role that religion plays in politics and public life. Second, I want to say thank you to the Ford Foundation and the Nathan Cummings Foundation whose generous support made this survey possible, and particularly to the Ford Foundation for their ongoing support of the collaboration between Brookings and PRRI. Third, I want to say thanks to the PRRI team. We turned this report around which you can see if fairly hefty, fairly quickly. We were still calling people September 30th and now you have this report in your hands. So this team worked very hard.

Daniel Cox, Director of Research at PRRI, Juim Nivara Rivera a research associate, Amelia Thompson Deveaux, our online communications associate, and Christina Sanievich who did the lovely graphics on the cover and inside the report, all the layout and

we're very thankful to her and everyone for their hard work in turning this around on a very tight timeline. All right. So enough of that. Let's jump into the findings here. Just a little about what this is, it's a very large survey of three thousand Americans. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus two points.

We were in the field -- this is important, between September 13th and September 30th. So that is before the first presidential debate. It's interesting. The polls have sort of moved around a little bit and we've actually come closer back to where we were before that time. It was conducted both in English and Spanish and we also have 1,200 people reached on the cell phone as well. This is also in the way of kind of looking ahead, wave one of a two wave study. We'll be calling back as many people as we can get back on the phone as soon as the election is over, asking them what effected their vote, what was the driving factors, what was most important, how their religion and values kind of effected their decisions, whether Mitt Romney's Mormonism was a factor, and whether perceptions of Obama's religiosity was a factor, all of that.

Stay tuned November 15th, we'll have a data write back on kind of a look back at what happened with the same group of folks that we have in this current survey. So I'm going to start with kind of a big picture and then kind of dial into the electoral context. One big thing that the survey did and we were lucky to have such a large sample, is we were able to kind of look at a really religious churn in American public life. It's quite remarkable the amount of switching that has gone on. So when you look at fairly stable religious coalitions from 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, it really does mask a lot of movement underneath the surface.

So I'm just going to give you couple of numbers here. I won't go over all of these but one thing to note is the groups at the top and the bottom of this slide. So among Catholics, we asked people in the survey, what was their childhood religious affiliation and then what was their religious affiliation today so then we could look and see what the

differences were. And we found two things. One is that while 31 percent of Americans were raised Catholic, currently only 22 percent of Americans are affiliated as Catholics. So that's a net loss of 9.4 percentage points. So by far, Catholics are the group that has experienced the most decline. In the report we actually have more detailed numbers that shows the number of people coming in, number of people going out, because it's actually both of those things.

This is the net number here. Down here at the bottom -- so Catholics are the group that's sort of losing the most adherence. Down here at the bottom, the religiously unaffiliated which have been getting a lot of press in the last few years, the group that has really more than doubled in size since the early 1990's. It now currently -- you can see this 19 percent of the population identifies as unaffiliated and you can see how quickly this has changed. Only seven percent of Americans were raised unaffiliated, but currently 19 percent identify as religiously unaffiliated. So that makes the religiously unaffiliated the fastest growing group in the religious landscape which is a kind of interesting way of thinking about it.

And you can see the other numbers here as well, but I'll have a little more to say about the unaffiliated as I unpack it. The other thing to say if you want to look at -- you know, as pollsters, we have a hard time looking into the future, right? We're very reluctant to do that. The best we can usually do is to say, okay, let's look at generational cohorts and see what kinds of patterns that we see among generations. So if you look at the religious landscape by generational cohorts, you see a pretty interesting pattern here. And I'll just start with the religiously unaffiliated. All right, if you look among seniors only nine percent identify as religiously unaffiliated, but that number is pretty linear in its increase. And if you look under the 18 to 29 crowd, it's a third who count themselves as religiously unaffiliated.

So a big change in terms of generational cohorts. You can also see -- these

next groups that are all blue here are different groups of white Christians. So another thing you can see is that the wedge of white Christians is shrinking as you go sort of, down the age cohort. So if you look here among seniors, that's about 7 in 10 that are white Christians. If you go up here to the millennial cohort, it's really only 3 in 10. All right. So it's a very, very big difference. And you can also see less of a difference but if you look at minority Christians you see again, bigger wedge among younger people, thinner wedge among older.

And the group of non-Christian religious people, that's Jews, Hindus, Buddhists that are outside the Christian denominations have remained somewhat steady across the age cohorts. All right. We also had a very interesting question where we asked these groups of unaffiliated Americans why they left -- there's been a lot of debate about this, about why they left the religion of their childhood. And we got a really wide array of answers. We actually had an open-ended question and allowed people to say whatever they wanted to, to this question, then we grouped them into categories. And basically what we found is sort of this big sort of set of reasons that people gave, but they kind of fell into some clusters.

So about 4 in 10 fell into a cluster that I would call some kind of belief conflicts, so they said they no longer believed the church teachings, they no longer believed in God, they sort of saw this as kind of childhood sorts of beliefs that they had grown out of. So it's only about 4 in 10 who sort of think about rejecting some kind of religious belief. There's another group that I've kind of highlighted in green. About 3 in 10, they gave some sort of reasons that were about either negative reactions to religious institutions or negative reactions to religious people, that is they're hypocritical, they're judgmental, you know, are controlling, or they disliked organized religion or religion just causes problems and divisions in society. Those are the kinds of answers we heard here.

And then there was this very interesting kind of, larger wedge -- well, first this one. Very, very few actually Americans named anything about sexuality issues that we were

a little bit surprised about. And only a few really named the sex abuse scandal within the Catholic Church there and that was only named by Catholics, but still a very, very small number naming that. And then there was a fairly large wedge of people giving what I would call, fairly mundane reasons. I'm just busy, I've kind of fallen away, I don't really know why I'm not. I mean, people have actually said, I'm not really affiliated but I don't really know why I'm not affiliated, I'm just not, those kinds of answers.

We heard a fairly, you know, big number saying that as well. One other contribution I think we may hear is that again, this group has grown to 19 percent of the population; that's one in five Americans identifying as religiously unaffiliated. And one contribution we've made in this survey is to help sub-segment this group and understand what are the subgroups underneath. Whenever you get a group this big, you've got to know there's some diversity underneath the hood. And one of the kinds of new things that we've found is this wedge I've kind of pulled out here, is a group we're calling unattached believers. All right. So everyone sort of is not surprised to see atheists and agnostics here at 36 percent.

Another group that we're calling, secular Americans who don't identify as religious, identify as secular. But then we have this group of unattached believers that do identify as religious even though they're unaffiliated. So they don't claim a formal religious affiliation, but if you ask them a follow-up question and say, do you consider yourself a secular person or a religious person, they actually pick religious. I consider myself a religious person. Now that's pretty interesting, right, that there's a big slice of this group that looks like that. And when we look at some attitudes here in just a second, you'll see really stark differences.

So here are atheists, agnostics on the one hand, and seculars, on a basic question about belief in God. The first category is, God is a person with whom one can have

a relationship. The second one is, God is an impersonal force. The third one is, I do not believe in God and then kind of other: don't know or refuse the question. And so you can see atheists and agnostics are the only group in which a majority, 56 percent say they do not believe in God. But now what you might notice is kind of interestingly enough, 36 percent of atheists and agnostics say, I do believe in God in one way or the other. So our research director, Dan Cox commented yesterday actually that maybe this is the way Americans do atheism, right, which I think is a great line.

And then seculars look, you know, a little more balanced. You know, 3 in 10 say God is a person, about 4 in 10 say God is an impersonal force, and about a quarter say they don't believe in God. But you'll see some stark differences when you look at this group of unattached believers. 7 in 10 say that God is a person with whom one can have a relationship, another quarter say that God is an impersonal force, absolutely zero say they do not believe in God, right. And yet they're counted in the unaffiliated group, so it's a kind of interesting profile here. You can look at this a number of different ways.

They differ by education, they also differ by race. So atheists and agnostics are three quarters white, non-Hispanic. All right. So overwhelming white. They're also more likely to have college degrees than the general public or these other two groups. If we step it down, secular is about two-thirds like to be white, non-Hispanic. A little more representation among minority groups. And if you look at the profile of unattached believers, they look significantly different. Still the majority that are white, non-Hispanic. But particularly this number of African Americans -- a quarter of them are African American which is you know, a constituency that has very high degree of religiosity, so maybe not surprising they're influencing the profile of this group.

So we can talk about the implications of this later, but I just want to kind of lay this out. So the second group that we looked at really was the complexity of American

Catholics and a couple of groups I want to break out here are two in the press release that sort of say there's been a lot of ink spilled about you know, the Catholic vote and sort of looking at it over time. And we actually argued that there is no Catholic vote, all right. That really you'd have to look underneath it and there are a number of Catholic votes and I'm going to give you a couple of ways of looking at it. One is by a new question that we've asked about what emphasis Catholics would like to see the church put in their public proclamations.

That is an emphasis on the one hand on social justice and an obligation to care for the poor or on the other hand, an emphasis on right to life and abortion. So we asked kind of which of those two things would you like to see more emphasis on. The other division is between white and Latino Catholics that we'll break out as well here but I'll just kind of start with this one. Interestingly enough, when we asked Catholics -- and this is not their personal opinion about whether they consider themselves more prolife or whether they consider themselves more social justice. This is a question about church public priorities, all right. So we said, in the church's public engagements would you like to see more emphasis on the social justice and the obligation to help the poor even if it means less emphasis on abortion and right to life or would like to see the opposite?

By a margin of two to one Catholics overall say that they'd like to see more emphasis on social justice and the obligation to help the poor. So 60 percent to 31 percent saying they'd like to see more emphasis in the church's public proclamations on issues like abortion and the right to life. Now if we break this out across the number of categories, you can see here a little bit of difference, still the same kind of majority on the side of social justice and helping the poor, but a little more balanced emphasis among Hispanic Catholics. And probably one of the more remarkable findings that I think E.J's going to come back to here is this one on the end here.

That even among Catholics who attend church weekly or more, which tend to be a more socially conservative cohort, a slim majority, 51 percent say in the church's public engagements they'd like to see an emphasis on social justice even if it means less of an emphasis on right to life. The other place I'm just going to kind of highlight white Catholics and Hispanic Catholics here, are on two questions about abortion and the death penalty versus life in prison. So if we look at white Catholics, less than a majority think that abortion should be illegal in all or most cases, only about 4 in 10 of white Catholics say that. Also slightly less than the majority say they favor life in prison over the death penalty.

So that question was phrased, which do you favor for people who have been convicted of murder? Do you favor life in prison without parole or do you favor the death penalty? So 48 percent on that question. If you look at Hispanic Catholics you see again, a different profile here. 55 percent saying abortion should be illegal in all or most cases and 59 percent favoring life in prison over the death penalty here. So you can get a hint of the complexity that runs along ethnic lines here. So let me turn to the presidential election. The first thing to say that won't surprise anyone is that what is the election about?

Well, it's about the economy. All right. So overwhelming. Democrats, republicans, independents, everyone says this is the most important issue influencing their vote. So it's not really a surprise. Coming in second with still considerable amounts of support and particularly among democrats is the issue of health care. So 1 in 5 of all Americans and 3 in 10 democrats, about 1 in 10 republicans saying that. And then everything else is down really at the floor, so not a lot of support. Abortion, immigration, same sex marriage, and a range of other issues. National security jumps up at least into double digits only among republicans, but everything else as you can see is fairly low.

So all about the economy. You understand why last night in the debates a third of the foreign policy debates were spent talking about domestic policy, economic policy.

This is why. So the other very interesting thing that we found that I think will tie back to the really religious churn in the American religious marketplace is the start divisions between the religious coalitions that make up Obama and Romney's base. So I'll start with really this group of white Christians in Obama's coalition. President Obama's religious coalition is made up of less than 4 in 10 white Christians. This is the breakout between white evangelicals, mainliners, and white Catholics.

Romney's coalition on the other hand is made up of three quarters white Christians. All right. So you see very stark differences in the landscape here of what each of these coalitions make. By the way, if you sort of map this on to generational cohorts, Obama's coalition looks somewhere between the sort of 30 to 40 year old range if you map it out there. Romney's coalition looks a lot more like seniors in terms of its demographic breakout. And then you can see also the significant numbers of minority Christians and non-Christians in Obama's coalition and fully 23 percent of the unaffiliated making up Obama's coalition. Again, this kind of very small wedge. That little star there is less than one percent of African American Protestants making up Romney's coalition.

And then finally, this eight percent here of Romney's coalition made up of religiously unaffiliated Americans. One thing to kind of point out here that is sort of interesting is that you know, the biggest wedge over here by far is White evangelical protestants which voted about three quarters protestant. The biggest wedge over there is religiously unaffiliated Americans which vote about three quarters democrat in elections. So we have these kind of counterbalancing forces now that have sort of emerged on each of the party blocks.

So what does it look like in terms of vote across traditions here? That's what the coalitions look like. But if you look at the actual vote -- again this is from late September. And we put these in a bubble chart. I'll explain exactly how this works, but basically this is Obama's coalition here, right. And the size of the bubbles indicate the size that this group

makes up inside his coalition. All right. So the bigger the circle, the bigger proportion it makes up of Obama's coalition. You can see white evangelical protestants, he's getting about 20 percent of their vote, he's getting about 90 percent of the African American protestant vote, about 3 quarters of the unaffiliated, and then these two swing groups in the middle, Catholics, white mainland protestants that are sort of divided, he is sort of slightly ahead on the Catholic vote and a little behind on the white mainland protestant vote.

If we sort of drop in Romney's numbers here, you can see a very similar kind of you know, opposite pattern here with this little tiny block here of African American protestants, about three quarters white evangelicals on the other side. And you can see particularly Catholics right here in the middle with both campaigns really wrestling over Catholic votes that are very, very complex to sort out. To just kind of hammer home this kind of Catholic point here -- so here's the overall Catholic vote. Dead heat statistically 49, 47, Obama to Romney. But if we look at this break and we look at sort of two groups that Obama is leading in, this is among Catholic likely voters, this little asterisk by Hispanic Catholic voters is -- the caveat here is that these are Hispanic Registered voters.

There weren't enough likely voters in the sample so one little asterisk there that's registered voters versus likely voters, but it comports very well with other surveys of Hispanic likely voters; about 7 in 10. So Obama winning among Catholics, among Catholic women, among Latino Catholics with Romney having an edge then among white Catholics and Catholic men. All right so next little vote here I want to sort of break out, here's that same number 49, 47. And one number we're used to looking at is attendance. All right. The exit polls typically give us this and what we're showing now among likely voters is Romney handling winning. 6 in 10 of Catholic likely voters saying that they support Romney and a mirror image about 6 in 10 of those who attend monthly or less supporting Obama.

Here's these new breaks of groups and those groups are roughly evenly

sized. There's about 45 percent of Catholic likely voters say they attend weekly or more, 55 percent say they attend monthly or less. Obama's group here is a little bit bigger. Among those who prefer a kind of right to life emphasis or a social justice emphasis in the Catholic Church's public proclamations, you can again see big divides in the vote. One interesting thing here to note is that again, this social justice group is twice as big as the right to life emphasis group over here. But Romney winning two-thirds among the right to life oriented Catholics and Obama winning 6 in 10 of social justice emphasis.

So just a couple of things toward the home stretch here and I'll turn it over to Bill. We also asked a question about the contraception mandate controversy. So the question read, religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals should have to provide employees with no cost contraception coverage. We've asked this question before and wanted to see if there's movement from March of 2010 when we asked this question which is after the administration came out with some accommodations but before the Catholic bishops had launched this Fortnight for Freedom campaign, kind of raising awareness and opposing this requirement.

So we asked the question again. There really is no movement in Catholics overall or the general population on this movement either before or after the campaign. We also went the extra step here in asking, would it make a difference? So we asked one version of the question that did not specify that churches would have a religious objection to this. We asked another version of the question that actually specified that church might have a religious objection and we found no difference which basically means that people already have that in their heads as part of the way that they're answering the question. So we split the sample so half the sample got one question, half the sample got the other question.

These differences that you see are statistically insignificant, so you see small differences but they're really not significant. Among all Catholics 57 percent saying they

support the administration's policy that religiously affiliated colleges and hospitals should have to provide employees with no cost contraception coverage. White Catholics are basically divided on this question, a little less supportive and divided. One other question that I'll sort of use to just whet the appetite here that I know that Bill is going to take up, is a question that we had about whether women are naturally better suited to raise children than men. There's been a lot of debate about the role of women in the election.

And we wanted to kind of see just a basic question about -- you know, really it's about gender essentialism, all right. So if you read the question carefully, women are naturally better suited to raise children than men. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Among all Americans -- well, let me do women first. Among all Americans -- and these are women by age cohorts. So a majority of women agree with this statement, but not a large majority, 54 percent. And you can see that these numbers don't move a lot across age cohorts until you get to seniors, right, then it jumps up to about two-thirds of women agreeing with the statement among seniors.

Now sort of -- let you take just a minute to anticipate where men are on this question before I hit the slide, but I think you'll be surprised. They're not much different on this question. So among all Americans, they're dead on. So it's 54 percent of men. Among younger age groups -- under 50 anyway, you see very, very little difference. These are not statistically significant differences here. And then you see some -- you know, they go up with women. The biggest gender difference is the age cohort 50 to 64, but by the time you get to seniors they kind of come back together again. Here are the seniors. All right, so one last slide here that kind of looks ahead to voter engagement, and then I'll turn it over to Bill Galston.

You know, one question is always what would the electorate look like if everyone voted, right, versus the people that actually do? And there's all this debate about

who counts as a likely voter and who's likely to turn out. So we'll just kind of take these a couple at a time. One thing to say about the unaffiliated, I've mentioned that they're the fastest growing group in the American religious landscape. They are slightly less likely to vote than the general population. So they shrink a little bit if you compare them to the general population, they're 19 percent of the general population; they're only 16 percent of voters. A little bit of a drop off here.

If we look at -- this group is non-Christian, so Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, no difference really there. If we look at the group of minority Christians, you'll see some drop off here. That minority Christians slightly less likely to vote than others. And if you look at the group of white Christians, you'll see the opposite, right. That white Christians are slightly more likely to turn out and vote. So they make up slightly less than a majority of all Americans. They make up 56 percent of likely voters, so they're kind of overrepresented.

The white Christians are over represented. So if you kind of go back to the Romney coalition, Obama coalition thing, what you see is that among likely voters, Romney's actually got a little bit of a turnout advantage here because his base is sort of more likely to turn out than Obama's base. So I'll stop there and hopefully whet your appetite for some questions and set the table well for Bill. And let Bill come up and dive in a little bit.

MR. GALSTON: Well thanks, Robbie. You get the fast talking award and I'll get the short talking award because as you can hear, laryngitis has just about robbed me of my voice and it disappeared entirely last night. I'm going to drill down for just a few minutes on three topics of particular interest to me in this report. E.J. noted in his introduction that I studied political polarization, but that was a matter for "another day". Wrong. It's a topic for today because --

MR. DIONNE: (off mic) relationship with the safety net.

MR. GALSTON: -- in fact I guess was illustrating the maxim that if all you

have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail, I was really struck by the illumination that this study cast on the broader question of partisan and ideological polarization in the United States. As you know, there's been a big scholarly debate, A, how polarized are we and B, are we more polarized than we used to be and my answer to those two questions is very and yes. We can't really speak to the second question based on these data, but we can sure speak to the first. And let me just show you three slides to illustrate the extent of partisan in ideological polarization on the kinds of values questions that were explored in this survey.

First, partisanship. Just about any -- and a matter of fact, any social issue you look at there are very, very large gaps between what republicans think about these questions and what democrats think about these questions. You know, some of these gaps are more than 40 percentage points. These are not just statistical differences; these are value chasms between the two political parties. What about ideology? Same thing. As a matter of fact, on average gaps between liberals and conservatives are even wider than the gaps between democrats and republicans.

By the way, for those of you who are frantically scribbling, you can find these two charts and the one I'm about to present on pages 69, 70, and 71 of your report respectively, so you can calm down. And you know, here's a case study that combines partisanship and ideology in one topic area that we've spent a little bit of time talking about in the past few years, namely Obama Care. And as you can see, whether you divide it by partisanship or ideology, you get chasm sized gaps once again. So I would say there's no other way to read these data on these questions which have become very, very significant in American political debate, we are badly divided and deeply divided as a country.

Does that mean that we are doomed to suffer through all of these debates interminably? Not necessarily. There are divisive social issues in American politics that in living memory have been resolved by near total consensus. A couple are interracial marriage

and the legal availability of contraception. 50 years ago, both were intensely controversial. Now the controversy has virtually disappeared. So what about today's? One leading indicator is the attitude of different age cohorts and roughly speaking, if you can see big differences between older and younger Americans, then you can expect that over time the attitudes that prevail among younger Americans will become the dominant attitudes because those bearing the others will disappear from the scene.

And we can predict exactly how quickly demographically. Conversely, if attitudes are or less the same across age cohorts, you can pretty much predict that the debate will be interminable, or at least that there's no end in sight. And that's a reasonably good description of the difference between same sex marriage as a social issue and abortion as a social issue. So if you ask the young adults about same sex marriage, 68 percent are in favor of it. If you ask retirees, 31 percent. You can guess who's going to win this debate in the long run. If you ask the oldest Americans whether they think abortion is morally acceptable, only 40 percent say yes.

When you ask 18 to 29 year olds, only 42 percent say yes. There is no cohort sorting on that issue which means that we have pretty good reason to believe that a generation from now, unless something very dramatic happens, we're going to be having the same debate. Whether it's in exactly the same terms, I can't tell you, but the debate will not go away. But that's topic number one. Topic number two, African Americans. And the picture that this survey paints of African American religiosity and attitudes on social issues and the interplay between them is really fascinating.

Very quickly, here is some of the highlights. 80 percent of African Americans say that religion is either very important in their lives or the single most important thing in their lives. That's a very, very high number. 83 percent of African Americans say that the bible is "the word of God". 70 percent of African Americans say that the bible is to be taken literally

word for word. 79 percent say that religious belief is necessary for morality. To lead a moral life you must be a believer. And 76 percent affirm the following proposition: if enough people had a personal relationship with God, social problems would take care of themselves.

There's a gap of almost 25 percentage points between what African Americans think on that issue and what white Americans think of that issue. So this is a picture of theological traditionalism. Indeed, theological literalism of a protestant kind. Okay. But then when you compare black Protestants and white evangelicals on social and economic issues, you know, there's a chasm. So when you ask for example, whether welfare represents a response to genuine needs or is just a kind of scamming of the system, 32 percent of white evangelicals say that it's a response to genuine needs and the rest think that people are just ripping off the system.

For black Protestants, 60 percent say it's a response to genuine needs. 62 percent versus 32 percent. And there's a gap of more than 30 percentage points on the question of whether aid to the poor creates a culture of dependency. Black Protestants, 30 percentage points less likely to say that than white evangelicals. Now 78 percent of African Americans affirm the proposition the primary cause of America's problems is an economic system that results in continuing inequality and poverty. Now I would point out 76 percent said that these problems would go away if we had personal relationship with God, and now 78 percent that the principle cause of these social problems is you know, an economic system that produces this inequality.

You can put those two propositions together if you work really hard, but I think it's fair to say that there is a tension in the African American community between very traditional personalized religiosity on the one hand and a much more structuralist understanding of social problems on the other as applied to one in the same set of problems. And I think that it would be really interesting to have an intense conversation to see how

thoughtful members, faithful members of the African American community wrestle with this tension in their own thinking. Finally and most briefly, women. Robbie has already presented the basic findings here. Let me just tell you why I pulled this out.

When we were discussing this question designing the survey, I had a hypotheses and that is that two generations of a vigorous modern feminist movement plus the predominance of academic views of gender roles as socially and culturally constructed would undermine traditional conceptions of men and women within families at least as applied to the rearing of children. But as we saw that just hasn't happened. The question was designed to tease out the difference between what Robbie called, gender essentialism on the one hand the thesis of social construction on the other because the question reads I quote again, "women are naturally better suited to raise children than are men. Not by social convention, naturally".

As you've heard, 54 percent affirmed that proposition, equal percentages of men and women. Partisanship, ideology, race, and education are less influential than one might have expected. There are some significant gaps between those with a high school education or less and the rest of the population. There's an outlier group, white women who've never been married. But I guess one of the most significant things about the findings in this area is signs of ambivalence all around. Very few people were really, really sure about their positions on this question. The vast majority said that they were mostly in favor of that proposition or mostly rejected it.

This suggests to us that each of the sides to this very interesting discussion finds something to consider and take seriously in the views of the other. Still and this is my conclusion, the persistence of this very traditional essentialist understanding of gender differences despite the profound question in women's economic roles is striking and we think significant. But exactly what it means is not easy to tell and we've had vigorous internal

discussions and I suspect that these findings will probably provoke a somewhat broader discussion as indeed they should. Thank you very much.

MR. DIONNE: Now, thank you so much, Bill. I'm going to welcome the rest of the panel here and I'm just going to speak of a couple of matters. We did in those internal discussions that Bill spoke about, ponder the idea of having a test question which would go, women are naturally better suited to do almost anything than men. My friend Corinne and I discussed this so we could determine whether this was a particular finding or a broader finding. And I do appreciate the fact that on that question, Bill underscored that a vast majority of people did not either completely agree or completely disagree. There's a lot of struggle over this question.

MR. GALSTON: But we also toyed with the idea that when people read the question, they interpreted it to mean that women are better suited to raise children than they are to raise men. A proposition for which I think some evidence exists.

MR. DIONNE: Yeah. The other think I just want to underscore before I make my two points bringing together Robbie's presentation and Bill's, is to ponder this about the democratic and republican religious coalitions, which is that the republican coalition as was clear in Robbie's presentation is relatively homogenous. The democratic coalition actually includes the most and the least religious groups in the country, the most religious group being African Americans and the least religious group being those varieties of secular and religiously unaffiliated. And I think that explains a lot about how these issues are discussed and probably creates a lot of, this is a political science term, *suris* for the Democratic party.

I just want to focus on two things. The first is what I thought in the light of the controversy of Governor Romney's comments about the 47 percent of the population who pay no federal taxes and were deemed as dependant on government programs, we found

fascinating shifts of opinion on this sort of question depending upon how the issue was framed for Americans. There was one question in the survey that Robbie alluded to, offered respondents a choice between two statements and I'll read both of them. The first was government policies aimed at helping the poor serve as a critical safety net which help people in hard times get back on their feet. So it's all about a safety net for people who need it.

The second choice, government policies aimed at helping the poor created cultural dependency where people are provided with too many handouts. So choice A, choice B. The pro safety net statement was favored overwhelmingly; 63 percent up to 32 percent. And so looking at that margin, you were not in the least bit surprised that President Obama is running commercials on the 47 percent. But then we asked a different question and it suggested how much the conversation changes simply with the introduction of the word welfare. The other question we asked is, I'll read it. In your view, are most people who receive welfare payments genuinely in need of help or are they taking advantage of the system?

And on that question, Americans were divided in almost equal halves. 44 percent said that welfare helped the genuinely needy and 46 percent said that welfare recipients were taking advantage of the system. And so I think you see right there in those two questions, a lot of clues about the nature of the debate you have heard on these matters and will hear in the next couple of weeks. And then I want to go back to the finding among Catholics. As many of you know over the last decade or more, American Catholics have engaged in a vigorous debate that is not so much about the church's formal positions on issues as it is over which aspects of Catholic teaching should be given priority in the public debate.

Conservative Catholics with growing support in an increasingly conservative bishop's conference have argued that the focus should be on abortion and other right to life

issues and opposition to gay marriage. More recently as Robbie mentioned, a campaign for religious liberties sparked by opposition to the contraception requirements under the new healthcare law, has consumed a great deal of the church's and particularly the bishop's energy. Progressive Catholics have argued that the church's social teaching with its emphasis on economic justice and a concern for the poor should be at the heart of the church's public mission.

Many progressives have expressed concern that while the bishop still formally endorsed the church's traditional social justice agenda which in conventional terms is broadly progressive, the church's energy has been concentrated on abortion. And we've seen this conflict play out in the fight between the Vatican and American nuns. We've seen quite different statements from nuns on the bus and some of the bishops. So this is a very live issue. When we were putting together this survey, we wanted to be very careful. We did a lot of work on the question that we asked and we had a lot of discussion because we wanted -- two things that we cared about. One was that the question be fair and not be loaded one way or the other and the other is to present the choice as it is presented in this argument which is again, not a question of where people stand on the particular issue, but what the priority should be.

And so this is what we did. We have respondent's two choices and we asked to pick one even if neither was exactly right. The first choice was in its statements about public policy the Catholic Church should focus more on social justice and the obligation to help the poor even if it means focusing less on issues like abortion and the right to life. The second choice the reverse. In its statements about public policy the Catholic church should focus more on issues like abortion and the right to life even if it means focusing less on social justice and the obligation to the poor. So we felt that gave a pretty clear choice of priorities.

And as Robbie showed, it was very striking that by a 2 to 1 margin, 60 to 31 percent Catholics overall picked the social justice answer, the priority of social justice. But I thought it was particularly striking that not only did those Catholics who attended church monthly or yearly or attended seldom or never in the course of the year, not only did they choose social justice, but weekly church attenders chose social justice over the right to life issues by a 15 point margin; 51 to 36 percent. I think this should lead to a great deal of discussion inside the church. It was also striking by the way, that even more conservative Catholics included a very large social justice cohort.

Among self prescribed conservatives, 46 percent chose social justice, 44 percent chose the right to life issues. Among republicans the split was 47 percent social justice, 40 percent the right to life. And it won't surprise you that democrats on the other hand were social justice choosers; 70 percent to 22 percent. On this one by the way, there was absolutely no gender gap. Men and women were equally inclined to -- chose the same way. And you can find this chart by the way, I should have said this at the beginning, on page 61. And so we hope that will provoke some discussion.

Incidentally we had a very large sample. A large part of the sample because they're a large part of the American religious landscape or ex Catholics, who constituted as I remember, 12 percent of the survey. Am I right about that Robbie? Yeah, 12 percent were actually ex Catholics. They were social justice Catholics by 70 -- or I guess they were social justice ex Catholics, but they picked social justice with I think it was 76 percent on that question. Now just to underscore the fact, this does not mean that all those church attenders disagree with the church on abortion, this is a question of priorities. And so I would refer you to a chart on page 64 of the report that I'm just going to briefly go through right now.

It's clear the bishop's campaign on religious liberty has had some effect on regular Catholic Church attenders. If you'll look at the little box where the questions is --

those who say that the right to religious liberty is being threatened in America. 70 percent of Catholics who attend church once a week or more say yes to that versus 50 percent and 45 percent to those less inclined to attend. I'm going to leave birth control for last to the right there. On this question of whether religiously affiliated organizations should be required to provide contraception, you see an obvious difference among church attenders and not.

This is sort of a glass half empty, half full matter depending on which side of the fight you're on that the majority of regular church attenders say the organization shouldn't be required to provide contraception. On the other hand, that 43 percent of regular attenders still say, yes, I think is significant. We ask that question in two different ways in the course of (inaudible) and we split the sample because we want to make sure we were asking the question fairly. So we added to half the sample asking whether these organizations should be required to provide contraception even if they have religious objections.

In the survey overall that made no difference. Indeed, adding the religious objections slightly increased support for providing contraception and I think was just a glitch as to -- not a glitch, but just slight composition differences between the two samples. Although maybe some of the angry more secular folks said, yes, we really want to do it now. But the one place it made a slight difference as you can see from this chart, is when you introduce the religious objections there was a slight decrease in the number of proportion of church attending Catholics who supported the contraception requirement.

I would note the difference between saying that abortion is morally acceptable and saying as to whether it should be legal in all or most cases. Church attending Catholics are clearly very much right to life in their own views, but so are Catholics who attend church only monthly or yearly. The little box 23, 38, 52, 23 percent of church attending regular attenders say abortion is morally acceptable. Only 38 percent of those who attend occasionally, about 52 percent who attend seldom or never. But there is a gap between

views on this and views on whether abortion should be legal or not. The gap is especially big in this chart as this chart shows among Catholics who attend church monthly or less. But even among regular church attenders only 23 percent say abortion is morally acceptable, 35 percent still say it should be legal in all or most cases.

You see similar splits on same sex marriage and I will get to the death penalty in a moment. What is quite clear is the one area where the Catholic faith will have differences with the church and this is not surprising, is contraception. If you look at the chart on the page in the top right hand corner, 90 percent of Catholics who attend only monthly say that artificial birth control is morally acceptable, 86 percent who attend seldom or never, but also 70 percent of regular Catholic Church attenders say that contraception is morally acceptable.

The last point I want to make concerns the death penalty because this is one place where I think you find a fascinating Catholic difference if you will, particularly among political conservatives. Whereas the total sample split 47 to 46 percent in favor of life without parole over the death penalty as a punishment for murder. Catholics overall picked life without parole by a 52 to 41 percent margin. And what's especially striking is that Catholics who attend church once a week or more are more strongly opposed to the death penalty. They were 57, 37 for life without parole over the death penalty than were Catholics who attended church less frequently. In conventional terms, in other words, if church attendance made Catholics "conservative" on abortion, it made them more liberal on the death penalty.

And the last point on this difference is I was struck by -- I looked at sort of conservatives and liberals and I asked Robbie to run these numbers for me. Catholic conservatives favored life without parole over the death penalty 51 to 44 percent. But non-Catholic conservatives, these numbers were more than reversed. Only 37 percent favored life without parole while 56 percent favored the death penalty. So it is quite clear that one

area where a Catholic church teaching on life is having a substantial impact that kind of flies in the face of some of our conventional notions of politics and that's where I will stop. And if I can find them, yes, there they are.

In this paper we are really, if I may use the term blessed, to have a very distinguished panel to respond to this survey. And I'll introduce them briefly in the order in which they will speak. Melissa Deckman is the Louis L. Goldstein Professor of Public Affairs and Chair of the Political Science Department at Washington College. She's also an affiliated scholar with PRRI. Her areas of specialty include religion in politics, state and local politics, and women and politics. Her current research focuses on the ways that religion, gender, and politics intersect. She's a graduate of Saint Mary's College in Maryland and received her PhD in Political Science from American University.

And John -- I should know this. It's Sides, correct? Yes. John Sides is an Associate Professor of Political Science at George Washington University. Or is it The George Washington University, I believe they like to call it. But maybe I'm thinking of Ohio State. Everybody's mind is on Ohio. He studies public opinion and American elections. He is the coauthor of a book about the 2012 campaign, *The Gamble*. He's written a textbook on campaigns, scholarly articles on campaign strategies and its effect, attitudes towards immigration, and other topics. He upped founding a tribute to the *Monkey Cage*, a political science blog that lots of people read and many should. He received his BA from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a PhD from the University of California at Berkeley.

And lastly, Michelle Dillon, a Professor and Chair of the Department of Sociology at the University of New Hampshire. She is therefore met more candidates than almost anyone on this panel. Her research focuses on the place of religion in contemporary society with a particular interest in issues of identity and authority among Catholics and the

moral politics surrounding abortion and gay rights. How perfect is that for this survey. She received her PhD in Sociology from the University of California at Berkeley and BA and Master's degrees in Sociology from University College Dublin. So we'll start with Melissa, and again, thank you all so much for joining us today.

(Recess)

MS. DECKMAN: Thank you E.J. And I'd like to say thank you to the Brookings Institution and also to the folks at the Public Religion Research Institute for inviting me today. It's a pleasure to be here. I'd also like to say congratulations to Robbie and Dan and PRRI for another really interesting, innovative study about values in American politics.

Well, today I'm going to focus on three different aspects of religion and politics in the American Values Survey. First I want to talk a little bit about religion and the vote in 2012, including the survey's findings with respect to the presidential candidates own religious beliefs. I want to talk also about attitudes, about religious liberty, and lastly a little bit about religion and the Tea Party.

First, looking at the religious coalitions of Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. The American Values Survey shows that the religious lines have really been drawn in the sand in this election when it comes to vote choice. There's really not any discernible movement among religious coalitions in 2008 with the exception of two key swing groups, Catholics and white mainline Protestants. By contrast though Obama actually improved his standing among many religious groups compared with John Kerry in 2004, especially by drawing even higher levels of support among religious minorities such as Black Protestants, Latino Catholics, Latino Protestants, and of course the unaffiliated. The survey here today shows that Obama's standing among these latter groups is really firm. It's holding quite firmly. Whereas, just under four in ten of Obama's religious coalition survey are white Christians. By contrast of course we see Mitt Romney's religious coalition very similar to

John McCain's in 2008. He continues to draw much of his support from the white religious voters. In the electorate eight and ten likely Romney voters identify as white Christians. His support among the unaffiliated voters of color is very, very small, even minuscule among black Protestants. I think I saw one survey this summer that showed that zero black women said they would vote for Mitt Romney. Catholics and white mainline Protestants however remain up for grabs. We're going to hear more about Catholics later from Michele. But I think it is noteworthy that white mainline Protestants now are leaning back toward Mitt Romney versus Obama in the study here, especially because Obama had made some inroads into this voting bloc in 2008, especially among less observant mainline Protestants. Now whether this movement back toward Romney among mainline Protestants hurts Obama might be mitigated by the fact that according to recent studies mainline Protestants, white mainline Protestants have actually reduced their numbers in the overall population. Just in four years they've gone down from 18 percent of the U.S. population to 15 percent of the U.S. population. You can't even find a white mainline Protestant on the U.S. Supreme Court these days. Their presence in this society definitely is becoming smaller. One other intriguing finding in the study concerns how voters compare their candidate's religious beliefs with their own religious beliefs. And remember how we all wrote these articles and talked about how evangelicals will never embrace Romney because he's a Mormon.

I'm guilty of that, too. We had those conversations. Well, it turns out, not so much. Evangelical Protestants really, really, really don't like Barack Obama. So we see that among all of these sizable religious groups Romney has the largest support among white evangelical Protestants.

However what strikes me about their data here is that just 55 percent of white evangelical Protestants say that Romney's religious beliefs are somewhat or very different from their own, just 45 percent. In fact white evangelical Protestants are far more likely to

say that Barack Obama's religious faith differs from their own. And Obama of course is the only Protestant on the ticket, right. There's two Catholics, there's a Mormon, and Barack Obama here. So I think what this data is showing is there are really these close political ties between conservative evangelicals and Mormons are really being solidified in this election. I think there's an analogy to be drawn to the strong political alliance that conservative Catholics and white evangelicals developed as part of the Religious Right first in the early 1980s as they had the shared set of conservative values about abortion and gay rights despite their own significant theological differences.

I want to turn next to the findings with respect to religious liberty. The extent to which Americans in their study express support for the idea that religious liberty is threatened in the U.S. was a bit surprising to me. A solid majority, 57 percent of Americans say that they completely agree or mostly agree that religious liberty is threatened here. And a majority of Americans hold this view despite their finding that 56 percent of Americans support the Obama administration's contraception mandate, which of course many conservative Catholics and Bishops have viewed as a direct violation of religious liberty. So why is there a disconnect here? Well, the survey findings show that the position about religious liberty is colored by partisanship. Republicans more likely to be this -- and religious liberties under attack than are Democrats. But of course this is also colored by religious tradition. Among religious voters by far white evangelical Protestants are the most likely to completely agree with this notion that religious liberty is under attack. 44 percent completely agree with this assessment. And that's almost twice as many as white mainline Protestants, Catholics, and almost three times as many black Protestants and of course unaffiliated voters. I think what's really driving this perception that religious liberty is under attack, especially among evangelicals, is not the contraception mandate per se, but instead this pervasive view that the free exercise rights and First Amendment speech rights of

conservative Christians are being trampled upon in this country moving us further from what they deem to be our "Godly heritage". I mean just take a look at recent events this week in Texas with the controversy over the cheerleaders and the banners and Bible statements here. Or to take the more long-standing view among conservative Christians about the so-called war on Christmas, right. This idea that the popular culture in the media and schools are watering down Christmas into some sort of generic holiday or winter celebration. I'd say my favorite response to that argument was Jon Stuart a few weeks ago when he was having this mock debate with Bill O'Reilly said, if you think Christmas isn't celebrated in this country as Christmas, walk a mile in Hanukkah's shoes. That was his response there. Well, the only group in the survey other than white evangelical Protestants to express higher levels of complete agreement with the idea that the rights of religious liberty are being threatened here in the U.S. is the Tea Party. 51 percent of Tea Party members completely agree with this notion, and another 31 percent of Tea Party members mostly agree with this idea. So fully 82 percent of Tea Party members, self-identified Tea Party members, say that religious rights are being threatened in this country here.

And it's that finding about religious liberty and the Tea Party that brings me to my last set of comments about the Tea Party and the Religious Right.

So when the Tea Party first emerged in the political lexicon so to speak in 2009, it touted itself as a largely libertarian movement that had a laser beam focus on the economy, on the national debt, on limiting the size and scope of government. And these views of course steeped in a very conservative interpretation of the Constitution. Many Tea Party leaders of course would routinely downplay any role that social issues would play in their movement. As someone who's studying women in the Tea Party right now I distinctly remember in 2009 when Amy Kremer, who is now the head of the Tea Party Express, was on the View and she was questioned by Joy Behr about her views on abortion. So what does

the Tea Party feel about abortion? And Amy Kremer said, oh, no, social issues, we don't go there. We don't go there. Well, I sort of suspected at the time that the Tea Party may just really be the Religious Right with a new label. So the data here I think really sort of get at that notion, support that notion. It's striking the conservative social positions held by self-identified Tea Party members here in the country. For example Robbie's data find 70 percent of Tea Party members oppose same sex marriage compared with 73 percent of white evangelical Protestants. On abortion 62 percent of Tea Party members think abortion should be illegal in all or most circumstances. That comports with 64 percent white evangelical Protestants. Both groups, white evangelicals and Tea Party members also show high levels of support for the notion that both abortion and sex between adults of the same gender are morally wrong. So clearly most Tea Party activists are not libertarian when it comes to attitudes about private behavior. However, where the Tea Party and white evangelicals differ in this report concerns economic policy and support for the social safety net. As E.J. and Bill write in the last section of this report, there is some moderation among white evangelical Protestants with respect to economic policy. So one figure for example. 46 percent of white evangelicals disagree with the idea that we should increase taxes on those making more than \$250,000, which of course is a key principle for the Republican Party right now and the Tea Party. Whereas 68 percent of Tea Party members disagree with that notion there. Also white evangelicals are less supportive of repealing Obama Care compared to Tea Party members there. So it would be interesting to see in the future if the Tea Party is able to convince white evangelical Protestants and frankly other religious Americans and the unaffiliated that conservative economic policy is also moral policy. And last note, in years many evangelical leaders have really tried to promote conservative fiscal policy as pro family, right. Lower taxes are good for families. Some have even provided biblical justifications for the free market. Although I have to say I do wonder what version of the New Testament

David Barton, he's the founder of WallBuilders is using when he says that Jesus would oppose the minimum wage. He does. But as the data show here, evangelicals and frankly unaffiliated voters and voters of all other religious faiths really aren't as conservative on economic issues. So I'll stop there. (Applause).

MR. JONES: Thank you so much.

John.

MR. SIDES: Thanks again to E.J. and to Robbie and to Bill for having me. I just want to say first something about the quality of the survey. We live in a world in which CNBC can put up a poll on this website and ask who won a Presidential debate. Completely nonrandom group of people can register their approval. CNBC will tweet that out. Reporters will re-tweet that out, and people will take that seriously as a scientific exercise in the measurement of public opinion. By contrast here we have a poll that interviews in English and Spanish, cell phones and land lines, plans to recontact people after the election. Three thousand people in its sample. This is what science looks like. And so I think PRRI and its sponsors deserve a lot of credit for really continuing to hold up I think what survey methodology really can do and how effective it can be.

I want to sort of address three topics in this report, a Trinity of topics if you will. And the first of these is whether people should view this report as good news for Democrats. And I think the two findings that jump out in this regard is that the two fastest increasing populations among religious groups in this country are Hispanic Catholics and the unaffiliated, both of which are groups that lean Democratic. Could these groups be part of an emerging Democratic majority, to quote from the title of a book that unfortunately was published 20 years ago now, I think? And though the broader question is whether the religious coalition of the Republican Party, which is 75 percent white Christian, is that really a sustainable coalition over the long term with fewer and fewer white Christians in this country.

And I think while it is a challenge for the Republican Party in the long term, the real question is how long is the long term. As Robbie showed you and the report illustrates there's lower levels of political engagement among Hispanic Catholics and Hispanics generally and among the religiously unaffiliated and young people generally who are disproportionately unaffiliated. And so it's not quite clear that their growth in numerical terms translates to an additional number of votes or how quickly that will take the place. So I'm just very wary of any argument that sort of suggests that we're headed towards a realignment in favor of one or the other parties. There is a real end of history flavor to those kinds of arguments. And I think if history tells us anything, it's amazing how quickly the end of it becomes a substantially new beginning.

A second question speaks to many of the findings in the report, and it's this. Do religious people actually think about politics religiously? And if so how, and if not why? There's a tendency when we look at survey data that's broken down by categories of people to assume that any differences across those categories must be due to the categories themselves. So if there's a difference between Catholics and Protestants, let's say, that's because of religion. But we really don't have any way of knowing that for sure when we're just looking at a relationship between only one factor and any political attitude. And I think many facts in the report oftentimes suggest that people don't really think about politics religiously even if they are religious people. There is a real lack of doctrinal orthodoxy in these data. Maybe if you want a bumper sticker version of this, we'll call this The Gospel of Who, because you look at the way in which religious groups reason and it doesn't really comport with either, what their theological ideas should instruct them or in fact sort of what the casual or informal sort of political linkages between theology and politics should tell them. So if you're a Catholic, let's say, and you go to mass every week, go to mass on Sunday and look to your left and look to your right and then look at these people and think, one of these

people is voting for Barack Obama. That's what the data says. 37 percent of all churchgoing Catholics once a week or more are voting for Barack Obama. That's 2 to 1 in favor of Romney. That's a real tendency. But yet there is this group that's not exactly 0 that's not doing this. Why is that the case? There's a lack of -- I don't think people necessarily translate their religious precepts or at least how we think of their religious precepts as applying to politics. They don't necessarily translate that to their choices. That speaks to a second idea in this category which is what we might call powerless pulpits, or if you prefer in the Catholic sense a powerless pope.

I think E.J. and Bill have done a very good job mapping the extent to which many religious people do not subscribe to the viewpoints that religious authorities suggest they should. And that may mean their own clergy members, my father actually one of them. He had more power at the pulpit than most ministers. But I attribute that more to his paternal authority than to his religious authority judging by the number of times he glared at me from the pulpit when he caught me chit chatting with my friends in the middle of church. So lots of Catholics are okay with abortion. Many, many, many Catholics are okay with contraception, even though Catholics tend not to support the death penalty on average, many still do.

And then there's the social justice finding in terms of the priority of a church, social justice versus social issues. You know most Catholics are Nuns, not Bishops, if you want to put it in that framework. So really this gets at an important question which no cross sectional survey can answer obviously which is how effectively are religious authorities able to transmit their understandings to parishioners. Is it because they're not talking about these things, or is it because cultural kinds of influences, let's say in terms of contraception, just override religious instruction which appears increasingly antiquated. How much political persuasion and mobilization is really going on in the pews. And this is a very much harder question to answer from a social science perspective because you have to sort of show up in

church and start measuring what kinds of messages people are actually hearing. But it's pretty clear that oftentimes those messages aren't getting through. Another way to think about this is there's a famous distinction that some Christians make, particularly evangelicals make, between being in the world or being of the world. And this comes from a passage in the Gospel of John which is my favorite Gospel for obvious reasons. And they want to think of themselves as living in the world that not being of the world because they're focused on the world to come. So they're not really sort of part of this culture in some sense.

Well, I think what the survey shows is just how many religious people are really of the world. They look and act and think like people as supposed to like religious people.

A final point which I'll sort of entitle Priests or Parties. This speaks to the presentation that Bill gave with regard to political polarization. What you see in these data often time and time again is that Americans are much more divided by party than they are by religion. That's particularly true with even topics like contraception or attitudes towards religious institutions and things like that. This is why evangelical Protestants embrace a Mormon, to use the example that Melissa gave. And what we don't have in the report but what I suspect is true is if you start breaking down religious groups by party and comparing the views of Democratic and Republican Catholics, Democratic and Republican Protestants, evangelical, mainline, and so forth, what you'll see is what distinguishes them is not Protestantism or Catholicism. What distinguishes them is being Democrat or being Republican.

To connect this to the previous point, if you think about what kinds messages and cues people are responding to in politics, one tendency is to assume that it's the Pope Benedict or whomever that's providing these for religious people. I'm going to suggest to you if it's a choice between Benedict and Barack or Benedict and Boehner, bet on

the Baracks and the Boehners of the world. Political leaders seem to be doing a better job providing these kinds of messages than religious authorities are often doing.

Last point concerns this gender finding. My casual observation is that almost anything about gender roles is almost intrinsically the most interesting thing that we encounter in politics. The stories that New York Times airs on this will almost always end up in the most email and most widely read articles. So I want to take this question that they asked and I want to sort of put two spins on it. The first is I want to encourage you to think a little bit about what a survey respondent might be hearing when they're asked about the word naturally, as in who is naturally sort of predisposed or whatever the question wording was to take care of children. Does naturally in the eyes of a survey respondent mean biologically, or does naturally mean just in terms of the nature of the circumstances that men and women typically confront. Whereby men are sort of more the wage earners in the family, breadwinners. Women less so despite the changes in that regard. So I don't want people to come away with that question thinking that people are basically saying that there is something in like the DNA of men and women that really drives us. Maybe for some response that's true. Maybe for some it's not.

Second point. The fact that a majority of Americans suggest that there's some sort of greater ability of women to take care of children doesn't make that attitude a distinctly political attitude. And I'm going to show you why that's the case. I pulled this up on my phone while Bill was talking. This is a question that's been asked since 1972 as part of the American National Election Study. Imagine you are a survey respondent. They still interview in person, all right. So you're handed a card. There's seven positions on this card you can put yourself on. And the endpoints of those seven positions are anchored. And the first endpoint says, some people feel that women should have an equal role with men in running a business industry in government. Other endpoint. Others feel that women's place

is in the home. Where would you place yourself on this scale or haven't you thought much about it. Not that question was written obviously in 1972. So the wording sounds a little old to us now. But let me just describe to you the change in the responses to that question.

In 1972 only 31 percent of people were willing to put themselves at that sort of furthest point closest to women have a role with men in business or a place and so forth. Only 31 percent.

In 2008 64 percent said that. Now again I'm not saying that question wording is the perfect wording. It's not. But let's be clear. When people say that women might be good at raising children, I don't think that means that they think that as a political matter women should be making that choice or cannot make any other choice or that we should be encouraging women to do that, or that men are so much better at doing all the other stuff in the world like business and government and so forth. So I think Bill used a very nice word that describes I think Americans attitude towards those questions: ambivalence. On the one hand this, but on the other hand that. And I think this question compared with that question helps to convey some of the nature of that ambivalence. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you very much.

And now Michele. And now to Michele. And just so you know, we will be opening it up to comments and questions right after.

MS. DILLON: Good afternoon. And again I would like to echo my thanks to the Brookings Institution for the wonderful invitation and to have access to all this data from Robbie and for the comments already that we've had this afternoon. I'm also going to comment on the women question because when I first read the report on Friday I said to myself, why does he even ask this question because it's going to get a lot of publicity. I actually don't see ambivalence with the answers. I see that women and men look around and they know whether women work in the home or outside the home, they still have to do the

child minding. So whether it's natural, I think it's an admirable objective to try to unpack the essentialism from the constructionism. But I think you look around, women are still relatively absent from politics, from Fortune 500 companies, and the Catholic Church, leadership positions, etcetera, et cetera. And when women are at work, they're also doing double shifts at home as all the sociological evidence even today continues to show.

But anyway there is a huge amount of data here. It's fascinating, so many patterns. And I'm going to just comment a few general points. First of all as they highlight at the very beginning, very few people actually give priority to values questions. Over the last eight or ten years a lot of people in the media have made a lot of emphasis of the fact that all these values voters -- interestingly a lot of these values voters seem to be of a particular kind of values, generally conservative values. But what we see really here and I know we're in a deep recession. But even if it wasn't a deep recession I don't think that percentages would say that they're really abortion or same-sex marriage are big issues of priority for them would be any much greater. So I sometimes think even though we like to talk about values because we get to do events like this and write books and things about values. But I think for most people values are not something that's totally on the tips of their fingers, on the tops of the minds all the time. And even when they are, most voters are not single issue voters. So they do care about a number of things simultaneously.

I do want to echo again the admiration for the survey methodology. This is something that social science loves and uses. I love it myself and use it. But I also do want to caution that as we see what some of the tensions in the data, sometimes the tension is because people really do struggle morally or values wise with particular questions. But sometimes it's just that people get into a certain zone and say yes, or strongly agreed. And so there often is little bits of contradiction that make us a little nervous. So I don't want you to over interpret the answer to any one or two questions in any survey, including one like this

which is of a very high scientific standard.

A general point. Didn't mention the term today, but it's in the report that the churn, as they mention, the flux in the religious landscape. And I was somewhat surprised to see the re-invocation of the term winners and losers in the religious marketplace. I feel I have to comment on this. This is the Brookings institution, and Robbie didn't invent this term. The Pew used it and indeed several of my colleagues in sociology use it. When we talk about winners and losers it always leaves me wondering when is the end game? There's going to be winners and losers on November 6, and there are winners and losers in the football game, and I think the Redskins just lost, actually. But the point is that when it comes to religion, I'm not sure where do we know who really won at the end. And so I really think that it makes for exciting headlines. But I'd love to see reputable institutions not use this term because we eventually are going to be able to say, well, the Episcopalians punted and the Catholics won in overtime or something. I'm not sure where we're going. So that's just -- and then related to that.

MR. JONES: That's CYO basketball, by the way.

MS. DILLON: CYO. That's tuff.

Related to that of course is often a lot of glee. Anytime you go anywhere people say, oh, all these ex-Catholics walking around, and there may even be one or two or fifty in this room because there's always a lot of emphasis put on the fact that the Catholic Church has this higher attrition rate. But in fact the Protestant attrition rate isn't that much lower. And I think there's complications here. The Catholic tradition is a very different tradition where leaving makes a lot of sense in many cases, but also it doesn't mean that people are still not affiliated in some way. So this use of the word affiliation is really just denominational attachment. And as your data and other data show, a lot of people who are no longer calling themselves a particular denominational identity nonetheless actually go to

church. Some Catholics who are no longer Catholic go to mass on Sundays, and many others believe in God and afterlife and other things. So that's just sort of a general comment about this because this winners and losers language and the fact that so many Catholics leave does get a lot of attention. And of course usually that's when people talk about the people leaving the Catholic Church.

Then they say, well, of course the Catholic Church would basically be dead were it not for the Hispanics. And so we look to Hispanic immigration which of course not all Hispanics are Catholic, but a large proportion of them are Catholic. But my point again to that is that religion keeps on moving. All religious traditions are dynamic traditions. And so that we shouldn't be surprised that maybe some are leaving, but some new groups are coming in because the American Catholic Church would never have become what it has become had it not been for the immigrants from Europe in the 19th century.

So again I think a bigger picture of historical context is important so that we don't get too excited and take certain over interpretations. There's always flux in the sense that traditions and religious traditions, I would say in particular, and particularly Catholicism are living traditions. So there's dynamism there. And again another question that was asked which you didn't get a chance to talk about is asking people, regardless of their religious affiliation, do they think that their church should preserve tradition. Whether it should incorporate some modern changes, or whether it should adjust tradition. But really it's all of the above. And I would argue that Catholicism in particular is a tradition which has to be always in conversation with and in dialogue with its past. It's a long tradition. So within that one big tradition there's an awful lot of strands of variation and continuity and the discontinuity. And of course just this month we're celebrating the 50th anniversary of the convocation of Vatican II.

Now many people -- at least some conservatives would argue that Catholic II

has been the beginning of the end of the Catholic Church. But I think most other Catholics would argue, including Cardinal or Pope Benedict has said that it's in continuity with the Catholic tradition. So we don't want to have an essentialism with gender roles. But we also want to have an essentialism when it comes to talk about religion. So that would just be a plea. I don't know that that's helpful. But I think if we understand that traditions are much more multifaceted, then would be much more open to see how they can appeal to us either in terms of politics or some other issue.

More specifically about Catholics and the election, as you said, John, if you're at a weekly mass or in the Catholic tradition somebody in that pre is going to be voting Catholic or voting for the democrats, I would argue --

MR. JONES: Some people don't make that distinction.

MS. DILLON: That's no longer the case I think. I think in fact it's an indictment of the Democratic Party that more of these weekly mass goers are not voting for Obama. And this is just I feel a misunderstanding of the Catholic Church that you have among political elites, perhaps the DNC in particular and also sometimes even the media elite. And I'm not somebody who normally is anti-elite. I feel I'm part of the elite. At the beginning of the Republican primary campaign there was an article in the New York Times talking about Newt Gingrich, that he was the new face of the Catholic Church, right. That he was the new Catholic politician. He was displacing the Ted Kennedy politician. That the social justice Ted Kennedy Democratic politician Catholic is no longer real. I said this is not true. And I think we all saw that not too many Catholics voted for either Newt Gingrich or Rick Santorum.

And they're voting for Romney in part because of social class issues. They don't want to pay higher taxes. Nonetheless the social justice emphasis that came up so clearly in the PRRI poll shouldn't be a surprise because since Bill, Antonio, and others have

been doing this service of Catholics since the early 1980s, social justice, the churches concern for the poor, this has been to the forefront of Catholics views of what it means to be Catholic. This is something that they value, right. And I think it's interesting certainly and it's fascinating when you see that these weekly churchgoers, many of them who are more conservative clearly than the monthly churchgoers, mass goers, will still give priority to the social justice tradition.

And one of the points that will also come out in response to this question was that Hispanic Catholics were more likely to say that the church leaders should focus on the right to life issues even if it means giving less attention to social justice. I would suggest that because you forced them into that choice, that's why so many opted for giving abortion or the right to life issue greater priority. In our study that we did last year with Bill D'Antonio and Mary Gautier where we had an oversample of Hispanics, yes, Hispanic Catholics are more likely than white Catholics to emphasize the church's teaching on abortion and taking it more seriously.

Nonetheless they overwhelmingly when you ask them very separate questions about do you support the Bishop's action on behalf of immigration reform. Do you support the Bishops effort to increase minimum wage kinds of things, overwhelmingly they endorse that view. So I think you can't force people. You have to in a survey. And we do that all the time in sociology. But they really want the social justice issues very much on the priority. And you talk about the generational differences. It's certainly true among the millennial generation which has far more Hispanics now than in the older generations because of immigration.

And in fact that's one of the divisions almost is that young Hispanic millennials are far more likely to emphasize the social justice tradition whereas all the white millennials are more indifferent to it. So I think that's something from a political point of view

that can come out more readily.

And also again this right to life. I mean I don't think actually that abortion is a polarizing issue in America. The data that you have shown is very consistent with all the polls since Roe v. Wade, right. There has been about 20 percent since '73, '74. About 20 percent of Americans. It ebbs and flows a little bit depending on what month you ask the questions are saying they're pro-life in all cases or opposed to abortion in all cases. There's a 20 percent who say they want abortion to be legal in all cases. And that is what 60 percent in the middle who say depending on the circumstances. Now I know it's an issue. People have spent a lot of money over it. There's a lots of lobbying. The Bishops have been very active on it. But American public opinion has really not shifted on that issue. And as you point out generationally the generations reproduce it because it is a difficult issue. It does raise important moral issues for people. Whereas of course with same-sex issues the momentum is clearly in favor of same-sex.

And that of course brings me to which I guess has to be my last point which is when the contraception issue came back on the news back in December and January this year, this was a huge surprise to anyone who was paying attention to what Catholics thought or did, right. Since the early 70s we know the Catholics have made up their minds that they can be good Catholics and use contraception. And they do use contraception as these data show and lots of other studies, 90 percent of Catholics believe there's no problem in using contraception including those who go to church often. I think in my assessment sociologically the bishops put their religious liberty and the contraception issue back as an issue because they avoid talking about it. Bishops don't talk from the altar about the sinfulness of using artificial contraception. There hasn't been a pastor letter or Encyclical on this since 1968.

And so that was just quite surprising in some sense that suddenly it becomes a big issue. And I think in part it was because we have certainly a new what I would call a

muscular authority in the Catholic leadership which is trying to reclaim some significance and credibility in the wake of the sex abuse scandal on the one hand. And at the same time seeing the momentum just as the Catholic Bishops lost on contraception, they are in a sense losing, if you want to use winners and losers. They're losing on the same sex issue. And so I think there's a very clever political framing to talk about in terms of religious liberty because religious liberty is a very symbolically significant term in the American culture and history.

But frankly I find it perplexing that so many first Americans, but particularly Catholics, actually say that they believe their religious liberty has been threatened. I would love to see a follow-up question when or how or in what way because I certainly for Catholics I agree with Melissa about evangelicals and biblical literalism and having your verses on your cheerleading materials. But for Catholics I have not seen any evidence that the religious liberty has been infringed on. And I think we have an increasing number of people who go to church weekly saying that, a, because they're going to be Republican and they're speaking merely as Republicans rather than as Catholics. But also because even in the most moderate of churches every week now for several months people have been saying, either praying. The priests are leading prayers that our religious liberty, the priests' religious liberty is being violated.

So I think it's a political use of a very iconic and significant term in the American culture. But it's really in a very clever perhaps political strategy on the part of the bishops. But it's not telling you very much about Catholicism or how it's practiced on the ground. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. JONES: Thank you.

So we're going to go to questions. Robbi had one comment, and I will have a brief confession and I want to answer one question before it's asked, and then we will go to questions. Robby.

SPEAKER: So just one comment. Since the religious liberty issue has come up, a couple of comments. We actually did ask a follow-up question in March. So when we polled on this we asked a similar religious liberty question. And then we asked a follow up of all those who said they did think it was under attack. We asked an open-ended question. Said, okay, can you tell us how or why? Exactly that question, and we let them say whatever they wanted to say. What was remarkable about that question is that only six percent of the respondents mentioned anything about the contraception mandate or HHS. What most of them were talking about was things like prayer in school, the 10 Commandments on public property, the clash in the civic space. It was these much older issues that we've been fighting about for decades about the place of religion in public space really that came up in those open-ended questions. So I think we've sort of seeing two things here. That religious liberty is absolutely a concern for Americans. And there's a sizable number that surveys show as having concerns about that.

But on the question of whether they're connecting that to something like contraception, I think the answer is clearly no. And that's why we see that despite those concerns about religious liberty a solid majority of Americans plus a solid majority of Catholics support the HHS mandate.

MR. JONES: Thank you very much.

First my confession. I just have to say I'm inclined to believe anything said with an Irish accent which creates real problems for me when I encounter two people from Ireland who disagree. But I thought the ring of social justice sounds best in an Irish accent. The question I wanted to answer in advance to is that you may ask why have we not discussed Jews, Muslims, or other groups here. And the answer is simply that not a sufficient number turn up in a survey of this sort to provide us with enough numbers to analyze. So we'd rather not comment on numbers when we know the date is not reliable.

Seems like a good practice. Robbie actually has done surveys with Jews. You need specific studies of groups partly because of where they are located geographically also.

Here's what I would suggest on questions. We have a mic going around. What I'd like to do is collect them. We will be Trinitarian, to pick up John's term. Let's do three at a time. And all the panelists don't have to answer every question. Whoever. You can either address it specifically to someone, or people can pick up different questions as they go. But we'll just do three at a time so we can get more people into the discussion. And you saw someone. Let's see. Was there a gentleman back there? And then why don't you bring the mic over to this gentleman, and then that lady in the back.

MR. BEARY: Washington Correspondent for *Europolitics*. Just a question on Catholic voters. And E.J. you mentioned that they are different in terms of their views on the death penalty. Is there any other issues that they purely differentiate from the overall American population?

MR. JONES: Thank you. That's a good question.

Let's bring a mic over to that lady.

This gentleman.

SPEAKER: Thank you. It would have been reasonable to hypothesize that at the beginning of this cycle that religious prejudice would keep even one of the evangelical Protestants from embracing Romney the way they have. Given that that hasn't happened, I'm wondering how much racial prejudice comes into play in the opposition of white evangelical Protestants to Obama. Now is there any data in this study or in any other studies that some of you may be aware of that speaks to that question?

MR. JONES: Thank you.

And then, please.

MS. DIGGLES: Hi. I'm Michelle Diggles, Third Way. I just

wanted to raise a question about the woman's natural role in raising children. Not so much a question but point out something interesting. In a recent USA Today poll they asked two questions. They asked respondents what do you think is a top issue for women. And then they asked what is the top issue for you. And they pulled out crosstabs by gender. Women overwhelmingly said abortion was the Women's issue, but it was near the bottom of the issues that were most important to them. So I think that question might actually have to do with how they read the question or heard rather than fundamental essentialist beliefs.

Thanks.

MR. JONES: Excellent. I have a couple of answers myself, but let me go to someone else first. Who wants to pick up any of those questions -- John?

MR. SIDES: Let me speak briefly to the question about racial prejudice and let me be very careful in how we address this question.

It is easy to find correlations between beliefs about black people and beliefs about Barack Obama. Many of the less favorable reviews of black people. The less favorable reviews of Barack Obama. The less favorable views you have of anything that Barack Obama is associated with, his health care plan, his dog. And I'm not joking. There's been a study. You can have the same dog, right. Picture of the same dog, but Obama, okay. And one condition of the experiment it was described as Barack Obama's dog and one condition of the experiment it was described as Ted Kennedy's dog. Why is this a good experiment? Because they actually both have the same kind of dog, a Portuguese water dog. That's how Barack Obama learned about the dog, from Ted Kennedy. He told him it's a great breed. It's hypoallergenic. Sasha or Malia needs a hypoallergenic dog, okay. People's attitudes towards black people are associated with their attitudes towards the dog when it was described as Obama's dog but not when it was described as Kennedy's dog. So the point is race is powerful. It touches lots of things. How much do we say that racial prejudice

is to blame for how well or badly Obama does. That is a harder question to answer.

I think the best that we can do is we can look at this correlation and we can look at it with survey data and we can look at it with Google search data to match searches for Obama plus, say, racially loaded terms like Nader or KKK with data on voting in the areas in which those Google searches were conducted. All of these studies basically suggest that if you were to sort of simulate worlds in which racial prejudice was lowered that Barack Obama would gain some votes. How many right wing in a hypothetical world here. Hypothetically one, two, three, the pins out what your counterfactual or your hypothetical is so I want to be clear about what that means. A correlation between an attitude like your feelings towards blacks and you and it towards Obama does not mean that is the only ingredient in your attitude towards Obama that is the primary ingredient in your attitude towards Obama. To say that people who have racial prejudice are less likely to support Obama. Is not to say that everyone who doesn't support Obama is racially prejudiced. I vote that distinction oftentimes gets lost and get three in trouble in orange county California when I made this argument of GW alumni. So orange county California being what it is. So that's the answer to your question. I think weather is located among whites evangelical Protestants is harder to say. They do manifest more racially conservative answers on some questions bad Vietnam War Constable dissecting in a general statement. As best as we can tell the author caveats I've tried to attach, race does costs the president something.

I'll just follow on real quickly in the answer of Romney. We've been tracking this very carefully over the last year and really asking a lot of questions around it. One of the very interesting patterns that we see is the going back into the fall if you put Romney had to have with Obama the numbers haven't moved much at all. Is basically what we're seeing three quarters are white evangelical Protestant voters saying they pick Romney over Obama if he's put into head. Now, if you compare that though to run these favorability numbers

throughout the primary season. What we saw is you go back into the fall, Romney's primary will list the ahead being drenched with you had sent and I also think is really interesting that really Santorum was the evangelical candidate, the Catholic primary candidate really was that evangelicals candidate in the primary. But around these favorability is around 40 percent and October of 2011 and they started coming up as he sort of – you could just track properties progress to the top of the ticket with Romney's favorability is coming up.

And when you hit Maywood, Romney is worried the presumptive nominee by May his numbers have gone from 40 percent favorable to 67 percent favorable. I like in a very short amount of time. And that's really all I think attributable to, okay, now he's our guy. And so I think that's a big explanation for kind of what's going on and what's overcome. I think the theological disagreements that are still very much there between White Evangelical Protestants and Mormons. But it's been overcome I think in the political process.

MR. JONES: I just want to underscore something that was really interesting in the study which is we asked people attitudes toward Obama's religion and how disturbed or close they felt to it and Romney's religion. And what was overwhelmingly the case is people's attitudes on that weren't shaped by religion. They weren't shaped by their own religious affiliation. They were shaped by their politics. And so it does seem that a lot of times when people are talking about faith, they're really talking about their political party. Which I actually think is something people ought to think about more when they ponder these questions. Secondly, there is clearly some racial prejudice against Obama.

It's also the case that in many of the areas, say, of the white south where Obama got clobbered in 2008, John Kerry got clobbered in 2004. There were about 15 percent of the counties in the country where Obama ran behind Kerry where you might see some of that, some specifically racial going on now. Those alignments we're talking about were shaped in the civil rights year. So there's a deeper political issue of race and civil rights

going on. But I think it's because of the party alignments it's sometimes hard to sort of pull race out of it. I don't think anybody who knows our country would deny race has always been part of your politics. There's a piece of that. We don't have a lot of data in this particular survey. And just very quickly on Catholics. And I haven't gone through the entire survey comparing Catholics to everybody else. But I've always said the Catholic church's job is – I say this proves I'm a Catholic. The Catholic Church's job is to make everybody feel guilty about something. And so liberal Catholics tend to be -- have more qualms about abortion than other kinds of liberal conservative Catholics often have more qualms about (inaudible) than other kinds of conservatives. And so I think you can see a modest Catholic effect on a lot of -- I'd be curious if Professor Dillon wants to correct me by love of her accent means I'll cede by view entirely to hers.

MS. DILLON: I don't think there's guilt at all. Catholicism though on the one sentence personally. But I do think that the Democratic Party has been lazy. They're afraid and they're intimidated by the bishops and they're afraid to go out and really talk to Catholics and explain how close the Catholic tradition including on pro-life. You know again the New York Times last week the day of the announcement dinner it was really given the impression that Romney was totally on the same pro-life manner as the Catholic Church. I've read the Catholic Church says abortion in all circumstances is morally wrong. There's no exception for rape and incest or the help of the mother. But somehow that gets lost where the people think including the Democrats themselves all that there is so far a way from the Catholic Church that they are afraid to go after these voters. So it's impossible to have a Catholic vote that the allergy of Catholicism is too complicated. I mean just what Cardinal Bernadine, that consistent anti-life. If you're really a good Catholic you're pro-life from the very beginning to the very end.

So that means you have to be anti-abortion, anti-the death penalty compost

social welfare, pro-healthcare all of those things. So we have not seen yet either a politician or a Catholic probably for that matter who truly. That's true. That's not a joke. Who truly emulates that epic in terms of the effort to articulate Catholicism?

MR. JONES: Bless you for mentioning Cardinal Bernadine.

Three more. I don't want the whole anybody up. Is everybody all said? Let's do three more.

MR. MITCHELL: I'm Eric Mitchell and I write the Mitchell report. And I want to say again to Doctor Jones that as in all previous cases this is the really very interesting and important data. And I think it's from that point of focusing on the fact that it's interesting. And I think both Doctor Sides and Doctor Dillon make mention of how important it is that this study has been done so professionally in the right sample size, etc., etc. So there's a big investment here. This is a first rate piece of research. The results are definitely interesting.

Is the question that I've been thinking about in listening to all the commentary today which is, okay, it's interesting and you can spend a lot of time.

MR. JONES: You knew there was a but in there somewhere.

MR. MITCHELL: but to whom and in what ways is this relevant? Who ought to be taking this book home and saying let's look at this because we got work to do. Whether it's at the White House or at the Vatican, probably not. But that's my question. I'm interested. And I think what I'm also asking at the same time is, in your -- and now I'm speaking to you, Robbie, that who would you most like to see pay attention to this and do something about it. And I'm also interested in the reactions that others on the panel might have to that.

MR. JONES: In kind and generous foundations like Ford don't count. Can we go to this lady who had her up right away and then that gentleman?

SPEAKER: I'd like to ask a question about what may or may not have been in the report. You probably know that there are some Christians who believe that

stewardship of the environment is part of their moral Christian obligation, whether you think of it as what would Jesus drive. But it's a moral commitment. And so I wondering did you not ask that question because you didn't think there were any Catholics to whom that question would be of interest or whether there were again is about stewardship as a moral obligation as a Christian obligation and if that wasn't in your survey why not.

MR. JONES: Thank you that's a good question, too. And then this gentleman.

SPEAKER: I'm from China and we don't have religious freedom there. But I'm surprised to find in the report in page 2 that a majority of (inaudible) saying that religious liberties is being threatened. So I want to know where does the threat come from.

MR. JONES: That's also a good question. But a couple were directed at Robbie, so why don't you take it Robbie.

SPEAKER: so Mitchell out try not to dodge your question. So our mission is as a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization really is, and this is our kind of flagship survey for the year. So it's a little bit of everything and anything. It's our multi-issue survey. A few weeks ago we released one that was really focused on the white working class and we did a Jewish values survey earlier in the year. Because we do have ones that are very community directed so the Jewish values survey very clearly to provide the information to the Jewish community about where, when Jews cared about, what their political priorities were. This one I think really is -- I mean the general public really is our audience on this one. And I do think this take-home here certainly for the campaign and certainly for the future of campaigns. I take John's point really seriously that well for the future when. And I'm not sure. I was sitting here thinking about whether we could like model when the tipping point might be if current trends continue or something. But clearly they are like these generational changes I think are clearly there.

Clearly shift the growth of the unaffiliated and these kind of distinctions between the kind of white Christian coalition of each political party and how tenable those are going forward I think of the real serious issue. It's really complicated. I ended the slide with this difference between All-Americans and likely voters really for the reason to show that we haven't really felt at the ballot box the full implications of the shifting and increasing diversity and pluralism in the country. And the reason we haven't felt bad is because some of the newer immigrants, younger people are all less likely to vote than our older white Americans. And so we don't really feel it at the ballot box the way it is in communities. But that's surely going to change going forward. Again when that's going to change to the point where it's kind of a tipping point I don't know. But the demographic trends are pretty clear on both of those issues. So I'm hoping that there are, you know, there's political relevancy here. There's also relevance to church leaders in this survey about I think in particular that unattached believers category. If your church leader I mean those are people who actually find places to go to church even though they don't belong. And that's a really interesting group to kind of figure out who they are, what they care about. I'll just kind of take that to the unattached believers group.

I think this is a group that -- I wrote a piece today that's up at the Washington Post on Faith section talking about this unattached believers group because one group like President Obama used which are that a lot of the ink spilled at the time you use it in his 2009 inaugural was use the word nonbelievers, right, and they turned to talk about the American religious landscape. And it was a lot of fanfare because it was the first time an American president had acknowledged this group is part of the big American landscape. But that term nonbelievers doesn't really capture it, right. It's a much more diverse group than that. And that term nonbelievers has its own kind of Protestant Christian baggage to it, right. It's a kind of overlay onto that group that isn't really quite appropriate. So I'm hoping that will make the

difference.

Quickly on the environment. We do not have a question on the environment here. It's one of those things like what hit the cutting world floor and what doesn't that we always want more questions. Stay tuned that we do have another cut at this and the postelection survey will be including other things. One quick comment here that goes to the comments that Bill made about political polarization. We have seen on this issue is it has really been more and more taken over by partisan views. So if you dial back the environment used to be more of a kind of cross party consensus issue and it has a more and more become -- if a kind of classic case of asymmetric polarization with the relevance I think we've been more a way that Democrats have on this issue. But it's taken more and more over bike kind of partisan views so you can kind of pretty clearly where people are on basic environmental questions.

MR. JONES: Bill and Melissa.

SPEAKER: I can remember a time when the Republican Party took the lead on both environmental issues which it owned from the days of Teddy Roosevelt and also family-planning. So there has been a sea change in the position of the parties with respect to a whole host of issues. But let me give a political answer to your question. I'm sort of book ended by two people who are much better able to give it than I am. But let me play a hack for a minute. I look at this survey and I observed the following. That the percentage of Catholics who identify with the social justice tradition is substantially higher than the percentage of Catholics who regularly vote for Democrats. Now that looks to me like a market opportunity.

And so if I were a Democratic operative, obviously not in the next two weeks, but after that I would want to put together a focus group of Catholics. And I would ask them in every way that I could, you've talked about the social justice tradition. What does that mean to you? And who is responsible for justice? Is it the church? Is it voluntary

organizations with which the church works? Is that the political system? In other words how is this social justice issue structured and textured with invisible on the matrix. And perhaps you already have the answers to those questions. But it's pretty obvious question.

SPEAKER: The answers are -- there's lots of studies. They don't even have to do focus groups. The data is already there. The operatives need to use that data. That's what I would say. So they could even skip more research because there's a lot of good data telling the answers to how Catholics understand these things. But in particular the DNC has been afraid to go after them just very quickly I think I want bishops to read it because is the flipside of what Bill said which is there's clearly a hunger and the rank-and-file for more on social justice.

MS. DILLON: You know the Bishop who don't read these. Andrew Greeley has long said and Richard Shakur many years ago gave the demographics. There wasn't anything political about the pre-shortage. And the Bishop said we don't run the church based on the polling data. But that wasn't about polling data. It was a demo graphics shortage of priests. So the bishops are not going to read these studies. They might read them but they're not going to do anything about it. They already know all of this.

SPEAKER: I hope the Holy Spirit, social scientists might inspire them. I also hope a lot of political leaders and journalists look at it because we blow up a lot of stereotypes here. I think that's one of the great functions of polling. Sometimes polling confirms stereotypes. But a lot of times it blows them up.

Melissa could you just very briefly take on the agenda was religious liberty question because I think it is mystifying in a sense that the country with some of the most expensive religious liberty in the world still has this feeling maybe we protected because we are always worried about it.

MS. DECKMAN: It's striking those findings in the context of what is

happened in the world. I think of that poor young girl in Pakistan, right, shot for going to school. I view arguments about freedom of religion and I look at what's happening around the world and I think to myself as a big disconnect. We are very free in this country, in this society, too, to express our religious views as part of our heritage. But it is a real defining issue for many conservative Christians in this country.

And the team party I also strike to the extent to which the tea party espouses this idea that we have a Judeo-Christian culture, that the problems we have have really been, not that we have massive debt but we've gotten away from that godly heritage so to speak. And so it's become part of their mantra. And there's just really -- there's a whole legal apparatus engaged in trying to fight these sorts of battles and then highlight the source of battles to somehow scare at think a lot of conservative Christians into thinking that just around the corner the Obama administration is going to be taking away some of these rights which is blatantly not true. So I think a lot of it is just frankly irrational, but yet it is still part of the concern for a lot of these activists.

MR. JONES: There are two ages people over here that want to get in. I'd like to get them both in very quickly, if you could be brief. Bill wanted to come back in, and then I'll let anyone else.

MR. ANTONIO: Bill Antonio, Catholic U.

Bill asked the right question. Two colleagues and I have just completed a manuscript with looks at all roll call votes in Congress over the last 40 years. And using the (inaudible) scale, ideological scale, plus every other damn thing we could think we could dream up we found that the Catholic Democrats, Jews, and black Democrats, and some mainline Protestants voted in such a way that you would say they have voted and Abraham it tradition. So if you're having trouble with the Catholic just talk about the Abraham Lincoln tradition. I'm going to push that. I think it's solid in the data. And Bill I'll show you the data

later.

MR. JONES: Bless you Bill, who does great work. It's great to have you here.

SPEAKER: I'm (off mic). I attended two churches. They're both Catholic churches. One is in Anacostia which is a black church of course, and is very traditional and is 100 percent Obama. And I attend another one in Arlington which is maybe my former pastor used to call it the last step before you leave the church. If the most liberal church parish in Arlington. And I work in a very traditional white Catholic school. So I'm (inaudible). And I can see which is saying. I can live it. My parish of choice (inaudible) parish. We are very active in social justice. In our parish (inaudible) the people vote according to the general issues to look at all the issues and not be fixated in one issue which is clearly a call. And the place where I work where there are few, very very few Democrats. Really you can count two or three in my classroom. What I can see is the people who are Republicans are very angry Republicans. They are people who are very (inaudible) to what they believe. And they tell the children we vote for Romney because Obama is bad. He's a bad man. Like one of the parishes in Northern Virginia also had in its website Obama kills babies. It's been removed, but it was there. And they were handing (inaudible) for Romney, which is not supposed to be allowed. So this is my world.

MR. JONES: Thank you so much. I'm going to be quiet except to say thank you at the end. Does anyone have closing remarks on this?

Bill.

SPEAKER: Only this. I have a hunch that I know a bit about what this religious liberty issue is about. I am now old enough to have grown up in an America where there was an informal Protestant establishment. I'm Jewish. I was required to recite the Lord's Prayer in public school up to the sixth grade and nobody thought there was anything

anomalous about that. The display in public places of various sorts of religious artifacts etcetera, people didn't consider that to be anomalous or a violation of the First Amendment, etc. I think taking the long historical view we have to understand that there has been a change in the legal framework and also the cultural framework. And views that were culturally majority and not even questioned when I was in grade school and high school are now not only questioned and interrogated but frequently repudiated. And among conservative religious people who are opposed to same-sex marriage there is now a lots of discussion about the possibility that the expression of those views in a public school setting will be seen as discriminatory or hate speech and therefore forbidden. So I could go on and on. I don't think we have to invent conspiratorial mindsets in order to see that very fundamental structural changes in the role of religion in American culture and politics have -- for people who believe that religious liberty meant the freedom to pray in public schools as part of the administered ritual of the schools, from their standpoint religious liberty has been diminished. For people who believe that (inaudible) is on the town square were part of the expression of your religious faith, they believe that their liberty has been diminished. I'm not saying I associate myself with these views. But we don't have to reach very far to understand them.

MR. JONES: That's a great answer.

MS. DILLON: I agree totally with what Bill said. But I will also make the point, though, that the Protestant, the mainline Protestant tradition we owe it the differentiation of church and state. And to the Catholic Church and the declaration of religious freedom a total recognition of the autonomous and write all independent role of each in the public sphere. So I think religion should be in the public sphere, but only when it's an expression of the particular community, not intimidating others to say the prayers or believe want the line 01 particular denomination. That's where the conversation hasn't really

happened. How can we be truly pluralistic that engage with others who are not like us but not impose any one's otherness on the other and at the same time be civilized.

MR. JONES: I just totally identify with what Bill said because I do believe that the cultural and legal disestablishment first of Protestant Christianity then of Christianity altogether has provoked a reaction which from people who see that as an attack or really just liberty even as others see it as an expansion of religious liberty. And as one of the great paradoxes --

SPEAKER: And is not going anywhere. If you live in the data here because people are more -- I mean there is a growing pluralism of religious views and nonreligious views of this country. And that's why I think we still have such debate up over this. So I think is a good point.

MR. JONES: the much praised scientists with an accident methodology should have the last word.

SPEAKER: I think I'll close and be brief. You've been very patient and hanging in here with us for a very long conversation. I hope is a bit interesting. But I just want to thank again EJ in Bill of the Brookings Institution, the entire team here both for sort of having us design and write the report and also for hosting this marvelous event. And also Melissa, John,, and Michele for all being here taking their time out of a busy semester to be here with us here just a couple weeks out from the election year. So it's all up on the website, publicreligion.org. I hope you're sort of come find it there. And if you have other questions were happy to have you to fill them. All right thank you all. (Applause)

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