The American Religious Landscape and the 2004 Presidential Vote: Increased Polarization

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The American religious landscape was strongly polarized in the 2004 presidential vote and more so than in 2000. Both President Bush and Senator Kerry benefited from strong support among key religious constituencies, with only a few religious groups closely divided.

Increased polarization is the principal finding of the Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics post-election survey. Other major findings include:

- Mainline Protestants, once a strong Republican constituency, divided their votes evenly between Kerry and Bush, producing the highest level of support for a Democratic presidential candidate in recent times.
- Modernist Mainline Protestants and Catholics strongly supported Kerry, dramatically increasing their Democratic vote and turnout over 2000.
- Kerry gained ground among the Unaffiliated compared to 2000, but turnout remained unchanged.
- Bush's biggest gain came among Latino Protestants, who moved from the Democratic column in 2000 to the Republican column in 2004.
- Non-Latino Catholics, once a bedrock Democratic constituency, gave a majority of their votes to Bush. This gain was largely due to increased support among Traditionalist Catholics, but Bush also won the crucial swing group of Centrist Catholics.
- Black Protestants and Latino Catholics supported Bush at a higher level than in 2000, but were still solidly Democratic.
- Foreign policy and economic priorities were far more important to the overall vote than social issues, such as abortion or same-sex marriage. However, social issue priorities were most important to Bush's religious constituencies. In contrast, economic issues were most important to Kerry's constituencies.

This report is based on the post-election sample of the Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, conducted November-December 2004 at the University of Akron. It had 2,730 re-interviews of surveys conducted in the spring of 2004 (a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percent; see Appendix for details of the study).

How the Faithful Voted

Table 1 lists eighteen major religious groups that describe the American religious landscape, and the two-party presidential vote and estimated turnout for each (see the appendix for details on how these categories were defined).

Table 1. The American Religious Landscape and the 2004 Two-Party Presidential Vote (arranged by Religious Tradition)

	Vote Choice*		
	Bush	**Kerry**	**Turnout***
ALL EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT	*78*	*22 = 100%*	*63%*
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	88	12	69%
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	64	36	52%
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	48	52	65%
ALL MAINLINE PROTESTANT	*50*	*50*	*69%*
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	68	32	78%
Centrist Mainline Protestant	58	42	68%
Modernist Mainline Protestant	22	78	71%
Latino Protestant	63	37	49%
Black Protestant	17	83	50%
ALL NON-LATINO CATHOLIC	*53*	*47*	*67%*
Traditionalist Catholic	72	28	77%
Centrist Catholic	55	45	58%
Modernist Catholic	31	69	70%
Latino Catholic	31	69	43%
Other Christians	80	20	60%
Other Faiths	23	77	62%
Jews	27	73	87%
ALL UNAFFILIATED	*28*	*72*	*52%*
Unaffiliated Believers	37	63	39%
Seculars	30	70	55%
Atheists, Agnostics	18	82	61%
ENTIRE ELECTORATE	**51**	**49 =100%**	**60.8%**

* Vote choice and turnout weighted to reflect actual election results. Unweighted results show very similar patterns.

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron)

Although the election was very close overall (51 percent for Bush and 49 percent for Kerry), there was extensive polarization between and within the major religious traditions.

An example of polarization *between* religious traditions is that Evangelical Protestants gave Bush more than three-quarters of their votes, while nearly three-quarters of the Unaffiliated voted for Kerry. An example of polarization *within* religious traditions is the sharp differences in support for Bush and Kerry among groups of Mainline Protestants and Catholics.

Evangelical Protestants. Overall, Evangelical Protestants strongly backed Bush with 78 percent of their votes, and had a 63 percent turnout.

However, there were important divisions among Evangelicals. Traditionalist Evangelicals (highly orthodox beliefs and practices) voted 88 percent for Bush, with a turnout of 69 percent. Centrist Evangelicals (moderate beliefs and practices) were less supportive, voting 64 percent for Bush, with a turnout of 52 percent.

In contrast, Modernist Evangelicals (highly heterodox beliefs and practices) voted on balance for Kerry, with 52 percent and had a turnout of 65 percent. This group was one of the few closely divided between the candidates. (Indeed, these close results must be viewed with some caution because of the small number of respondents.)

Mainline Protestants. Overall, Mainline Protestants divided their votes evenly, with Bush and Kerry each receiving 50 percent; their turnout was 69 percent. This result is the highest level of support for a Democratic presidential candidate in recent times.

This tie at the ballot box was caused by sharp internal divisions. Traditionalist Mainline Protestants voted 68 percent for Bush, with a turnout of 78 percent, and Centrist Mainliners backed the President with 58 percent, with a turnout of 68 percent.

In contrast, Modernist Mainline Protestants strongly backed Kerry with 78 percent, and had a turnout of 71 percent.

Minority Protestants. Latino Protestants supported Bush with 63 percent of their votes, and had a turnout of 49 percent. Black Protestants strongly backed Kerry with 83 percent, with a turnout of 50 percent.

Catholics. Overall, Bush won a slim majority of Non-Latino Catholics at 53 percent, with a turnout of 67 percent.

Here, too, there were sharp internal divisions. Traditionalist Catholics strongly preferred Bush with 72 percent, with a turnout of 77 percent, and Centrist Catholics supported the President with 55 percent, with a turnout of 58 percent.

In contrast, Modernist Catholics went strongly for Kerry, with 69 percent, and a turnout of 70 percent.

Latino Catholics were solidly in the Kerry camp with 69 percent, and had a turnout of 43 percent.

Other Religious Groups. Other Christians (including Latter Day Saints, Eastern Orthodox and other smaller churches) strongly backed Bush with 80 percent, and had a turnout of 60 percent.

Jews solidly supported Kerry with 73 percent of the vote, and had a turnout of 87 percent. And the Other Faiths (Muslims, Hindus, New Age practitioners, and other small groups) voted for Kerry with 77 percent, and had a 62 percent turnout.

Unaffiliated. Overall, the Unaffiliated strongly supported Kerry with 72 percent, and had a turnout of 52 percent.

Here the internal divisions were not as sharp: Unaffiliated Believers (no affiliation but traditional religious beliefs) voted 63 percent for Kerry, but with a very low turnout of 39 percent; Seculars (no affiliation or traditional beliefs) voted 70 percent for Kerry, with a 55 percent turnout; and Atheists/Agnostics (self-identified) voted 82 percent for Kerry, with a turnout of 61 percent.

The Bush and Kerry Constituencies

Table 2 arrays these eighteen religious groups in order of the Bush and Kerry vote. Each candidate had strong support from key constituencies and only a few groups were closely divided.

The Bush Constituencies. Four religious groups gave Bush more than two-thirds of their votes: Traditionalist Evangelicals (88 percent), Other Christians (80 percent), Traditionalist Catholics (72 percent); and Traditionalist Mainline Protestants (68 percent). All four of these groups had a turnout of three-fifths or more.

Four additional religious groups gave Bush a majority of their votes: Centrist Evangelicals (64 percent), Latino Protestants (63 percent), Centrist Mainline Protestants (58 percent), and Centrist Catholics (53 percent). These groups had lower turnout, ranging from less than one-half to two-thirds.

The Kerry Constituencies. Five religious groups gave Kerry about three-quarters or more of their votes: Black Protestants (83 percent), Atheists/Agnostics (82 percent), Modernist Mainline Protestants (78 percent), Other Faiths (77 percent), and Jews (73 percent). Turnout varied considerably among these groups, from a low of one-half to a high of nearly nine of ten.

Table 2. The American Religious Landscape and the 2004 Two-Party Presidential Vote (arranged by Bush and Kerry Vote)

	Vote Choice*	
	Bush	**Kerry**
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	88	12
Other Christians	80	20
ALL EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT	*78*	*22*
Traditionalist Catholic	72	28
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	68	32
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	64	36
Latino Protestant	63	37
Centrist Mainline Protestant	58	42
Centrist Catholic	55	45
ALL NON-LATINO CATHOLIC	*53*	*47*
ENTIRE ELECTORATE	**51**	**49 =100%**
ALL MAINLINE PROTESTANT	*50*	*50*
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	48	52
Unaffiliated Believers	37	63
Latino Catholic	31	69
Modernist Catholic	31	69
Seculars	30	70
ALL UNAFFILIATED	*28*	*72*
Jews	27	73
Other Faiths	23	77
Modernist Mainline Protestant	22	78
Atheists, Agnostics	18	82
Black Protestant	17	83

* Vote choice and turnout weighted to reflect actual election results. Unweighted results show very similar patterns.

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron)

Kerry received majority support from five additional groups: Seculars (70 percent), Modernist and Latino Catholics (69 percent each), Unaffiliated Believers (63 percent), and Modernist Evangelicals (52 percent). Here, too, turnout varied, from a low of less than two-fifths to a high of more than two-thirds.

Religious Groups and Party Coalitions in 2004

Table 3 looks at the major party vote coalitions, listing the contribution each of the eighteen religious groups made to the total Bush and Kerry vote (each column adds up to 100 percent; for ease of presentation, Table 2 has the same order of religious groups as Table 3.)

Bush depended heavily on traditionalist Christians, while Kerry had a more diverse coalition characterized by minority faiths, the Unaffiliated, and modernist Christians. All else being equal, the more homogeneous Republican coalition was probably easier to mobilize than the more diverse Democratic coalition.

Table 3. The American Religious Landscape and the 2004 Party Coalitions

	Bush	**Kerry**	**All**
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	27%	4%	15%
Other Christians	4	1	3
Traditionalist Catholic	8	3	6
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	8	4	6
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	11	7	9
Latino Protestant	3	2	2
Centrist Mainline Protestant	9	7	8
Centrist Catholic	8	6	7
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	2	3	2
Unaffiliated Believers	2	4	3
Latino Catholic	2	4	3
Modernist Catholic	4	9	6
Seculars	4	10	7
Jews	1	4	3
Other Faiths	1	4	2
Modernist Mainline Protestant	2	9	6
Atheists, Agnostics	1	6	4
Black Protestants	3	13	8
ENTIRE ELECTORATE	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron)

The Republican Coalition. The single most important group for Bush was Traditionalist Evangelicals, which provided more than one-quarter of his total votes (27 percent). Traditionalist Evangelicals supplied more than twice the proportion of Bush ballots than any other group. The top four Bush groups combined for nearly one-half of his total ballots (47 percent).

Bush's second most important group was Centrist Evangelicals (11 percent); and the second four Bush groups produced almost one-third of his total ballots (31 percent).

The remaining ten groups (which on balance supported Kerry) provided Bush with one-fifth of his total ballots. But given the closeness of the election, his vote in each of these groups was crucial to Bush's victory.

Looked at another way, all Evangelical Protestants together provided Bush with two-fifths percent of his total votes, all the traditionalist Christians combined for more than two-fifths, and all the centrist Christians more than one-quarter.

The Democratic Coalition. The single most important group for Kerry was Black Protestants, which accounted for a little more than one-eighth of his total votes (13 percent). The top set of five Democratic constituencies (at the very bottom of the table) provided Kerry with almost two-fifths of all his ballots (37 percent).

The second most important Kerry group was the Seculars, with one-tenth of his ballots. The second set of five Kerry groups provided a little less than one-third of his total votes (30 percent).

The eight remaining groups (which on balance supported Bush) provided one-third of Kerry's total votes, with the bulk of this support coming from the three Centrist groups. Even modest gains among these categories could have given Kerry a majority of the two-party vote. Indeed, the Kerry ballots from the top four Bush constituencies were nearly as numerous as the contribution made by Black Protestants (12 versus 13 percent), and the Kerry votes from Traditionalist Evangelicals were as important to his total as the Jewish vote (4 percent each).

Thus, the Democratic coalition was quite diverse: Black Protestants and Latinos together accounted for one-fifth of Kerry's ballots, and this proportion was matched by the Unaffiliated, Non-Latino Catholics, and Mainline Protestants.

Comparison to the 2000 Election

Table 4 reports the changes in presidential vote and turnout between 2000 and 2004 for the eighteen religious groups (for ease of presentation, the religious groups follow the order in Table 2).

Evangelical Protestants. Evangelical Protestants strongly backed Bush in both years, but their support increased by about 6 percentage points (from 74 to 78 percent). At the same time, their turnout grew by 9 percentage points (from about 54 to 63 percent).

Table 4. The American Religious Landscape and Change in Voting Behavior 2000-2004

	Change in Bush Vote*	Change in Dem. Vote	Change in Turnout
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	+ 4%	- 4%	+ 7
Other Christians	+12	-12	+ 7
ALL EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT	*+ 4*	*- 4*	*+ 9*
Traditionalist Catholic	+17	-17	+12
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	0	0	+14
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	+ 3	- 3	+ 2
Latino Protestant	+31	-31	+11
Centrist Mainline Protestant	+ 1	- 1	+15
Centrist Catholic	+11	-11	+ 4
ALL NON-LATINO CATHOLIC	*+ 5*	*- 5*	*+11*
ENTIRE ELECTORATE	**+ 1**	**- 1**	**+10**
ALL MAINLINE PROTESTANT	*-10*	*+10*	*+11*
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	0	0	+23
Unaffiliated Believers	- 5	- 5	- 10
Latino Catholic	+ 7	- 7	+17
Modernist Catholic	-12	+12	+21
Seculars	- 3	- 3	+ 9
ALL UNAFFLIATED	*- 5*	*+ 5*	*0*
Jews	0	0	+15
Other Faiths	- 5	+ 5	- 7
Modernist Mainline Protestant	- 23	+23	+13
Atheists, Agnostics	- 12	+12	- 7
Black Protestants	+12	- 12	0

* "+" indicates an increase over 2000 and "-" a decrease over 2000..

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron) and Third National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=3000, November-December 2000, University of Akron).

The increase in Bush support occurred among Traditionalist and Centrist Evangelicals (4 and 3 percentage points, respectively). In contrast, the Democratic leanings of Modernist Evangelicals were unchanged, but a 23 percentage point increase in turnout favored Kerry.

Overall, the total share of Bush's vote from Evangelicals in 2004 was the same as in 2000 (40 percent); the Evangelical share of the Kerry ballots was 14 percent, up slightly from Gore's 13 percent in 2000.

Mainline Protestants. The most dramatic change occurred among Mainline Protestants, where Bush's support fell sharply by 10 percentage points (60 to 50 percent) and turnout expanded by 11 percentage points (from 58 to 69 percent). This represents the largest support for a Democratic presidential candidate in recent times.

Traditionalist and Centrist Mainline Protestants voted for Bush at about the same rate as in 2000, so the overall change came almost entirely from Modernist Mainliners. Kerry gained 23 percentage points from this group and its turnout expanded by 13 percentage points. The result was stronger polarization within the Mainline Protestant community.

In essence, the Modernist Mainliners more closely matched their views on economic and foreign policy to their vote. For instance, 90 percent of Mainline Protestants who felt the Iraq War was unjustified voted for Kerry, as did three-quarters of those who opposed Bush's tax-cut policy.

The total share of Bush's vote from Mainline Protestants declined from 22 percent in 2000 to 19 percent in 2004; Kerry' proportion rose to 20 percent over Gore's 14 percent in 2000.

Minority and Other Christians. Bush made substantial gains among Latino Protestants, shifting this group from the Democratic column in 2000 to the Republican column in 2004. He also made more modest gains among Black Protestants, Latino Catholics, and the Other Christians. All of these groups increased their turnout except for Black Protestants.

In some respects, Bush's improvement among the minority faiths represents a reduction in political polarization. However, there is some evidence that these gains were concentrated among the most traditionally religious, a result which fits the traditionalist-modernist division among Evangelicals, Mainliners, and Non-Latino Catholics.

As a consequence, the share of the Bush vote from Black Protestants and Latinos increased to 8 percent from 3 percent in 2000. Meanwhile, the share of Kerry's vote from Black Protestants and Latinos fell to 19 percent from Gore's 22 percent in 2000.

Non-Latino Catholics. Bush improved among Non-Latino Catholics by 5 percentage points (48 to 53 percent), and turnout expanded by 11 percentage points (56 to 67

percent). In fact, Bush essentially broke even with Kerry in the overall Catholic vote, a historic achievement for a Republican presidential candidate.

Bush's gains occurred among Traditionalist and Centrist Catholics (an increase of 17 and 11 percentage points, respectively). Centrist Catholics were a key swing group in the campaign and Bush's win among them was crucial.

However, Bush lost substantial ground among Modernist Catholics. Here, support for Kerry rose 12 percentage points and turnout by 21 percentage points. Thus polarization increased within the Catholic community as well.

The share of the total Bush vote from Non-Latino Catholics increased slightly over 2000 (20 to 19 percent in 2000); the Catholic share of the total Kerry vote declined slightly over Gore in 2000 (18 to 21 percent).

Non-Christians and the Unaffiliated. Compared to 2000, the Jewish vote was largely unchanged. Bush lost ground among the Other Faiths and also among the Unaffiliated (about five percentages point for each). However, turnout varied a good bit: Seculars voted at a higher rate (up 9 percentage points), while the Other Faiths (down 7), Atheists/Agnostics (down 7), and Unaffiliated Believers (down 10) voted at a lower rate.

The Impact of Issues on Voting Decisions

Table 5 reports the impact of issues on the 2004 presidential vote across the religious landscape (for ease of presentation, Table 5 has the same order of groups as Table 2.)

The respondents were asked two questions about the impact of issues on their voting decision. First, they were asked the *relative importance* ("very," "somewhat," and "not very important") of three kinds of issues, and then which of the three was the *most important* when they cast their ballot. The three topics were: social issues (such as abortion and same-sex marriage); foreign policy (such as the war in Iraq and on terrorism), and economic issues (such as jobs and taxes).

Two pairs of numbers for each type of issue are presented in Table 5: the percent claiming the issue was *very important* to their vote and then the percentage claiming it was *most important.* These data reveal considerable complexity in the issue agenda of all the religious groups.

Social Issues. Overall, social issues rated third in terms of relative importance (49 percent "very important") and top priority (24 percent "most important").

However, a majority of the top four Bush constituencies regarded social issues as very important to their vote, exceeding the figure for the entire sample. Each of these groups was also more likely to choose social issues as most important. Here Traditionalist Evangelicals stand out in giving social issues top priority.

Table 5. The American Religious Landscape, Issues, and the 2004 Presidential Vote

	Social Issues Important		Foreign Policy Important		Economic Issues Important	
	%Very	%Most*	%Very	%Most	%Very	%Most
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	78	47	75	29	44	17
Other Christians	67	38	86	31	61	22
ALL EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT	*68*	*37*	*78*	*31*	*48*	*23*
Traditionalist Catholic	68	39	81	31	49	23
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	55	30	79	29	54	28
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	55	21	80	33	53	32
Latino Protestant	54	33	71	11	54	44
Centrist Mainline Protestant	33	14	80	42	55	39
Centrist Catholic	24	10	80	42	54	41
ALL NON-LATINO CATHOLIC	*39*	*19*	*81*	*40*	*56*	*34*
ENTIRE SAMPLE	**49**	**24**	**80**	**35**	**58**	**33**
ALL MAINLINE PROTESTANT	*43*	*19*	*80*	*38*	*57*	*34*
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	43	30	85	36	55	21
Unaffiliated Believers	46	26	86	26	65	42
Latino Catholic	40	21	74	26	71	44
Modernist Catholic	31	11	82	46	65	36
Seculars	36	17	80	52	60	27
ALL UNAFFLIATED	*38*	*17*	*82*	*32*	*63*	*45*
Jews	49	8	88	50	69	29
Other Faiths	41	18	86	60	55	14
Modernist Mainline Protestant	44	18	85	37	64	35
Atheists, Agnostics	38	11	81	54	61	27
Black Protestant	50	17	78	14	81	60

*Neither the columns nor the rows add to 100% because some categories have been excluded, such as respondents who said an issue was "somewhat" or "not important" or respondents who gave top priority to other issues.

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron)

The relative importance of social issues drops quickly for the rest of the religious groups, generally falling below the entire sample on both measures. Partial exceptions are Centrist Evangelicals, Latino and Black Protestants, who match or exceed the entire sample on the relative importance of social issues. (Latino Protestants also exceed the sample on social issues as most important, with 33 percent.)

Modernist Catholics, Seculars, and Atheists/Agnostics gave the least priority to social issues.

These figures suggest that social issues were quite important to the Bush vote, but a secondary factor for the electorate as a whole.

Foreign Policy. Foreign policy was rated as "very important" to the votes of 80 percent of the entire sample, and reported as the "most important" for 35 percent. Both of these figures are far greater than for social issues.

However, there is very little variation in relative importance of foreign policy across the religious landscape, with the highest group scoring 88 percent (Jews) and the lowest 71 percent (Latino Protestants).

There is more variation on listing foreign policy as a top priority. The groups doing so were concentrated among Kerry's religious constituencies, including the Other Faiths, Atheists/Agnostics, Jews, Seculars, and Modernist Catholics.

But the groups least concerned with foreign policy are also found among the Kerry supporters: Black Protestants, Latino Catholics, and Unaffiliated Believers.

However, the single lowest group in this regard was Latino Protestants, a Bush constituency in 2004. Traditionalist Evangelical and Mainline Protestants also gave less priority to foreign policy.

Thus, foreign policy issues produced less clear-cut divisions across the religious landscape, despite being the most salient issue to the electorate as a whole.

Economic Issues. Overall, 58 percent of the entire sample said economic issues were very important to their vote, and 33 percent said it was top priority. So, economic issues ranked second, behind foreign policy and ahead of social issues.

Most Kerry constituencies reported that economic issues were very important to their vote, including Black Protestants (81 percent), Latino Catholics (71 percent), Other Faiths (69 percent), Modernist Catholics and Unaffiliated Believers (65 percent each). By and large, these groups also gave the economy top priority as well.

In contrast, the Bush constituencies were less concerned with the economy in both regards. However, here the Other Christians, Latino Protestants, and Centrist Catholics were exceptions.

Thus, economic issues were important to Kerry's strongest backers, presenting a contrast to social issues, which were a priority among the top Bush supporters.

The Direct Impact of Faith on the Vote

Table 6 reports the results of a question on the direct impact of faith the 2004 vote across the religious landscape:

Which of the following statements best describes the relationship of your religious faith to your voting decision in 2004?

> *My faith was more important to my voting decision than other factors*
> *My faith was about as important to my voting decision as other factors*
> *My faith was less important to my voting decision than other factors*
> *My faith was not at all important to my voting decision*

Overall, 21 percent of the entire sample reported that faith was "more important than other factors" and 26 percent said it was "about as important as other factors" in their voting decisions (for a total of 47 percent). Another 15 percent said faith was "less important than other factors" and 38 percent said faith was "not at all important" in their voting decisions (for a total of 53 percent).

With two exceptions, a majority of Bush's religious constituencies claimed their faith was more or about as important as other factors in their voting decision. Here Traditionalist Evangelicals ranked first (56 percent said faith was more important than other factors). The exceptions were Centrist Catholics (38 percent) and Centrist Mainline Protestants (31 percent).

With one exception, a majority of Kerry's religious constituencies reported that their faith was less important or not at all important to their voting decisions. Atheists/Agnostics rated first (76 percent), followed by Seculars (69 percent), and Unaffiliated Believers (57 percent). Modernist Catholics (53 percent) and Mainline Protestants (51 percent) and Jews (49 percent) also had high numbers in this regard. The exception was Black Protestants, where more than one-half reported faith to be more or about as important as other factors in their voting decisions.

These findings further illustrate the polarization of the religious landscape in the 2004 presidential vote.

Table 6. The American Religious Landscape and the Role of Faith in 2004 Presidential Vote

	COMPARED TO OTHER FACTORS: Faith More Important	Faith About as Important	Faith Less Important	Faith Not Important	
Traditionalist Evangelical Protestant	56	31	6	7	=100%
Other Christians	39	21	8	32	
ALL EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT	*42*	*29*	*9*	*20*	
Traditionalist Catholic	32	43	10	15	
Traditionalist Mainline Protestant	24	40	16	20	
Centrist Evangelical Protestant	25	31	12	32	
Latino Protestant	40	25	8	27	
Centrist Mainline Protestant	8	30	22	40	
Centrist Catholic	5	26	23	46	
ALL NON-LATINO CATHOLIC	*11*	*27*	*21*	*41*	
ENTIRE SAMPLE	**21**	**26**	**15**	**38**	
ALL MAINLINE PROTESTANT	*9*	*30*	*19*	*42*	
Modernist Evangelical Protestant	10	31	12	32	
Unaffiliated Believers	16	17	11	56	
Latino Catholic	19	20	15	46	
Modernist Catholic	3	18	27	52	
Seculars	3	11	17	69	
ALL UNAFFILIATED	*7*	*13*	*11*	*69*	
Jews	5	20	26	49	
Other Faiths	13	20	25	42	
Modernist Mainline Protestant	4	21	24	51	
Atheists, Agnostics	5	9	10	76	
Black Protestant	30	26	13	31	

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Post-Election Sample (N=2730, November-December 2004, University of Akron)

APPENDIX

Data and Methods

The Surveys. This report is primarily based on the Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, conducted by the Bliss Institute at the University of Akron. The survey was a national random sample of adult Americans (18 years or older), conducted in March, April, and May of 2004. The total number of cases was 4,000 and the margin of error is plus or minus two percent. In November and December of 2004, 2,730 cases were re-interviewed; the margin of error is 2.5 percent. The pre-election report can be found at www.uakron.edu/bliss/research.php. Voter turnout was estimated by weighting reported turnout to match overall national turnout among vote eligible population. Similar surveys were taken in the spring of 1992, 1996, and 2000. All of these surveys were supported by grants from the Pew Charitable Trusts, and in 2004, by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Defining the Religious Landscape. The eighteen categories used in this report were derived from measures of religious belonging, believing, and behaving. (For more details on the construction of these measures, contact John Green, the Bliss Institute, green@uakron.edu.)

The first step was to use the detailed denominational affiliation collected in the survey to sort respondents into religious traditions. Ambiguous categories (such as "just a Christian") were sorted with the aid of other religious measures.

Latino Protestants and Catholics and Black Protestants were then placed in separate categories because of their religious and political distinctiveness.

The remaining portions of three major traditions were then broken into traditionalists, centrists, and modernists based on three sets of measures. First, six belief measures (belief in God, belief in an afterlife, views of the Bible, the existence of the devil, evolution, and the truth of all the world's religions) were combined into a single scale running from the most traditional beliefs to the most modern. This measure allowed for a great deal of nuance. Second, five measures of religious behavior (worship attendance, financial support of a congregation, private prayer, scripture reading, and participation in small groups) and the salience of religion were combined into a single scale running from the lowest to highest level of religious engagement.

Third, scales measuring identification with religious traditionalist and modernist religious movements were constructed. For evangelical Protestants, traditionalists were those who claimed to be fundamentalist, evangelical, Pentecostal, or charismatic, and those without movement identification who agreed in preserving religious traditions. Modernists were those who claimed to be liberal or progressive, ecumenical or mainline and those without a movement identification who agreed in adopting modern religious beliefs and practices.

For mainline Protestants and Catholics, traditionalists were those who claimed to be "traditional or conservative" in the context of movement identification and those without

movement identification who agreed in preserving religious traditions. Modernists were those who claimed to be liberal or progressive in the context of movement identification and those without a movement identification who agreed in adopting modern religious beliefs and practices.

For the three largest religious traditions (white evangelical and mainline Protestants and non-Latino Catholic), the belief, behavior and movement scales were combined and then divided into three groups. Although the cut-points were slightly different in each of the major tradition (reflecting their special circumstances), the traditionalists scored high on all three scales—identifying with traditionalist religious movements, having traditional beliefs, and a high level of religious engagement. The modernists identified with modernist religious movements and had a high level of modern beliefs (religious engagement made less difference in defining modernists, but overall modernists had longer levels of religious engagement). Centrists were members of each tradition that did not fall into the traditionalist or modernist groups.

Finally, the respondents who reported no religious affiliation were subdivided on the basis of belief. The Unaffiliated Believers were those with the same level of belief as the Centrists in the three largest traditions. Atheists and Agnostics were defined by self-identification, and the Seculars were the residual category.

While these categories are certainly not definitive, they do capture important regularities across the American religious landscape. Table 7 lists the size of the original categories and the partisanship of the groups; Table 8 illustrates the content of these categories by looking at three important measures of religiosity: worship attendance, views of God, and views of traditional beliefs and practices.

Table 7.The Religious Landscape and Self-Identified Partisanship, Spring 2004

	Percent Population	Partisanship*			
		Republican	*Independent*	*Democratic*	
ALL	**100.0%**	**38%**	**20**	**42**	**= 100%**
Evangelical Protestant	**26.3**	**56%**	**17**	**27**	
Traditionalist Evangelical	*12.6*	*70%*	*10*	*20*	
Centrist Evangelical	*10.8*	*47%*	*22*	*31*	
Modernist Evangelical	*2.9*	*30%*	*26*	*44*	
Mainline Protestant	**16.0**	**44%**	**18**	**38**	
Traditionalist Mainline	*4.3*	*59%*	*10*	*31*	
Centrist Mainline	*7.0*	*46%*	*21*	*33*	
Modernist Mainline	*4.7*	*26%*	*20*	*54*	
Latino Protestants	2.8	37%	20	43	
Black Protestants	9.6	11%	18	71	
Catholic	**17.5**	**41%**	**15**	**44**	
Traditionalist Catholic	*4.4*	*57%*	*13*	*30*	
Centrist Catholic	*8.1*	*34%*	*19*	*47*	
Modernist Catholic	*5.0*	*38%*	*11*	*51*	
Latino Catholic	4.5	15%	24	61	
Other Christian	2.7	42%	36	22	
Other Faiths	2.7	12%	33	55	
Jewish	1.9	21%	11	68	
Unaffiliated	**16.0**	**27%**	**30**	**43**	
Unaffiliated Believers	*5.3*	*28%*	*37*	*35*	
Secular	*7.5*	*29%*	*27*	*44*	
Atheist, Agnostic	*3.2*	*19%*	*27*	*54*	

** Partisan "leaners" included with Republicans and Democrats; minor party affiliation included with independents.*

Source: Fourth National Survey of Religion and Politics, Bliss Institute University of Akron, March-May 2004 (N=4000).

Table 8. Defining the Religious Landscape: Measures of Religion

	Worship Attendance:			**View of God:**			**View of Tradition:**		
	Regular	*Often*	*Rarely*	*Personal*	*Impersonal*	*Unsure*	*Preserve*	*Adapt*	*Adopt*
ENTIRE SAMPLE	**43%**	**32**	**25**	**40%**	**41**	**19**	**45%**	**40**	**15**
Evangelical Protestant									
Traditionalist Evangelical	87%	11	2	89%	11	0	78%	18	2
Centrist Evangelical	36%	41	23	60%	37	3	48%	43	9
Modernist Evangelical	23%	46	31	12%	56	32	30%	42	28
Mainline Protestant									
Traditionalist Mainline	59%	33	8	75%	24	1	61%	35	4
Centrist Mainline	33%	45	22	28%	55	17	33%	53	14
Modernist Mainline	19%	46	35	4%	58	38	3%	62	35
Latino Protestants	63%	31	6	57%	33	10	57%	29	14
Black Protestants	57%	33	10	54%	44	2	43%	38	19
Catholic									
Traditionalist Catholic	87%	11	2	56%	44	0	65%	32	3
Centrist Catholic	45%	36	20	34%	59	7	29%	55	16
Modernist Catholic	21%	49	30	4%	56	40	3%	66	31
Latino Catholic	47%	41	12	35%	55	10	44%	31	25
Other Christian	57%	28	15	43%	43	14	63%	28	9
Other Faiths	40%	35	25	12%	62	26	37%	43	20
Jewish	24%	49	27	10%	45	45	37%	46	17
Unaffiliated									
Unaffiliated Believers	9%	33	58	15%	70	15	NA	NA	NA
Secular	1%	20	79	2%	28	70	NA	NA	NA
Atheist, Agnostic	1%	16	83	0%	5	95	NA	NA	NA

Legend: Worship attendance: *"regular": weekly or more; "often": 1-2 a month; few times a year; "rarely": seldom or never;* View of God: *"Personal": God is a person; "Impersonal": God is a spirit or force; "Unsure": not sure or doesn't believe in God;* View of Tradition: *"Preserve": strive to preserve beliefs/practices; "Adapt": strive to adapt beliefs/practices to new times; "Adopt": strive to adopt new beliefs/practices; NA: Not asked.*