

The Essentiality of “Culture” in the Study of Religion and Politics

LAURA R. OLSON
*Political Science Department
Clemson University*

This article reviews various theoretical approaches political scientists employ in the analysis of religion and politics and posits culture as a conceptual bridge between competing approaches. After coming to the study of religion slowly in comparison with other social science disciplines, political science finally has a theoretically diverse and thriving religion and politics subfield. However, political scientists' contributions to the social scientific study of religion are hampered by a lack of agreement about whether endogenous or exogenous theoretical approaches ought to dominate our scholarship. I assert that the concept of culture—and more specifically, subculture—might help create more connections across theoretical research traditions. I emphasize how the concept of religion-based subculture is inherent in psychological, social psychological, social movement, and contextual approaches to religion and politics scholarship, and I explore these theoretical connections using the example of religion-based “us versus them” discourses in contemporary American politics.

Keywords: culture, religion, politics.

INTRODUCTION

Since the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* debuted 50 years ago, our understanding of the relationship between religion and politics has deepened substantially. Although political scientists have been slower than scholars in other social science disciplines to embrace the study of religion (Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005; Wald and Wilcox 2006), the religion and politics subfield is now thriving. In fact, in 2009 alone, two dense handbooks on the study of religion and politics (Haynes 2009; Smidt, Kellstedt, and Guth 2009) were published. The range of content included in these handbooks provides a rather comprehensive picture of the vibrant state of research on religion's relevance to politics in both American and international contexts. As its title indicates, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics* (Smidt, Kellstedt, and Guth 2009) focuses squarely on scholarship about the religion-politics relationship in the United States. It includes detailed treatments of religious social movements and interest groups; religion's relevance to political parties, political participation, political socialization, vote choice, and a range of political attitudes; the relationship between aspects of religion and political institutions; and religion in American political thought and history. The *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Politics* (Haynes 2009) is international in its approach and content. It takes a tradition-specific approach, with chapters on the relationships of eight distinct faith traditions to politics worldwide; the volume also includes several takes on religion's relevance to different aspects of governance, as well as discussions of religion and international relations, security, and development.

While the handbooks nicely illustrate the substantive, epistemological, and methodological pluralism inherent in political science approaches to the study of religion, neither volume (at least *in toto*) synthesizes an overarching theory of “religion and politics.” To be fair, developing such a theory is much easier said than done. Most scholars are (quite rationally) invested in their own

Correspondence should be addressed to Laura R. Olson, Political Science Department, Clemson University, 232 Bracket Hall, Clemson, SC 29634. E-mail: laurao@clemson.edu

particular ways of knowing, which can result in some resistance to theories and methods that could contradict one's own preferred approaches. And a plurality of approaches leads to a broader swath of understanding, too. Even a quick perusal of the aforementioned handbooks reveals exemplary traditions of scholarship about how various aspects of religion affect the political world. After all, "religion" and "politics" are hardly unitary concepts. In thinking about religious interests, we might mean broad religious institutions and traditions, people who share a particular religious characteristic, or something else entirely (e.g., Djupe and Olson 2007). Separately, "politics" covers everything from institutions to mass behavior, and that is just on the empirical side of scholarship. Perhaps we should simply say *vive la difference!* and not worry about positing a grand theory of religion and politics.

On the other hand, religion and politics scholars might well benefit from finding ways of asserting a more unified theoretical front, particularly because of our subfield's "and-politics" status. "And-politics" subfields (such as gender and politics, race and politics, etc.) often are seen as tangential by the broader discipline of political science (Wald and Wilcox 2006). Among the critics' charges: "What, if anything, might we learn about the nature and conduct of the (very earthly) realm of politics from understanding religion?" and "Isn't religion just another demographic variable that one might include as a control?" The struggle for disciplinary relevance is compounded by the fact that any "and-politics" subfield must, by definition, draw insights from other disciplines (see Leege, Lieske, and Wald 1991). As a result, religion and politics scholars sometimes face criticism—from both the broader discipline and one another (Djupe and Olson 2007; Wald and Wilcox 2006)—for not advancing *political science* theory *per se*.

From my perspective, if any social scientific concept has the potential to inform a broad theory of religion and politics, it is *culture*. While I am well aware of the caution that must be exercised when discussing culture (e.g., Eckstein 1988; Laitin 1988; Ross 1997)—and extremely hesitant to imply that rational choice models have no merit in the study of religion and politics (as some scholars would insist; see Eckstein 1988)—below I shall present my view of how the concept of culture seems to unify disparate threads of the religion and politics literature and propose ways in which scholars might make use of the concept in future research. Thus what follows is partly a review of current scholarship on religion and politics (particularly in the United States, as that is my own area of specialization) and partly an effort to employ the concept of culture as a way of connecting seemingly disparate research programs.

ON CULTURE AND SUBCULTURE

Religion is many things, and it is well beyond the scope of this article to attempt even a cursory inventory of possible definitions. Nevertheless, for our purposes here, religion is three things: a cultural construction, an essential basis of social identity, and a multifaceted force of tremendous political significance in today's world. Each of these aspects of religion is clearly relevant to the broad concept of culture. First, scholars across disciplines have commented widely on the profound connections between religion and culture (e.g., Durkheim 1915/1965; Eliade 1957/1987; Geertz 1973; Leege 1992; Leege et al. 2002; Lenski 1961; Niebuhr 1951; Ross 1997; Smith 1996; Wald and Leege 2009, 2010; Weber 1905/1958; Wuthnow 1987). Second, "it is clear that religion is intimately bound up with people's identity, their sense of who they 'really' are" (Greil and Davidman 2007:549; see also Berger 1967; Durkheim 1915/1965; Herberg 1956; James 1902/1982; Jelen 1991, 1993). Third, all one need do to be convinced of religion's relevance to contemporary politics is to read the news on any given day. What can we learn about the relationship(s) between religion and politics from culture? What can we learn about culture from understanding how religion variously affects politics? And how do various threads of the religion and politics literature relate to the mechanisms by which culture and the religion-politics relationship mutually reinforce each other?

My assertion that culture is key to our understanding of religion and politics draws heavily on the work of Leege and Wald, who have endeavored for two decades to get the discipline and the subfield to take cultural analysis seriously (Leege 1992, 1993; Leege, Lieske, and Wald 1991; Leege et al. 2002; Wald and Leege 2009, 2010; Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005). Although their work has been foundational to research on religion and politics in many ways, the subfield has been hesitant at best to embrace their insistence on cultural analysis. The handbooks mentioned above (Haynes 2009; Smidt, Kellstedt, and Guth 2009) include little on culture or cultural analysis (save for Wald and Leege 2009). The same is true in a recent book marking the culmination of the American Political Science Association's official Task Force on Religion and American Democracy (Wolfe and Katznelson 2010), except for another entry by Wald and Leege (2010). Another especially high-profile recent publication on religion and American politics, Putnam and Campbell's *American Grace* (2010), does not explicitly treat culture, either.

What is culture? How and why might it be essential to our understanding of religion and politics? Geertz defines culture as "an historically transmitted pattern of meaning embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men [*sic*] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (Geertz 1973:89, quoted in Ross 1997:301). This definition is useful because it emphasizes that *shared symbolic meaning* lies at the heart of cultural ties, just as is the case with any religious meaning-system (see Wald and Leege 2009). Such shared understandings of what is right and wrong, good and bad, inevitably affect individual choices about everything—including politics; "these choices are simultaneously choices of culture—shared values legitimating different patterns of social practices" (Wildavsky 1987:5). Most elements of religious self-understanding are rooted in shared values (whether this involves identification as a born-again Christian, a member of a particular congregation, a follower of a particular religious leader, or something else entirely). Thus, it should hardly be surprising, at least from a cultural perspective, that political choices would be affected by shared religious values.

Nevertheless, "culture" is a tricky concept. It means different things to different scholars (Almond and Verba 1963; DiMaggio 1997; Eckstein 1988; Laitin 1988; Leege et al. 2002; Reisinger 1995; Ross 1997; Smith 1996; Swidler 1986; Thompson, Grendstad, and Selle 1999; Wald and Leege 2009; Wildavsky 1987; Wuthnow 1987), and some remain unconvinced that it has much utility at all (e.g., Jackman and Miller 1996). Culture can be construed—quite accurately—as too broad to provide much theoretical traction (see Jackman and Miller 1996; Laitin 1988). This is especially so when culture is viewed as a constant force uniting a group of people, rather than diverse and mutable. Thus, it is often more useful to study differences between and among *subcultures* rather than trying to grapple with the broader concept of culture itself (see Leege et al. 2002).

For the most part, political science either has ignored culture (Leege 1992) or treated it as a broad, largely static entity (e.g., Almond and Verba 1963). And the discipline has been especially "slow to appreciate the political significance of cultural differences rooted in *religious* understanding" (Wald and Leege 2009:144, emphasis added; see also Leege 1992). However, Wildavsky used his 1986 presidential address to the American Political Science Association to assert the merits of cultural analysis: "It is . . . unreasonable to neglect the study of *why* people want what they want" (Wildavsky 1987:3). For Wildavsky, culture lies at the core of why people want what they want, which links it inextricably with politics.

If, as Wildavsky argued, politics arises from social interactions, and "cultural theory . . . is based on the premise that preferences . . . emerge from social interaction in defending or opposing different ways of life" (1987:5), then applying cultural models to the study of politics is not just reasonable but necessary. And cultural analysis seems especially well suited to inquiries about religion's relevance to politics, since religion is (1) heavily symbolic in nature (e.g., Eliade 1957/1987) and (2) learned (e.g., Durkheim 1915/1965). "Religion is collective memory . . . [that] rehearses, retells, the story of a people, [and] gives it cosmic significance" (Leege et al. 2002:42).

The role of symbol and parable in transmitting religious values from one generation to the next cannot be overstated. Moreover,

[w]e don't come pre-programmed with meaning systems . . . humans have to construct [them] . . . These created meaning-systems are what we sometimes call "culture," that is, a social group's conglomeration of shared codes, norms, values, beliefs, and symbols that tell its members what to do with their lives and why . . . Religion . . . is a particular kind of cultural meaning-system, oriented toward the sacred or supernatural. (Smith 1996:5)

However, for the concept of culture to be useful in the study of religion and politics, one of the principal criticisms of its use in political science—that is, that it is too broad to explain much variation—must be addressed. It is my assertion that the more specialized concept of *subculture* has particular theoretical leverage to offer in studies of religion and politics. I join Legee and colleagues in asking that we employ "a dynamic, diffuse definition [of culture] rooted in the competing notions of how we should and should not live" (2002:13). Such a definition (or perhaps operationalization) permits *comparison* of the multitude of distinctive, even oppositional, "ways of life" that exist within broader cultures. Laitin makes it plain: "To share a culture means to share a language or a religion or a historiography. Very rarely do these cultural systems coincide perfectly within a large society. People often must choose which among their religious group, language group, and so on will be their primary mode of cultural identification" (1988:591; see also Ross 1997:301). In any broad culture, individuals pick and choose which values to espouse on the basis of their favored social characteristics or relationships (Laitin 1988; Lieske 1993; Ross 1997). Logically, individuals rank order the salience of the subcultural groups to which they might belong—in essence choosing which among their various affiliations to prioritize in creating a sense of self. Thus, most people should be expected to respond—both cognitively and emotionally—to messages and symbols that resonate with the core values of the subcultures with which they most fully identify, "almost like a secret code . . . which sets one group's experience apart from others" (Ross 1997:302). Political science research has demonstrated the variety of ways in which this rank-ordering process has implications for political attitudes and actions (e.g., Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee 1954; Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002; Hetherington and Weiler 2009; Legee et al. 2002; Miller et al. 1981; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995).

Any individual's sense of self is rooted in his or her understanding and prioritization of the cultural significance and value of salient personal characteristics and group memberships. When an individual has determined the relative ranking of various components of his or her "cultural repertoire," certain values necessarily take precedence over others. And religion—in all its manifestations—fosters shared subcultural identities, meanings, symbols, and values. Indeed, "religion [is] the quintessential cultural basis for political organization" (Ross 1997:310; see also Cohen 1969; Legee 1992; Legee et al. 2002; Lenski 1961; Smith 1996; Wuthnow 1987).

If politics is the perpetual struggle over "who gets what, when, how" (Lippmann 1936), then subcultural identity helps individuals decide "who" they are. Subcultural identity also goes a long way toward determining which "symbolic and material objects people consider valuable and worth fighting over, the contexts in which such disputes occur, and the rules (both formal and informal) by which politics takes place and who participates in it" (Ross 1997:302; see also Edelman 1964). Thus, the prioritization and framing of values within different subcultures provide meaningful frames for social criticism and motivate prescriptions to cure society's perceived ills.

(Sub)culture in the Study of Religion and Politics

The psychological power of group identification is essential to religion's effect on politics. As Legee and colleagues note:

Groups form the basis of cleavage in a larger society for a variety of cultural and political reasons: (1) whether based on voluntary affiliation or generational replacement, groups socialize members into their values; (2) through

processes of social identification, groups develop consciousness of kind so that it is possible for members to say “we . . . they”; (3) through the interaction of members, a sense of social cohesion develops that provides reinforcement for group identity and norms; and (4) through an advantageous political shorthand, political elites think of society in terms of groups. (2002:49–50)

Thus, religious identity renders individuals members or nonmembers of various groups. Membership in this broad sense is rooted largely in acceptance or rejection of shared values and symbols rather than in concrete exchange of goods or services. Although I do not deny that organized religion also does offer concrete benefits (Chaves 2004; Djupe and Gilbert 2006; Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), the symbolic, group-relevant nature of religious identity suggests that much of the work we do on religion and politics may be unified (at least to an extent) using the concept of subculture.

Djupe and Olson (2007) identify five distinct theoretical approaches that inform most empirical scholarship on religion and politics. Two of these five approaches focus primarily on how individuals’ internal (endogenous) religious orientations affect political outcomes, while the other three theoretical approaches place greater emphasis on external (exogenous) religious factors that buffet individuals and thus shape political outcomes. Djupe and Olson (2007) discuss cultural approaches under the latter rubric, emphasizing the work of Legee and Wald (e.g., Legee et al. 2002). However, because my purpose here is to illuminate the ways in which cultural theory may be used to unify the religion and politics subfield, I focus below on how insights from cultural analysis might inform the other four approaches: psychological, social psychological, social movement, and contextual approaches. Thus, the discussion that follows draws broadly on insights from the Legee-Wald body of work rather than treating it separately.

(Sub)culture and Endogenous Approaches to Religion and Politics

According to Djupe and Olson, *psychological approaches* to the study of religion and politics “view the key attachment point between religious faith and political commitments as the individual’s identification with religious reference groups” (2007:256). In this vein of scholarship, psychological attachments with religious institutions, local congregations, theological streams, individual clergy, and other religious reference groups and figures are thought to drive individuals’ political preferences. The substantive focus of much of this work has been on the Religious Right and religion and politics in the African-American tradition (Calhoun-Brown 1996, 1998; Harris 1999; Jelen 1991, 1993; Wilcox 1992; Wilcox, Jelen, and Legee 1993).

The heavy emphasis on personal identity in this research stream sometimes precludes thoroughgoing analysis of organizational mechanisms that drive political activity, as Djupe and Olson (2007:256) note. However, if we think of the psychological dimension of religious identity as just one component of the formation of religion-based subcultures—and treat organizational mechanisms separately, such criticism might be muted a bit. As Merelman observed, it is essential in cultural analysis to “seek out correspondence between attitudes and collective representations” (1989:483). For example, studying the political implications of otherworldliness in black churches (Calhoun-Brown 1998) is one way of asking how individual religious and political attitudes are rooted in subcultural meaning-systems. In short, psychological approaches to religion and politics scholarship help us understand *the variety of symbolic themes that animate religion-based subcultures*.

Separately, *social psychological approaches* emphasize the relationships among individual religiosity (as measured by level of religious commitment and orthodoxy of theological views), moral traditionalism, and political orientation. This approach, as led by Guth, Green, and colleagues (Green 2007; Green et al. 1996; Guth et al. 1997; Smidt et al. 2008, 2010), has yielded a voluminous body of work elucidating the political significance of religion’s “three Bs”—“belonging,” or religious affiliation (e.g., Herberg 1956); “believing,” or theological orthodoxy (e.g., Kellstedt and Smidt 1993); and “behaving,” or nature and degree of participation in religious

activities (e.g., Green 2007). Over the course of three decades, Guth and colleagues have established that the political significance of religious “belonging” has diminished in the United States since World War II; no longer are Protestants simply on one side politically with Catholics and Jews on the other (see also Herberg 1956; Layman 2001; Wuthnow 1988). Instead, theological orthodoxy and the extent of one’s religious commitment are closely related to political attitudes, with theological conservatives and those who participate most frequently in religious activities trending strongly toward political conservatism (e.g., Green 2007; Layman 2001; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Smidt et al. 2010). The much-discussed “culture wars” thesis (Hunter 1991) is also social psychological in nature, as is the cottage industry of research on whether American public opinion is polarized around sociomoral issues (Abramowitz and Saunders 2008; DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson 1996; Fiorina 2011; Layman and Carsey 2002; Layman and Green 2005; Olson and Green 2006).

Like the psychological approach to religion and politics research, the social psychological approach has faced criticism, particularly from scholars who argue that its emphasis on endogenous attitudes and orientations results in a lack of emphasis on the organizational contexts within which personal religious and political orientations are developed (e.g., Djupe and Gilbert 2009). However, the work of Leege and Wald again might point us in a theoretically integrative direction. As they note, “the ‘culture’ that individuals construct inside their heads manages to integrate elements from many different worldviews. There are . . . multiple sources of cultural norms and values, and the differences among them provide fertile opportunity for political mobilization” (Leege et al. 2002:26). Social psychological analyses of religion and politics are useful—particularly in combination with the psychological approaches described above—because *they provide information about how religion-based subcultures marry their norms and values with particular political worldviews.*

Culture and Exogenous Approaches to Religion and Politics

Social movement approaches refocus our attention on the exogenous forces that shape the religion-politics relationship. Research employing social movement theory takes mass mobilization and counter-mobilization especially seriously. Instead of beginning with the question of how religious variables affect people’s political orientations, research using social movement theory tends to emphasize ways in which broad religious forces can inspire political participation. Scholars across disciplinary lines recognize social movement theory’s relevance to the study of religion and politics (e.g., Casanova 1994; Hertzke 1993; Leege et al. 2002; McVeigh and Sikkink 2001; Niles 2007; Oldfield 1996; Smith 1996; Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005). Social movement theory also is a useful tool in both the American and international context, allowing scholars to account for the macro-level religious forces that inspire collective action.

Significantly, the concept of culture is central in social movement theory; cultural approaches constitute one of the three branches of sociological work on social movements (Smith 1996; Swidler 1986; Tilly 1978; Wald, Silverman, and Fridy 2005).¹ Wald, Silverman, and Fridy cleverly assert that social movement theory provides scholars with the tools to discover the “motives, means, and opportunities” (2005:124) to understand the religion-politics relationship. The utility of this approach is illustrated by Balmer’s (2010; on a related note, see Lindsay 2007) argument about why the Religious Right came to prominence when it did:

Why did evangelicals emerge so emphatically in the 1970s? The short answer is that the time was ripe [*opportunity*]. The infrastructure that evangelicals had constructed in earnest . . . was now sufficiently established so that it could

¹For a time, proponents of cultural analysis stood at odds with advocates of other theoretical approaches to the study of social movements, but in recent years, the various schools of thought have come to recognize the value of the others’ insights (McVeigh and Sikkink 2001).

provide a foundation for evangelicals' return to the public square [*means*] . . . Americans were ready to hear a new message . . . that cloaked itself in a very simple morality, one that appropriated the language of Christian values [*motive*]. (Balmer 2010:55)

With its emphasis on the macro-level forces that drive social and political transformation, the social movement approach does not lead the way in illuminating personal motivations for identification with particular religion-based subcultures, nor need it do so. Instead, the value of the social movement approach is its ability to *elucidate the exogenous factors that give rise to religion-based subcultures in the first place*.

Finally, *contextual approaches* draw directly on political scientists' innovative efforts to demonstrate how the everyday social contexts and social networks within which people live, work, and socialize affect how they view the political world (e.g., Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987, 1995; Huckfeldt, Sprague, and Levine 2000; Mutz 2002). The work of Djupe and Gilbert (e.g., Djupe and Gilbert 2003, 2006, 2009; see also Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993) exemplifies the contextual approach to the study of religion and politics. Asserting that the local congregation is the key religious locus of political socialization, Djupe and Gilbert argue that congregation-based small groups (such as Sunday School classes and Bible studies), informal social networks, and clergy convey specialized information to congregation members, thereby shaping their political orientations (Djupe and Gilbert 2006, 2009; see also Campbell 2004; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993; Jelen 1991; Neiheisel, Djupe, and Sokhey 2009; Schwadel 2005; Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988, 1990). According to this view, "congregational life presents myriad opportunities and information that help structure the civic engagement and political opinions of church members; indeed, the political life of church members cannot be properly understood without a detailed explanation of how and why congregations exert such influence over their members" (Djupe and Gilbert 2009:4). Other work in the contextual tradition emphasizes the political significance of broader contexts such as neighborhood location (Crawford and Olson 2001; McRoberts 2003, 2009; Olson 2000), but the principal operationalization of "context" remains the congregation.

The contextual approach is unique in its ability to connect everyday exogenous forces (as opposed to the macro-level ones covered by social movement approaches) to the relationship between religion and politics. Participation in congregations remains the most prevalent form of voluntary association in the United States (Putnam and Campbell 2010:30), and congregational life offers myriad opportunities for social interaction beyond religious worship and education (Chaves 2004). Active participation in a congregation has been shown to build individuals' civic skills (Djupe and Gilbert 2006; Verba, Scholzman, and Brady 1995) and enhance their sense of social capital (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Smidt et al. 2008). The informal social networks developed in congregations have wide-ranging political significance as well (Cavendish, Welch, and Legee 1998; Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Neiheisel, Djupe, and Sokhey 2009).

The political consequences of participation in congregational life do not end with the attainment of politically relevant skills and feelings of mutual trust. Congregations also may be thought of as subcultures where participants work out—often in highly symbolic fashion—"underlying assumptions about 'who we are' and 'how we do things here'" (Becker 1999:3; see also Lenski 1961). According to Wald and Legee, congregations are particularly hospitable forums where "the work of cultural education takes place" (2009:148). Once individuals decide to prioritize their affiliation with a particular place of worship, not only will they be exposed to specialized information to be processed cognitively—they also will come to an affective understanding of what is desirable and undesirable, good and bad, from the perspective of the subculture to which they belong. In short, "cultural preferences are derived from the learning that occurs within the web of social relationships in which people are embedded and on which they are especially dependent" (Lieske 1993:891–92). Scholars of religion and politics must take the religiopolitical significance of social context and social networks—particularly those developed in congregations—seriously.

Without such knowledge of the political relevance of exogenous religious factors that touch people's lives on a daily basis, we cannot possibly understand why or how personal religious preferences come to shape political outcomes. The contextual approach helps us see what it looks like inside religion-based subcultures and grasp the mechanisms by which religion and politics become connected.

Using (Sub)culture to Understand "Othering" in Religion and Politics

If the notion of "subculture" can provide enough conceptual leverage to make connections across different theoretical approaches to the study of religion and politics, then it should be helpful in illustrating specific substantive questions. One convenient example is the way in which political orientations often seem to cleave rather clearly along various religious lines in the United States. Such cleavages have been in evidence since at least the early 19th century; as de Tocqueville observed, "by the side of every religion is to be found a political opinion, which is connected with it by affinity" (1840/1988:287). Religion-based subcultures define themselves in large part on the basis of what they are and are not—because those assumptions are grounded in the moral certitude provided by established religious doctrines (Wald and Leege 2009, 2010). Such clear dichotomization is politically beneficial, too: "When, on the issues that arouse men [*sic*] emotionally, there is a bimodal value structuring, threat and insecurity are maximized. Those who hold the other value become the enemy . . . a bimodal value structure [means] symbolic cues and assurances [are] avidly grasped" (Edelman 1964:175–77).

When religious groups engage in what Hunter (1991) terms "culture wars," they are motivated at least in part by confidence in the righteousness of their cause. This assurance can lead to what Wald and Leege (2009, 2010) call "othering." In their words, "'othering' refers to the process by which members of a group define their own identity by emphasizing what distinguishes them from another group. Othering is typically utilized to make a group feel pure by painting its opponents as impure" (Wald and Leege 2010:356). The "groups" to which Wald and Leege refer are, in short, subcultures, and the process of making one's "opponent" appear "impure" aligns perfectly with Edelman's (1964) thinking about the political potency of dichotomous symbolic debates. In short, religion is politically salient in American politics today in large part because the subcultures that arise around religious identity provide clear cues about "what is perceived as right and wrong, us versus them" (Leege et al. 2002:26).

Perhaps themes from the four distinct approaches to religion and politics scholarship (psychological, social psychological, social movement, and contextual) can illuminate the significance of "othering" in American politics. A quick review of how the concept of "subculture" relates to the four approaches to scholarship is in order. First, the psychological approach sheds light on the norms, symbols, and values informing religion-based subcultures. Second, the social psychological approach shows how religion-based subcultures tie their norms, symbols, and values to political worldviews. Third, the social movement and contextual approaches describe the exogenous nature of religion-based subcultures and explain the mechanisms by which their values become attached to politics.

We should therefore begin by considering how religious subcultures might give rise to a *psychology* of superiority among their members. Psychological attachments to subcultural norms, symbols, and values develop from "processes within a culture's deep structure [that] consist of frequently deployed narratives which recount and dramatize in story form appropriate interactions between the contrasting elements within any cultural set (e.g., good against evil; black against white; North against South; Republican against Democrat)" (Merelman 1989:477). Any subculture has its own ideas about "moral order," or the unwritten rules about how collective life should and should not proceed (Leege et al. 2002; Wuthnow 1987). Thus, adherents of a particular subculture "often dislike and distrust groups with rival perspectives, and they even feel that some groups have no right to participate in democratic politics, much less to have their rivals'

perspectives become binding on society” (Leege et al. 2002:5; see also Ross 1997; Wald and Leege 2009, 2010; Wuthnow 1987).

Studies show that many Americans (and people in other countries as well; e.g., Bowen 2007) embrace strong in-group preferences along lines of religious identity. Currently, Muslims, atheists, and religious fundamentalists draw particular ire among Americans (Edgell, Gerteis, and Hartmann 2006; Kalkan, Layman, and Uslaner 2009; Putnam and Campbell 2010). In a nation where freedom of religious choice is enshrined, and where the religious “market” thrives as a result (Finke and Stark 2005), it stands to reason that many Americans “choose up teams” along religious subcultural lines. Individual religious identity is a deeply personal choice (Greil and Davidman 2007), so viewing oneself as a member of a particular religion-based subculture often resonates with special profundity both in terms of in-group and out-group affect.

Second, religious subcultures promote adherence not just to social and religious values, but to political ones as well. *Social psychological* studies of religion and politics often use the term “social theology” (Guth et al. 1997) in reference to these religiopolitical ways of knowing. Individuals may be grouped by religious affiliation and level of religious commitment into categories that amount to religion-based subcultures. For example, “modernist” mainline Protestants attend worship services relatively infrequently, interpret religious doctrine liberally, and approach politics from a largely progressive standpoint; “traditionalist” Catholics attend Mass faithfully, adhere closely to the teachings of the Church, and embrace conservative political views (e.g., Green 2007; Smidt et al. 2010).

The very existence of clear religion-based subcultures requires us to confront the power of symbol in contemporary American political discourse. In Edelman’s classic formulation, “political symbols bring out in concentrated form those particular meanings and emotions which the members of a group create and reinforce in each other” (1964:11). Why else would Texas Governor Rick Perry choose a prayer rally as a political venue and ask Jesus to bless “those who cannot see the light in the midst of all the darkness” (Fernandez 2011)? Why else would former President George W. Bush so frequently have referred to Pope John Paul II’s “culture of life versus a culture of death” trope in his rhetoric? The short answer is that “shared symbols constitute a political resource that can be effectively exploited by political entrepreneurs” (Laitin 1988:591), whether the entrepreneurs are advocates for the subculture (e.g., Religious Right organizations or the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) or political candidates and officials. “Candidates and campaign organizations try to paint their opponents as religiously and morally threatening by emphasizing their outsider status” (Wald and Leege 2010:356).

In the last decade alone, we have seen religiopolitical symbols at work in American presidential elections and international human rights policy—just to name two examples. The 2004 Bush-Cheney reelection campaign employed a highly effective strategy of reaching out to the most committed cadres of evangelical Protestants and Catholics with “us versus them” symbolic appeals (Mockabee 2007). Such appeals implored the faithful simply to “vote your values,” and the success of this strategy was reflected by the plurality of American voters who told exit pollsters that “moral values” were their primary guide on Election Day (Domke and Coe 2008; Hillygus 2007; Monson and Oliphant 2007). Quite separately, people of faith in both the United States and abroad have banded together on the basis of shared symbolic values to battle religious persecution and related human rights issues abroad (Hertzke 2004). Their strong assumption is, of course, that religious freedom is an unqualified good, and any regime that restricts religious practice is inherently evil.

Finally, *social movement* and *contextual* approaches to religion and politics research add immeasurably to our understanding of the politics of “othering” among religious subcultures. Quite simply, the norms, symbols, and values that underlie “us versus them” political discourses have to be learned somewhere. Layman and Green note: “in terms of linking religious perspectives to politics, the most important social context is membership in a religious community or tradition” (2005:65). Put differently, “people often derive their notions of what political ideas logically

‘go with’ religious values through education in religious institutions” (Wald and Leege 2009:132). These religious institutions include both congregations (Djupe and Gilbert 2009) and broader religious traditions (Layman and Green 2005).

As noted above, the impact of congregations on the generation of political worldviews cannot be understated. The research program of Djupe and Gilbert (2009) culminated in a careful contextual argument about the political significance of congregational participation that builds on early work by Wald and colleagues (Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988, 1990). Indeed congregational participation shapes political worldviews. Congregations often constitute their own subcultures—or perhaps microcultures (Becker 1999; Lenski 1961). Religious leaders sometimes take the opportunity to act as political opinion leaders with their flocks, to great effect (Cavendish 2001; Djupe and Gilbert 2003, 2009; Olson 2000). Moreover, social network theory tells us that the people with whom we interact most have important effects on how we view the world (Djupe and Gilbert 2006, 2009; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993; Huckfeldt, Sprague, and Levine 2000; Mutz 2002; Wald and Leege 2009).

However, broader exogenous factors ought not to be ignored simply because contextual approaches emphasizing congregational subcultures are compelling. Social movement theory suggests that broader exogenous forces are at work as well. Wuthnow (1988) was the first to demonstrate that religious currents spanning ecclesiastical lines have had political significance in the United States since World War II. Thus, we can speak meaningfully of the “pro-family movement,” which is broader even than the Religious Right of the late 20th century but no less rooted in a distinctive cultural outlook. Americans who identify with the pro-family movement—and, separately, those who do not—make “determined effort[s] to claim the moral high ground by insisting that ‘our’ party represents the majority tradition and ‘they’ do not. This is followed by an indictment of ‘them’ for associating with all sorts of disreputable groups and values” (Leege et al. 2002:14; see also, e.g., Nussbaum 2010).

The continuing strength of the pro-family movement lies in its successful symbolic harnessing of deep-rooted cultural values that strike religious and moral chords among large numbers of Americans. Such individuals represent different (and sometimes overlapping) subcultural categories, many of which are based in specific religion-based settings (e.g., former Episcopalians who grew disgruntled with their denomination’s progressive politics, Christian advocates of homeschooling who wish to shield children from secular education) and some of which are rooted in broader religion-based contexts (e.g., “I’m just a good Christian American”). Some scholars have gone so far as to argue that widespread disagreement over values is at the root of political division in the United States today, in a way that draws directly on the notion of “othering” and seems to go beyond Hunter’s culture wars formulation: “Differences in policy preferences on some . . . issues go far beyond disagreements over policy choices and even ideology, to conflict about core self-understandings of what it means to be a good person and to the basis of a good society” (Hetherington and Weiler 2009:11).

To summarize, cultural theory seems to hold promise in religion and politics scholarship, even when research questions concern matters as broad as root divisions across religion-based subcultures. Psychological work helps us grasp how and why subcultures develop attitudes of superiority rooted in their distinctive moral orders. Social psychological research explains the nature of the bridge between subcultural values and political worldviews. Finally, exogenous approaches animate the contextual and broader movement-based mechanisms by which religion-based subcultures connect their values to politics.

CONCLUSION

Although the discipline of political science was slow to embrace the study of religion, the discipline now supports a thriving and diverse religion and politics subfield. Religion and politics

research by political scientists continues to face disciplinary challenges to its relevance, but that has not deterred a growing number of scholars from dedicating their careers to understanding the myriad hows and whys of the religion-politics connection, both in the United States and across the globe.

The handbooks I referenced at the outset of this article (Haynes 2009; Smidt, Kellstedt, and Guth 2009) are but two illustrations of the variety in substantive, epistemological, and methodological approaches employed by scholars of religion and politics. The growing variety inherent in the subfield is a testament to its vitality and prospects for continued contribution to the broader social scientific understanding of religion. However, I would welcome a bit more theoretical unity among religion and politics scholars. Broad theorization never hurts disciplinary relevance, and more importantly it moves us toward a better macro-level comprehension of how and why religion and politics are so inextricably linked.

My proposal is that the concept of culture, and more specifically the notion of competing religion-based subcultures, might provide a bridge across endogenous (psychological and social psychological) and exogenous (social movement and contextual) theoretical approaches to the study of religion and politics. Admittedly, culture is not the easiest concept from which to gather traction. Something that is often most evident in “symbols, rituals, narratives, icons, and songs” (Smith 1996:11) does not lend itself especially well to standard analysis of quantitative data. And advocates of cultural analysis run the risk of being perceived as hostile to the insights offered by the rational choice tradition of scholarship, although I, for one, have no interest in discarding rational choice approaches. My position is that the insights inherent in the concept of culture get to the very core of how we order our lives together—and are thus essential to the general endeavor of understanding religion’s role in shaping political worldviews. Religion-based subcultures distinguish themselves through their shared norms, symbols, and values, contributing to a powerful sense of mutuality. A subcultural meaning-system understandably can be the root of shared political grievances and may compel political action. Tilly (1978) argues that people will only pursue such political activity that is consistent with their shared norms and traditions. Thus, (sub)culture is Swidler’s (1986) metaphorical “tool kit,” circumscribing the content of political grievances and the universe of acceptable political strategies.

Consider for a moment the centrality of subculture in a religious historian’s account of 20th-century evangelical Protestants:

The ignominy surrounding the Scopes trial convinced evangelicals that the larger culture had turned against them. They responded by withdrawing from the culture, which they came to regard as Satan’s domain, to construct an alternative universe, an evangelical subculture . . . They set about forming their own congregations, denominations, missionary societies, publishing houses, Bible institutes, Bible colleges, Bible camps, and seminaries—all in an effort to insulate themselves from the larger world. (Balmer 2010:49)

Absent this process of creating and refining a shared subcultural meaning-system and building institutions to support it, it is hard to imagine the birth, much less the continuing political success, of the Religious Right or the broader pro-family movement (see Lindsay 2007). And there are and will be many more religion-based subcultures that take on deep political significance, since “the system of myths and symbols which religion provides is capable of being continuously interpreted and reinterpreted in order to accommodate it to changing economic, political, and other social circumstances” (Cohen 1969:210, quoted in Ross 1997:310).

As we look toward the future, scholarship on religion and politics should work wherever possible to identify religion-based subcultures, provide rich descriptions of them, explain why they are distinctive, and then analyze their politics through the lens of the subcultural norms, values, and symbols that resonate with them. We should follow the charge of Wald and Leege (2009) to pay close attention to the socially constructed institutions that are charged with the transmission of culture. Doing so would go a long way toward the advancement of political

science theory *per se*, especially if the religion and politics subfield as a whole comes to the conclusion that “religious questions should be subsumed under a general theory of cultural political conflict” (Wald and Legee 2010:357).

REFERENCES

- Abramowitz, Alan I. and Kyle L. Saunders. 2008. Is polarization a myth? *Journal of Politics* 70(2):542–55.
- Almond, Gabriel A. and Sidney Verba. 1963. *The civic culture: Political attitudes and democracy in five nations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Balmer, Randall. 2010. *The making of evangelicalism: From revivalism to politics and beyond*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- Becker, Penny Edgell. 1999. *Congregations in conflict: Cultural models of local religious life*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Berelson, Bernard R., Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee. 1954. *Voting: A study of opinion formation in a presidential campaign*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Berger, Peter. 1967. *The sacred canopy: Elements of a sociological theory of religion*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bowen, John R. 2007. *Why the French don't like headscarves: Islam, the state, and public space*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Calhoun-Brown, Allison. 1996. African-American churches and political mobilization: The psychological impact of organizational resources. *Journal of Politics* 58(4):935–53.
- . 1998. While marching to Zion: Otherworldliness and racial empowerment in the black community. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37(3):427–39.
- Campbell, David E. 2004. Acts of faith: Churches and political engagement. *Political Behavior* 26(2):155–80.
- Casanova, Jose. 1994. *Public religions in the modern world*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Cavendish, James C. 2001. To march or not to march: The effect of clergy mobilization strategies on grassroots anti-drug activism. In *Christian clergy in American politics*, edited by Sue E. S. Crawford and Laura R. Olson, pp. 203–26. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cavendish, James C., Michael R. Welch, and David C. Legee. 1998. Social network theory and predictors of religiosity for black and white Catholics: Evidence of a “black sacred cosmos”? *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 37(3):397–410.
- Chaves, Mark. 2004. *Congregations in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, Abner. 1969. *Custom and politics in urban Africa*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Crawford, Sue E. S. and Laura R. Olson. 2001. Clergy as political actors in urban contexts. In *Christian clergy in American politics*, edited by Sue E. S. Crawford and Laura R. Olson, pp. 104–19. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- DiMaggio, Paul. 1997. Culture and cognition. *Annual Review of Sociology* 23(1):263–87.
- DiMaggio, Paul, John Evans, and Bethany Bryson. 1996. Have Americans' social attitudes become more polarized? *American Journal of Sociology* 102(3):690–755.
- Djupe, Paul A. and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2003. *The prophetic pulpit: Clergy, churches, and communities in American politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- . 2006. The resourceful believer: Generating civic skills in church. *Journal of Politics* 68(1):116–27.
- . 2009. *The political influence of churches*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Djupe, Paul A. and Laura R. Olson. 2007. A meditation on and meta-analysis of the public presence of religious interests. In *Religious interests in community conflict*, edited by Paul A. Djupe and Laura R. Olson, pp. 251–81. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- Domke, David and Kevin Coe. 2008. *The God strategy: How religion became a political weapon in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Durkheim, Emile. 1915/1965. *The elementary forms of the religious life*. New York: Free Press.
- Eckstein, Harry. 1988. A culturalist theory of political change. *American Political Science Review* 82(3):789–804.
- Edelman, Murray. 1964. *The symbolic uses of politics*. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Edgell, Penny, Joseph Gerteis, and Douglas Hartmann. 2006. Atheists as “other”: Moral boundaries and cultural membership in American society. *American Sociological Review* 71(2):211–34.
- Eliade, Mircea. 1957/1987. *The sacred and the profane: The nature of religion*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Fernandez, Manny. 2011. Perry leads prayer rally for “nation in crisis.” *New York Times*, 6 August: A12.
- Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. 2005. *The churching of America, 1776–2005: Winners and losers in our religious economy*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Fiorina, Morris. 2011. *Culture war? The myth of a polarized America*, 3rd ed. Boston, MA: Longman.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1973. Religion as a cultural system. In *The interpretation of cultures*, edited by Clifford Geertz, pp. 87–125. New York: Basic Books.

- Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan hearts and minds: Political parties and the social identities of voters*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Green, John C. 2007. *The faith factor: How religion influences American elections*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Green, John C., James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. *Religion and the culture wars: Dispatches from the front*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Greil, Arthur L. and Lynn Davidman. 2007. Religion and identity. In *The SAGE handbook of the sociology of religion*, edited by James A. Beckford and N. J. Demerath III, pp. 549–65. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE.
- Guth, James L., John C. Green, Lyman A. Kellstedt, Corwin E. Smidt, and Margaret M. Poloma. 1997. *The bully pulpit: The politics of Protestant clergy*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas.
- Harris, Fredrick C. 1999. *Something within: Religion in African-American political activism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Haynes, Jeffrey, ed. 2009. *Routledge handbook of religion and politics*. New York: Routledge.
- Herberg, Will. 1956. *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An essay in American religious sociology*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Hertzke, Allen D. 1993. *Echoes of discontent: Jesse Jackson, Pat Robertson, and the resurgence of populism*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.
- . 2004. *Freeing God's children: The unlikely alliance for global human rights*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Hetherington, Marc J. and Jonathan D. Weiler. 2009. *Authoritarianism and polarization in American politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hillygus, D. Sunshine. 2007. Moral values: Media, voters, and candidate strategy. In *A matter of faith: Religion in the 2004 presidential election*, edited by David C. Campbell, pp. 65–79. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, Eric Plutzer, and John Sprague. 1993. Alternative contexts of political behavior: Churches, neighborhoods, and individuals. *Journal of Politics* 55(2):365–81.
- Huckfeldt, Robert and John Sprague. 1987. Networks in context: The social flow of political information. *American Political Science Review* 81(4):1197–1216.
- . 1995. *Citizens, politics, and social communication: Information and influence in an election campaign*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Huckfeldt, Robert, John Sprague, and Jeffrey Levine. 2000. The dynamics of collective deliberation in the 1996 election: Campaign effects on accessibility, certainty, and accuracy. *American Political Science Review* 94(3):641–51.
- Hunter, James Davison. 1991. *Culture wars: The struggle to define America*. New York: BasicBooks.
- Jackman, Robert W. and Ross A. Miller. 1996. A renaissance of political culture? *American Journal of Political Science* 40(3):632–59.
- James, William. 1902/1982. *The varieties of religious experience*. New York: Penguin.
- Jelen, Ted G. 1991. *The political mobilization of religious beliefs*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- . 1993. The political consequences of religious group attitudes. *Journal of Politics* 55(1):178–90.
- Kalkan, Kerem Ozan, Geoffrey C. Layman, and Eric M. Uslaner. 2009. "Bands of others"? Attitudes toward Muslims in contemporary American society. *Journal of Politics* 71(3):1–16.
- Kellstedt, Lyman A. and Corwin E. Smidt. 1993. Doctrinal beliefs and political behavior: Views of the Bible. In *Rediscovering the religious factor in American politics*, edited by David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt, pp. 177–98. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Laitin, David D. 1988. Political culture and political preferences. *American Political Science Review* 82(2):589–93.
- Layman, Geoffrey C. 2001. *The great divide: Religious and cultural conflict in American party politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Layman, Geoffrey C. and Thomas M. Carsey. 2002. Party polarization and "conflict extension" in the American electorate. *American Journal of Political Science* 46(4):786–802.
- Layman, Geoffrey C. and John C. Green. 2005. Wars and rumours of wars: The contexts of cultural conflict in American political behaviour. *British Journal of Political Science* 36(1):61–89.
- Leege, David C. 1992. Coalitions, cues, strategic politics, and the staying power of the religious right, or why political scientists ought to pay attention to cultural politics. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 25(2):198–204.
- . 1993. Religion and politics in theoretical perspective. In *Rediscovering the religious factor in American politics*, edited by David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt, pp. 3–25. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Leege, David C., Joel A. Lieske, and Kenneth D. Wald. 1991. Toward cultural theories of American political behavior: Religion, ethnicity and race, and class outlook. In *Political science: Looking to the future*, Vol. 3, edited by William J. Crotty, pp. 193–238. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
- Leege, David C., Kenneth D. Wald, Brian S. Krueger, and Paul D. Mueller. 2002. *The politics of cultural differences: Social change and voter mobilization in the post-new deal period*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Lenski, Gerhard. 1961. *The religious factor*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Lieske, Joel. 1993. Regional subcultures of the United States. *Journal of Politics* 55(4):888–913.
- Lindsay, D. Michael. 2007. *Faith in the halls of power: How evangelicals joined the American elite*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lippmann, Harold D. 1936. *Politics: Who gets what, when, how*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- McRoberts, Omar M. 2003. *Streets of glory: Church and community in a black urban neighborhood*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- . 2009. Beyond savior, victim, and sinner: Neighborhood civic life and “absent presence” in the religious district. In *The civic life of American religion*, edited by Paul Lichterman and C. Brady Potts, pp. 82–99. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- McVeigh, Rory and David Sikkink. 2001. God, politics, and protest: Religious beliefs and the legitimization of contentious tactics. *Social Forces* 79(4):1425–58.
- Merelman, Richard M. 1989. On culture and politics in America: A perspective from structural anthropology. *British Journal of Political Science* 19(4):465–93.
- Miller, Arthur H., Patricia Gurin, Gerald Gurin, and Oksana Malanchuk. 1981. Group consciousness and political participation. *American Journal of Political Science* 25(3):494–511.
- Mockabee, Stephen T. 2007. A question of authority: Religion and cultural conflict in the 2004 election. *Political Behavior* 29(2):221–48.
- Monson, J. Quin and J. Baxter Oliphant. 2007. Microtargeting and the instrumental mobilization of religious conservatives. In *A matter of faith: Religion in the 2004 presidential election*, edited by David C. Campbell, pp. 95–119. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2002. Cross-cutting social networks: Testing democratic theory in practice. *American Political Science Review* 96(1):111–26.
- Neiheisel, Jacob R., Paul A. Djupe, and Anand E. Sokhey. 2009. Veni, vidi, disseri: Churches and the promise of democratic deliberation. *American Politics Research* 37(4):614–43.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. 1951. *Christ and culture*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Niles, Franklyn C. 2007. Unity in the face of the faceless: Clergy opposition to the Ku Klux Klan in northwest Arkansas. In *Religious interests in community conflict*, edited by Paul A. Djupe and Laura R. Olson, pp. 229–52. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press.
- Nussbaum, Martha C. 2010. *From disgust to humanity: Sexual orientation and constitutional law*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Oldfield, Duane Murray. 1996. *The right and the righteous: The Christian Right confronts the Republican Party*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Olson, Laura R. 2000. *Filled with spirit and power: Protestant clergy in politics*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Olson, Laura R. and John C. Green. 2006. The religion gap. *PS: Political Science & Politics* 39(3):455–59.
- Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Putnam, Robert D. and David E. Campbell. 2010. *American grace: How religion divides and unites us*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Reisinger, William M. 1995. The renaissance of a rubric: Political culture as concept and theory. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 7(4):328–52.
- Ross, Marc Howard. 1997. The relevance of culture for the study of political psychology and ethnic conflict. *Political Psychology* 18(2):299–326.
- Schwadel, Philip. 2005. Individual, congregational, and denominational effects on church members’ civic participation. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 44(2):159–71.
- Smidt, Corwin E., Kevin R. den Dulk, Bryan T. Froehle, James M. Penning, Stephen V. Monsma, and Douglas L. Koopman. 2010. *The disappearing God gap? Religion in the 2008 presidential election*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smidt, Corwin E., Kevin R. den Dulk, James M. Penning, Stephen V. Monsma, and Douglas L. Koopman. 2008. *Pews, prayers, and participation: Religion and civic responsibility in America*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Smidt, Corwin E., Lyman A. Kellstedt, and James L. Guth, eds. 2009. *The Oxford handbook of religion and American politics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Smith, Christian. 1996. Correcting a curious neglect, or bringing religion back in. In *Disruptive religion: The force of faith in social movement activism*, edited by Christian Smith, pp. 1–25. New York: Routledge.
- Swidler, Ann. 1986. Culture in action: Symbols and strategies. *American Sociological Review* 51(2):273–86.
- Thompson, Michael, Gunnar Grendstad, and Per Selle. 1999. Cultural theory as political science. In *Cultural theory as political science*, edited by Michael Thompson, Gunnar Grendstad, and Per Selle, pp. 1–22. New York: Routledge.
- Tilly, Charles. 1978. *From mobilization to revolution*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- de Tocqueville, Alexis. 1840/1988. *Democracy in America*, edited by J. P. Mayer, trans. George Lawrence. New York: Harper and Row.
- Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in American politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wald, Kenneth D. and David C. Legee. 2009. Culture, religion, and American political life. In *The Oxford handbook of religion and American politics*, edited by Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and James L. Guth, New York: Oxford University Press.

- . 2010. Mobilizing religious differences in American politics. In *Religion and democracy in the United States: Danger or opportunity?* edited by Alan Wolfe and Ira Katznelson, pp. 355–81. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wald, Kenneth D., Dennis E. Owen, and Samuel S. Hill. 1988. Churches as political communities. *American Political Science Review* 82(2):531–48.
- . 1990. Political cohesion in churches. *Journal of Politics* 52(1):197–215.
- Wald, Kenneth D., Adam L. Silverman, and Kevin Fridy. 2005. Making sense of religion in political life. *Annual Review of Political Science* 8(1):121–43.
- Wald, Kenneth D. and Clyde Wilcox. 2006. Getting religion: Has political science rediscovered the faith factor? *American Political Science Review* 100(4):523–29.
- Weber, Max. 1905/1958. *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Wilcox, Clyde. 1992. *God's warriors: The Christian right in 20th century America*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Wilcox, Clyde, Ted G. Jelen, and David C. LEEGE. 1993. Religious group identifications: Toward a cognitive theory of religious mobilization. In *Rediscovering the religious factor in American politics*, edited by David C. LEEGE and Lyman A. Kellstedt, pp. 72–99. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Wildavsky, Aaron. 1987. Choosing preferences by constructing institutions: A cultural theory of preference formation. *American Political Science Review* 81(1):3–21.
- Wolfe, Alan and Ira Katznelson, eds. 2010. *Religion and democracy in the United States: Danger or opportunity?* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Wuthnow, Robert. 1987. *Meaning and moral order: Explorations in cultural analysis*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- . 1988. *The restructuring of American religion*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Copyright of Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion is the property of Wiley-Blackwell and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.