

CONFERENCE PROPOSAL

"Christian Conservatives and American Democracy"

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I. Issues

Following the 2004 presidential election, public attention was captured by reports about the importance of "moral-values voters" in deciding the outcome. Exit polls revealed that between 20 and 25 percent of voters cast their votes on the basis of an evaluation of the candidates' moral values. The great majority of these votes went to President Bush. Since the election, scholars have begun to question whether moral values really mattered as much as they were reported to at the time. For some voters, the phrase "moral values" may have been a shorthand way of talking about other concerns, such as perceptions of presidential leadership. The ambiguity surrounding the meaning of moral values is one reason why a more thorough and scholarly investigation of "the values question" is needed.

Another reason is that, while controversy continues about the role played by moral-values assessments in electoral politics, they clearly fuel strong passions among sizable numbers of Americans. Recent American history shows that commitments to values are deeply connected to some of the most contentious and emotional issues of our day. These include end of life issues, reproductive issues, homosexuality, and religion in the schools. Even positions on some issues that seem to have relatively little to do with moral values, such as issues of war and peace and the environment, would, for many Americans be seen as expressions of moral values. Political scientists once interpreted political identifications as relatively straightforward expressions of economic interests, but it now seems that divergent conceptions of morality run deeper.

For these reasons, more probing, more complete, and more careful research on "the values question" is needed. In the context of this research, Christian conservatives stand out as deserving particularly close attention. They deserve this attention for three reasons: First, they have been the major force in the interjection of moral values into public debate. Indeed, leaders of the movement have sought to define "traditional" and "pro-family" values as synonymous with moral values generally. Second, the Christian conservative movement has not been as fully studied as its influence merits. Third, and perhaps most important, Christian conservatives have challenged long-held beliefs and norms about the role of religion in public life. These challenges could lead to important changes in American traditions of church-state separation.

The conference we propose to organize will provide a balanced view of the Christian conservative movement and the "values question," focusing both on the movement's positive features for individuals involved, without neglecting the potentially anti-democratic, anti-pluralist outlook of some leaders of the movement. One central goal of the conference and the conference volume will be to examine the extent to which the energies produced by the Christian conservative movement lead in three directions: 1) toward the improvement of American society as a whole; 2) toward efforts to remake

American society to reflect conservative Christian values; and 3) toward the creation of parallel institutional structures outside the public sphere. The energies of conservative Christians can help to renew American society, but will they – and, if so, how?

II. Background

Much of the public discussion of the values question has been highly polemical. Mass mailings from conservative Christian groups, such as the Traditional Values Coalition and Concerned Women of America, rally supporters by raising the specter of control of the policy agenda by “liberal elites” who, they allege, support the degradation of American culture, hedonistic lifestyles, and a range of antithetical values from advocacy of abortion and homosexuality to atheism and pacifism. Similarly, liberal groups have demonized Christian conservatives as “an army on the march” whose “theocratic” leaders are intent on dismantling barriers to the separation of church and state. Vivid images of powerful opponents with extreme views are an effective part of the machinery used to raise donations for political campaigns.

Images of effete, non-believing liberals and rough-hewn, God-fearing conservatives have entered the broader culture, as political commentators have searched for concise ways to distinguish the values of “blue” and “red” states. Thus, Brock Hurst, a popular voice of conservative “middle America” writes: “Most Red (state) Americans can’t deconstruct post-modern literature, give proper orders to a nanny, pick out a cabernet with aftertones of licorice, or quote prices from the Abercrombie and Fitch catalog. But we can raise great children, make beautiful and delicious creations with our own hands, talk casually and comfortably about God, repair a small engine...tell you the histories of our town and the hopes of our neighbors...”

Less polemical commentators, while lowering the volume of the rhetoric, do not always provide a clear understanding of the motivations of “values voters.” For example, Thomas Frank’s best-selling book, *What’s the Matter with Kansas?*, advances a theory of values voters that rests, ultimately, on economic class conflict. For Frank, the Republican Party, with the help of allied Christian conservative leaders, has been able to direct resentments arising from economic insecurity into the cultural arena. Anger has been directed toward culturally alien “liberal elites” rather than where, according to Frank, the anger should be directed: against the economic policies of the Republican Party. Frank fails to take seriously the possibility that religious beliefs, joined to aspirations for status in society, can be a decisive motivation for social and political action in their own right. A similar interpretive redirection can be seen in the work of K. Luker, who evaluates the debate over abortion as, ultimately, a conflict between working and non-working women. Also rejecting values as decisive, G. Lakoff interprets conflict between conservatives and liberals as rooted in the emotional climate surrounding father-child relations in more “authoritarian” and more “nurturing” families.

Politicians have been more willing to grant the authenticity of values concerns. The first President Bush promoted a program of “one thousand points of light,” a metaphor with strong religious connotations, through recognition of unusual achievements in community

service. President Clinton, also attuned to values concerns, advocated policies, such as the V-chip, to allow parents to control their children's exposure to objectionable media content, and AmeriCorps, to encourage youth service. President Clinton often used his speeches to encourage Americans to act on their values through such actions as adoption, character education, and community service. President George W. Bush took steps to build a closer collaboration between government and religious communities through his Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives. These steps have lent controversial support to those advocating new thinking about church-state relations.

A scholarly literature has also begun to emerge on the "values question" and the Christian conservative movement, but this literature has been marred by three weaknesses: 1) Some of the scholarship shows signs of bias and alarm, reminiscent, in a milder form, of the interest group and polemical literature. 2) Extensive gaps exist in the literature, and some key questions have not been addressed at all. 3) The good scholarship that exists is piecemeal and unconnected to a comprehensive, integrated view of the issues. In the remainder of this background section, I will discuss each of these weaknesses, and I will present an overview of how I will organize the conference to provide a much better understanding of the "values question" than is currently available.

Apologetics and Forebodings. The first major study of American evangelicals, by C. Smith, provided a stimulating collective portrait of American evangelicals emphasizing the diversity of views found in this group, and some of the sources of division among them. However, because the book failed to connect its survey and interview-based methodology to an analysis of the much more organized forces in the political arena, the picture of evangelicals creates an illusion of inertness and diversity, both of which can give way to action and common purpose in the course of political mobilization. Recent works on evangelical family practices by W.B. Wilcox and the interaction of evangelicals and American popular culture by A. Wolfe emphasize the shaping of evangelical practices by the dominant culture. In doing so, they convey a very important insight – no subculture exists independent of broader trends in society – but the insight may lead to underestimation of the distinctiveness and oppositional quality of the evangelical subculture. Evidence of deep concern about the state of American culture, supporting themes of the Christian conservative movement, can be found in the literature on family, education and the formation of character, as in the work of L. Waite and M. Gallagher, E.D. Hirsch, Jr. and J.D. Hunter. Forebodings are more common, however, when the Christian conservative movement itself is the focus of inquiry and the broader socio-historical context is neglected or de-emphasized. This neglect of context can take several forms: failure to see the accommodations that can occur between religious and non-religious people; failure to consider countervailing or more powerful forces in society; and failure to consider the temporal and contingent nature of political influence. At times, alarm is part of the intended message, as in the scholarly, but occasionally polemical work of S. Diamond and K. Phillips. However, even the excellent analysis of G. Almond, S. Appleby, and E. Sivan focuses on the growth of "fundamentalisms" throughout the world, without an equivalent consideration of countervailing forces.

Gaps in the Literature. The literature thus far has focused on church communities, on the one hand, and the political organization and beliefs of Christian conservatives, on the other. The literature has been largely descriptive. One potential set of contributors to the Christian conservative movement, namely, social movement theorists, has been largely silent because of a long-standing preference for study of "progressive" social movements. Consequently, theories of the co-evolution of parties and movements also remain undeveloped. In some widely-cited analyses, such as that of T. Frank, religious motivations are discounted in favor of allegedly deeper economic explanations for political conflict. Perhaps the most important gap in the literature, however, has been the failure of social scientists to consider the interaction between the Christian conservative movement and America's non-religious social institutions, such as education, mass media, and law. (Some good work, by contrast, is beginning to emerge on the family.) The movement tends to be seen entirely as either a religious or a political phenomenon. Yet, Christian conservative activists have been highly involved in the refashioning of social institutions, both through the creation of separate sub-cultural institutions and through efforts to influence the dominant institutional structure. Finally, because Christian conservatives have been so much in the spotlight recently, much too little attention has been paid to continuity and change in other moral value traditions, including those of the moderate and liberal communities of faith. More investigation would be warranted as well into the causes for the relative quiescence of moderate and liberal moral messages in contemporary political discourse.

Piecemeal Approaches. Some outstanding studies now exist both on conservative religious movements and on conflicts of values within American society. The study of G. Almond, S. Appleby, and E. Sivan, mentioned above, provides a powerful comparative analysis of fundamentalist religion, seen by the authors as a predictable response to secularization varying in intensity depending on identifiable social conditions and political opportunities, but shaped also by contingencies of leadership and message. W. Baker has recently published a major comparative study of values, showing that Americans are far more "traditional" in their moral values than are citizens of other advanced industrial societies. Baker also highlights the close division between "absolutists" and "relativists" in the American polity and the consequences of this close division for perceptions of the intensity of values conflict. Important hypotheses about the organizational strength of ascetic Protestantism have been advanced by M. Stevens. M. Chaves has described the cultural and organizational priorities of America's religious congregations. A good literature on family structures and practices is now emerging in the work of W.B. Wilcox and J. Bartkowski. Careful and sophisticated studies of the influence of religious belief on voting have been produced by G. Layman and J. Manza and C. Brooks. C. Wilcox has been a leader in the analysis of public opinion on a range of social issues, quantifying differences between Christian conservatives and other groups. P. DiMaggio, J. Evans, and B. Bryson have provided trenchant criticism of the values polarization thesis on the basis of careful analyses of survey evidence. J. Green, J. Guth, and C. Wilcox have charted changes in Republican state party committees since the 1980s, showing the growing, but constrained influence of Christian conservatives in many states.

High-quality specialized research advances knowledge about the “values question,” but it can do so at the expense of an integrated understanding. This is an important limitation in the case of culturally significant, multi-sided phenomena like the rise of the Christian conservative movement and “the values question” in American political life.

IV. Project

The proposed conference and conference volume will aim for this broader, integrated understanding. The central integrating theme of the conference will be an assessment of the contributions of Christian conservatives to American society and democracy – and, simultaneously, the potential tensions between Christian conservatives and American democracy. All important dimensions of the complex issues bearing on the “values question” will be brought together, because it is only in this way that a more complete perspective can be gained on the issues. These topics include: the empowering and positive social relations sustained by religious belief: the sense of victimization experienced by many Christians in a largely secular culture: the reasons for the growing strength of Christian conservatives as a political constituency: their varying success in influencing secular social institutions: and, finally, the condition of alternative moral values traditions in American life, and the reasons for their relative quiescence in the face of the challenge presented by the Christian conservative movement..

A conference based on commissioned papers is the most appropriate format for a project of this type. No single person has the expertise to write the definitive work on the range of issues bearing on “the values question” in American life. However, the architecture for such a work can be designed, and scholars can be identified who are capable of producing high quality contributions to each topic. In addition, the conversations that occur before, during, and after the conference can contribute to creating stronger networks of collaboration among scholars engaged in research on these topics.

A. Analytical Approach

In this section, we will provide titles of papers that we plan to commission, together with a description of the issues we expect the papers to examine and the data available for examining these issues. Starred (*) authors have agreed to participate in the conference, pending funding. These authors include many of the foremost authorities on Christian conservatives, America’s social institutions, and political change in the United States.

Panel 1: Christian Conservatives in Comparative-Historical Perspective

“Conservative Protestantism as a Source of National and International Institutional Development” Beginning with the work of Max Weber, conservative Protestantism has been recognized as a world-transforming and world-organizing force in the modern era, whose influence can be seen in the institutions of “rational capitalism,” as well as military organization, curricular organization, and the institutions and practices of the scientific community. In addition, many of the ameliorative institutions of American society have been strongly influenced by Protestant activism, including the public

schools, the philanthropic foundations, and a variety of moral protest movements, from abolitionism to Temperance. This paper will explore the influence of activist Protestantism as a factor in the institutional development of European and American society. It will raise questions about the extent to which activist Protestantism has faltered or continued as a force for national and international renewal, focusing on whether weakening support for the secular institutions of the public sphere has translated into sub-cultural organizational development to the detriment of public institution-building. Possible authors: Christopher Bayley (Cambridge University), Philip Gorski (Yale University)*, Rodney Stark (Baylor University).

“Comparing Global and National Explanations for the Rise of Christian Conservatism” In the work for the Fundamentalism Project, Gabriel Almond and his co-authors placed the rise of Christian conservatives in the United States in a global context, emphasizing such underlying factors as high ratios of uprooted persons, unstable politics, large-scale migration, economic distress, loss of territory (including loss of symbolic space in the culture), and other factors. They showed the “family resemblances” among the fundamentalist movements across the world, including in the United States, but do not emphasize, perhaps as much as they might, the assertion-response spiral of fundamentalisms. By contrast, writers who concentrate on the American experience tend to focus on such explanations as status politics, “lifestyle politics,” demographic shifts among Christian whites toward more homogeneous exurban communities, and Republican party-Christian conservative co-evolution. In this paper, the author(s) will critically compare explanations for the growth of the Christian conservative movement and offer evidence for and against existing explanations, using data from the Fundamentalism Project, the General Social Survey, and the American National Election Studies. A second theme will take up the issue of religious revival. Previous American religious revival movements have arisen at times when the Protestant majority felt threatened by the growing power of secular elites and threats to traditional morality represented by growing bohemian and immigrant populations concentrated in cities. Often, revivalists have been strongest in states in which they were also numerically strongest. The classic precipitating sources of conservative reaction have long since passed from the American scene. The author(s) will discuss whether the contemporary movement of Christian conservatives truly counts as an instance of religious revivalism, given these circumstances, and in view of the stable (or declining) number of churchgoers in the United States. Possible authors: R. Scott Appleby (University of Notre Dame), James A. Morone (Brown University)*, Olivier Roy (CNRS, Paris).

“Have Christian Conservatives Been Left Out of the Conversation of American Pluralism?” One common concern of Christian conservatives is that the broader culture is hostile to their views and excludes them from the dialogue of American pluralism. Christian conservatives may have grounds for raising these concerns. They have frequently been labeled as a group intent on imposing their values on other Americans. This paper will develop an intellectual history of “enlightened opinion” about Christian conservatives from the Progressive Era to today, based on a content analysis of the leading periodicals of the educated middle class. The analysis may show that Christian conservatives were, in fact, largely ignored by leading intellectuals for most of the 20th

century, when they were not explicitly dismissed as a relic. The paper will investigate the role of the secularization thesis as a frame for intellectual discourse. The case that Christian conservatives continue to be excluded from elite discourse can no longer be made persuasively. Over the last 30 years, Christian conservatives have clearly made themselves a force to be reckoned with. The available evidence suggests that strong feelings of exclusion from elite discourse have been much more common in recent years than actual exclusion. Why do Christian conservatives feel more excluded at a time when they are gaining greater influence in the public domain? Can the idea of a "war on Christianity" be considered simply a strategy for mobilizing the support of conservative Christians? Are beliefs about exclusion common among all ascendant protest groups? Were they equally common, for example, among leaders of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s? What are the consequences of the development of a culture of besieged exclusion and victimization among Christian conservative activists? Possible authors: David Sikkink (University of Notre Dame), Rogers M. Smith (University of Pennsylvania)*, Alan Wolfe (Boston College)*

Panel 2: Christian Conservatives as a Social Movement

"The Organizational Vitality of Conservative Protestantism" Sociologists have argued that organizational features of the conservative Protestant movement have facilitated its growing influence. The features include: high and multiple commitments to Christian community organizations; relatively exclusive involvement in Christian organizations; approval of entrepreneurialism; a high-energy mix of charismatic and bureaucratic elements in the offices of Christian "ministry"; strict and enforced norms regarding personal conduct; and easily identifiable "commitment symbolism." In the political realm, mega-churches (with their concentrations of thousands of believers) may have become, as an unintended consequence, an important part of this organizational vitality. Robert Putnam has argued that conservative Protestantism provides a model of social capital development in a society in which that development is otherwise imperiled and declining. More than that, the organizational structure of conservative Protestantism (as opposed to its belief structure) may provide a model, if suitably modified, for organizational renewal in non-church spheres of American life. Drawing on ethnographic studies, statistics on social organizational development, and the Verba, Schlozman, and Brady study of political participation, this paper will investigate how the level of in-group commitment typical of conservative Protestant churches affects the broader society. It will also explore the innovations in the evangelical movement that have helped to renew its organizational vitality. Possible authors: David Campbell (University of Notre Dame), Mark Chaves (University of Arizona)*, Mitchell L. Stevens (New York University)*.

"The Evangelical Social and Political Experience: Two Sides of Community" Survey data indicates that religiosity is associated with many positive outcomes of social life. Religious people are less likely to be involved in crime and more likely to be involved in voluntary organizations, particularly through the church. Controlling for other relevant variables, they tend to be more optimistic, to be healthier, and even to live longer. Church communities provide friends, organized support groups, and, not infrequently,

business opportunities for congregants. At the same time, involvement in conservative Christian religious communities has been connected by some social scientists to an exclusive view of moral virtue, ambivalence about pluralistic values, more authoritarian child-rearing, lack of charity toward the more disadvantaged members of society, and lower levels of voluntarism in non-church organizations. Using survey data and ethnographic studies of conservative Christian church communities, this paper will explore the interaction between the positive consequences of Christian community and the potential for withdrawal from the ideals supporting American pluralism and the public sphere. It will identify patterns in the life experience and belief of those Christian conservatives who continue to identify with the ideals of American pluralism and a strong, democratic public sphere. Possible authors: Nancy Ammerman (Boston University), Michael Hout (University of California, Berkeley), Robert Wuthnow (Princeton University)*.

“The Co-Evolution of the Republican Party and the Christian Conservative Movement: A Challenge to Social Movement Theory” The beginnings of a formal alliance between religious conservatives and the Republican Party go back to the late 1970s, with the formation of the Moral Majority and the Religious Roundtable. These connections were greatly strengthened by Ronald Reagan’s appeal to Christian conservatives. George W. Bush, who served as liaison between religious conservatives and his father’s 1988 campaign for president, is now often described as both the leader of the Republican Party and the leader of the Christian conservative movement. This chapter will use historical data on movement activists, Republican Party politicians, and their organizational networks to show the connection between the growth of conservative churches and Christian activist organizations; the growing influence of Christian conservatives in state and federal Republican Party politics. It will analyze the Christian conservative movement using the framework of the revised “political process model” of social movements theory, and it will show that social movement theory must continue to be revised to account for the co-evolution of the Republican Party and the Christian conservative movement. The paper will also focus on the techniques developed by Christian conservative activists and Republican Party strategists to “turn out the faithful.” Possible authors: Doug McAdam (Stanford University), Rory McVeigh (University of Notre Dame), Clyde Wilcox (Georgetown University)*.

“The Evangelical Movement and Minorities” One of the striking features of the contemporary movement of Christian conservatives is the sharp break it represents with previous white conservative movements on issues involving racial and ethnic minorities. Racial and ethnic minorities are welcomed into the movement, so long as they prove their religious *bona fides*. Other minorities (such as homosexuals, “secular humanists,” and atheists) are, by contrast, explicitly condemned. In many respects, these patterns of inclusion and exclusion reflect the explicit religious message of the new evangelicalism, influenced perhaps by the growing racial diversity of American society. This paper will draw on materials from ethnographic studies, interviews with evangelicals from the Smith and Emerson study, and from survey data on social distance and prejudice from the General Social Survey to answer the following questions: Can conservative Christianity be considered a form of post-racial, multi-cultural conservative thought? Or are racial

and ethnic prejudices simply concealed better than they have been in the past? Have the new patterns of acceptance for racial minorities and condemnation of religious and homosexual minorities created opportunities for conservatives and new problems for liberals? Possible authors: Lourdes Arguelles (Claremont Graduate University)*, Melissa Harris-Lacewell (University of Chicago), Michele Lamont (Harvard University)*.

Panel 3: Christian Conservatives and America's Social Institutions

"The 'Traditional Values' Core: Christian Conservatives, the Family, and Sexuality"

The idea of restoring "traditional family values" has played a central role in the Christian conservative movement from the beginning. The paper will discuss the distinctive structure and climate of affection mixed with strict discipline found in Christian conservative families. The paper will analyze data on the outcomes of Christian family practices for improving male involvement in family life, and creating supportive environments for children. The paper will investigate the tensions between a culture of increasing equality for women and the "soft patriarchy" of contemporary Christian family structure. Christian conservative policy successes have also been greatest in this arena. In the 50 States, Christian conservatives have fought successful battles to limit abortion, gay marriage, and stem cell research. They have promoted policies to encourage marriage, toughen divorce laws, and teach "responsible fatherhood." The success of the Christian conservative movement may be related to the historical connection of the great passages in life -- birth, marriage, child-bearing, and death -- to religious traditions. Another part of this success may be due to the absence of a strong, organized opposition. Even the women's rights organizations have only a limited interest in family policy *per se*. One major battleground linked to Christian family and "culture of life" policies, however, is stem cell research, where the interests of the organized medical and scientific communities confront those of Christian conservatives. This paper will define the meaning of "traditional family values" and the "culture of life." It will show how these ideals are central to the Christian conservative movement. It will examine the adoption of Christian conservative family policies in the 50 states, and the evolution of Christian conservative organizations involved in family policy. Possible authors: Michele Adams (Tulane University), John Bartkowski (Mississippi State University)*, W. Bradford Wilcox (University of Virginia)*.

"The New 'Education Gospel': Christian Conservatives and Schooling" Christian conservatives have thus far largely failed in their efforts to reform the public schools. Prayer in school has not been allowed since 1962, and the Bible continues to be taught only for its historical impact on Western culture. In spite of much effort, just a few school districts, including those in Cobb County, Georgia, and Dover County, Pennsylvania, require the teaching of "intelligent design" alongside evolutionary theory in biology classes. Character education programs are weakly connected to the Christian conservative movement, and their adoption has also been limited. This paper will explore the successes and failures of Christian conservatives in the public schools, and the reasons for their comparatively limited success thus far. As in other institutional arenas, the existence of an organized opposition (in education, the highly secular and predominantly Democratic teacher's unions) must be considered one important factor in

the explanation. Largely lacking support in the public schools, Christian conservatives have developed parallel institutional structures through home schooling and Christian academies. More than one million children are home schooled and tens of thousands of others are educated in Christian schools. This paper will draw on survey data, ethnographic case studies, and interviews with Christian conservative educators to investigate differences in the structure, curriculum, and "moral climate" of conservative Christian alternatives to public schooling. The paper will also discuss the research evidence on the effectiveness of Christian alternatives to public schooling, both as they relate to children's academic and social development. Possible authors: Lisa Nordlinger (University of Minnesota), David Sikkink (University of Notre Dame), Mitchell L. Stevens (New York University)*.

"The Sacred and the Profane: Christian Conservatives and Popular Culture"

Christian conservative efforts to change mainstream media content have also proven largely unsuccessful. The amount of sex and violence on television has not declined, and the number of gay characters has increased. Christian conservatives have helped to lead the fight to label media content, but they have scored only rare successes in campaigns against specific programs. As in the educational arena, levels of organized resistance (on the part of media companies, broadcasters, journalists, and authors, all committed to first amendment guarantees of freedom of expression) are one cause for this limited influence. Thus far, the courts have consistently favored first amendment guarantees, with the exception of regulated content for children. Largely blocked in the mainstream media, Christian conservatives have instead built a parallel media structure of impressive proportions. These media provide a mix of religious, self-improvement and entertainment content to the Christian conservative community and simultaneously fuel the Christian conservative political movement. Indeed, some have argued that broadcasters, such as Pat Robertson and James C. Dobson, have been the most important figures in the rise of evangelicalism as a social and political force. At the same time, Christian media audiences do not begin to rival mainstream media audiences. This paper will examine Christian efforts in the mainstream media, and it will compare the Christian media world to that of the mainstream media. It will examine the thesis that radio and television programs, such as *the 700 Club* and *Focus on the Family*, are the key to understanding both the sub-cultural organization of the Christian conservative community, and its links to Christian activists connected to the Republican Party. Possible authors: Joshua Gamson (University of San Francisco), Michael Schudson (University of California, San Diego), Alan Wolfe (Boston College).

"Rival Principles of Authority: Christian Conservatives and the Law" The recent Terri Schiavo case has galvanized Christian conservative opposition to the American judiciary, but the origins of the Christian legal movement can be traced back to the early 1970s. Many scholars have identified the Supreme Court's ruling legalizing abortion in *Roe v. Wade* as a catalyst for the development of a socially conservative Christian movement in American society. Less attention has been paid to the ways that *Roe* mobilized conservative Christians within the legal profession. This paper will explore the intellectual foundations and strength of the contemporary "Christian legal movement." The paper will draw on an analysis of the legal challenges mounted by conservative

Christian legal groups to describe the ways in which these groups hope to transform the legal system into one that reflects religious values. The paper will pay particular attention to the work of the four key organizations: the Alliance Defense Fund, the Blackstone Fellowship, the Christian Legal Society, and the St. Thomas More Catholic Lawyers Guild. It will investigate the connection between these groups and justices nominated to the federal appellate courts under the Bush Administration and to state courts under Governors closely tied to the Christian conservative movement. The paper will specify commonalities and differences among those who subscribe to the concept of "Christian law," and how such a concept articulates with existing normative principles of interpretation of case and statutory law. Possible authors: Eleanor Bader (City University of New York), Jean Reith Schroedel (Claremont Graduate University)*.

Panel 4: The Values Question and Party Politics

"Moral Values Voters in Recent American Presidential Elections" The significance of "moral-values voters" in the presidential election of 2004 remains disputed. Open-ended and close-ended questions yield different estimates of the significance of "values voting." Some voting models, such as Ray Fair's economy-based model, which do not include "moral values" at all, predicted the Bush victory (and by a larger margin than President Bush actually received). Other voting models, such as John Mueller's, suggest a strong "rally-round-the-flag" effect for incumbents during wartime. These findings raise an analytical question: Was the presidential election of 2004 decisively influenced by "moral values" at all? How can we reconcile the much higher turnout figures for Christian conservatives and the large proportion of voters citing "moral values" as their leading issue with successful election models based solely on economic and war variables? Here it will be important to investigate and decompose the correlations between "moral-values" voting and perceptions of presidential "character," perceptions of the risk of terrorist attacks, authoritarian personality variables, perceived "strength" as a factor in candidate assessments, social distance from minorities and foreigners, and changes in the economic circumstances of voters. The paper will assess rival theories of the causes of variation in Christian conservative votes and turnout in recent elections. Possible authors: Clem Brooks (Indiana University) and Jeff Manza (Northwestern University)*, Ray Fair (Yale University), Geoffrey Layman (University of Maryland).

"Explaining America's Commonalities and Divisions on Moral Values" We can hypothesize a number of "moral values" dimensions: family values, community values, nationalist/patriotic values, religious values, consumption and entertainment values, life purpose values, and others. Considerable agreement exists among all major groups in American society on some of these values, such as commitment to family and community, commitment to country, and idealism about the purpose(s) of life. At the same time, disagreement can be found in other moral-values dimensions. Wayne Baker has shown, for example, that Americans are almost equally divided between "absolutists" and "relativists." The paper will begin by examining commonalities and differences among five major strata on key moral-values items and scales: 1) Christian conservatives, 2) other non-elite whites; 3) non-elite minorities; 4) cultural elites (highly educated people working in social and cultural professions); and 5) business elites (high income

managers, executives and entrepreneurs). The author(s) will explain scores on moral-values scales using variables such as religiosity, region, city size, age, education, gender, and other covariates. The author(s) will examine the competing explanations of W. Baker, S. Brint, J.D. Hunter, R. Collins, G. Lakoff, M. Macy (and perhaps others) for differences between social-issues liberals and conservatives. The paper will investigate how the cultural opposition between "educated elites" and "middle America," though empirically weak in many "moral values" dimensions, helps mobilized political interest groups perpetuate boundary-defining stereotypes of "the other." Many surveys, including the General Social Survey, the Michigan National Election Studies, the Smith and Emerson survey of evangelicals, the Wolfe middle-class morality interviews, and the Communitarian Opinion survey, include data relevant to this paper. Possible authors: Wayne E. Baker (University of Michigan)*, Steven Brint (University of California, Riverside)*, John H. Evans (University of California, San Diego).

"Moral-Values Voters and Political Party Organizations" Both political parties have had to come to terms with the growth of moral-values voters. This paper will investigate the dynamics of conflict and accommodation in the Republican and Democratic state committees in the 50 states, drawing on interviews with state party leaders and historical materials on intra-party relations in the 1980s and 1990s. Republican Party state committees have often been depicted as places of growing Christian conservative influence. In 2000, the political scientist John Green, for example, characterized Christian conservatives as in a "strong," or majority, position in 18 Republican Party state committees, a "moderately strong" position in 26 (twice as many as in 1994), and a "weak" position in only seven (down from 20 six years before). However, such assessments may fail to take account of accommodations and conversions that have occurred within the Republican Party leadership, and therefore may require critical examination. In particular, wealthy evangelical Christians have played a mediating role in many Republican Party organizations. The Democratic Party has faced an equal, but different challenge: whether to continue to insist on a secular orientation or to begin to address the religious and moral concerns of voters who identify the Democratic Party as lacking a "moral compass." Given its heterogeneous composition and traditional emphasis on economic and "quality of life" issues, Democratic Party leaders may face the Hobson's choice of potentially losing elections by turning away from "the values question," or, alternatively, risking the disaffection of key contributors and supporters by developing an accommodative response to the rise of religiously-influenced moral-values voting. Possible authors: Rory McVeigh (University of Notre Dame), Nicol C. Rae (Florida International University), Clyde Wilcox (Georgetown University)*.

Panel 5: The Values Question and the Future of American Democracy

"People of Faith and the Quest for Power: The Complex Relations between Believers and Christian Conservative Activists" For most of the 20th century, the dominant position among evangelical Christians was to withdraw from the corrupt world of politics and to focus instead on individual spiritual development and spreading the word of the Christian gospel. This outlook changed in the 1970s, largely as a response to the perceived breakdown of traditional moral values, the Supreme Court's decision in the

Roe case, and the development of an organizational infrastructure for political activism. Yet, even today Christian conservatives remain ambivalent about political action. Most endorse it as the obligation of all citizens in a democracy, and as a way to inject "moral clarity" into public discussion. However, a sizeable minority remains alienated from politics, and many others worry about the over-zealousness of the Christian Right. (Indeed, most Americans seem to be sensitive to "over-reaching" on the part of the Christian Right.) Using ideas drawn from Robert Michels and other "elite theorists," this paper will explore the complexities of relations between an ambivalent and divided stratum of religious believers and the far more organized professional political activists who act in their name. Some leaders of the Christian Right believe that Christians are intended not just to participate actively in American democracy, but to dominate the organization of American society and to restore Christian value principles (see, e.g., Almond, Appleby, and Sivan, 2003: 156-7). However, the terms "theocratic" and "dominionist," which are widely used by critics of the Christian Right, may be misleading. As Almond and his colleagues note: "(t)he theological precision of separatist, Bible-believing fundamentalism in its early stages...has given way...to an internal theological pluralism tied together by political coalitions..." (p. 157). This paper will address a key question: How large a challenge do Christian Right leaders represent for American traditions of separation of church and state, in view of the hesitations of the American public about these leaders combined with the dependence of the Republican Party on the votes they can deliver? Possible authors: Lyman Kellstadt (Wheaton College), Richard Mouw (Fuller Seminary), Corwin Smidt (Calvin College).

"Moral Values in the Liberal Faith Communities" One of the perplexing features of the debate over "moral values" has been the relative absence of discussion of "moral values" on the part of representatives of the liberal faith communities, whether Protestant, Catholic or Jewish. Organizations like Americans United for Separation of Church and State and the Inter-faith Alliance are influential, but appear to have organized in a defensive way to fight the perceived threat represented by the Christian Right to the establishment clause of the First Amendment. As yet, little public discussion has focused on the positive moral messages of the liberal faith communities. This is surprising, because such values as helping the poor, loving one's neighbors, "repairing the world," social justice, and inter-faith dialogue were not long ago among the central messages of faith traditions in the United States. Indeed, moral messages from the liberal faith traditions played an important role in support of the Civil Rights movement. This paper will show the differences in textual emphases of church leaders from liberal and conservative faith traditions and compare their responses on moral values questions from interview and survey evidence. The paper will also explore why leaders of the liberal faith communities have been relatively silent at a time when "moral values" and church-state relations have become increasingly important in public life. Among the reasons suggested thus far for this relative silence are: the aging of the liberal faith communities and the declining numbers of Americans identifying with liberal faith traditions, a movement to the right among leaders of liberal faith communities, the desire to maintain alliances with secular liberals who are uncomfortable with the projection of religious values in public life, and divergent priorities and tensions related to racial and ethnic succession in urban ministries. Possible authors: Andrew Greeley (University of

Arizona), Wade Roof (University of California, Santa Barbara), Robert Wuthnow (Princeton University)*.

“Christian Conservatives and American Democracy: Final Thoughts” The concluding paper will seek to resolve some of the many paradoxes raised by “the values question.” It will ponder how Christian moral principles, which have served in the past as a profound support for American democracy, are now often perceived, even by some moderate Republicans, as a threat to democracy. It will discuss how the discourse of “moral values” has been appropriated by Christian conservatives, though virtually all Americans express strong moral beliefs and try to act on them in their daily lives. Most of all, the paper will ponder the question: What have been the impacts of Christian conservatives on American democratic performance? The worrying issues about Christian conservative successes stem from three characteristics of the movement: 1) the opposition of many of its leaders to the basic Constitutional principle of separation of church and State; 2) the extent to which leaders of the movement adhere to principles based on absolutist faith, rather than allowing for change in the face of empirical evidence; and 3) the extent to which the movement has adopted advanced methods of marketing to conceal objectives that most Americans would find troubling if they were openly acknowledged. Can a movement with these characteristics be good for American democracy? Can we accept the Christian conservative movement as a force for democratic renewal – and, if so, under what conditions? Or has it threatened the priority of reason in public discourse and, through its withdrawal into sub-cultural institutions, also the vitality of the public sphere? Possible authors: Harry Frankfurt (Princeton University), Stephen Macedo (Princeton University), Olivier Roy (CNRS Paris).

B. Personnel

Steven G. Brint (Ph.D. Harvard University) is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Riverside. He is the author of *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985* (with J. Karabel) (Oxford University Press, 1989), *In an Age of Experts: The Changing Role of Professionals in Politics and Public Life* (Princeton University Press, 1994), and *Schools and Societies* (Sage Publications/Pine Forge Press, 1998; second edition Stanford University Press 2006). He also edited *The Future of the City of Intellect: The Changing American University* (Stanford University Press, 2002). His articles have appeared in *The American Journal of Sociology*, *the Annual Review of Sociology*, *Sociological Theory*, *Sociology of Education*, *Minerva*, and many other journals. In 1991, he won the Distinguished Publication Awards from the American Educational Research Association and the Council of Colleges and Universities for *The Diverted Dream*. In 2001, he won the Willard Waller award of the American Sociological Association for a study of values messages in American public schools (with M. Contreras and M. Matthews). His widely-cited article, “Cumulative Trends and ‘New-Class’ Theories of the Liberal Political Attitudes of Professionals” (*American Journal of Sociology*, 1984) was the first social science study to examine “new-class” theories in light of comprehensive survey evidence on the attitudes and values of highly educated professionals as compared to other strata in

American society. He has continued to write on values issues, most recently on the “new culture of professionalism.”

Jean Reith Schroedel (Ph.D. Massachusetts Institute of Technology) is Professor of Politics and Policy at the Claremont Graduate University. Her first book, *Alone in a Crowd* (1985), is a study of women employed in non-traditional blue-collar occupations. Her second book, *Congress, the President, and Policymaking: A Historical Analysis* (1994) is a longitudinal analysis of the shifting roles of Congress and the President in policymaking. A portion of this research was awarded the Pi Sigma Alpha Prize by the Western Political Science Association in 1992. Her third book, *Is the Fetus a Person? A Comparison of Policies across the Fifty States* (2000) is an analysis of the three major fetal policy issues (abortion, drug use by pregnant women, and third-party fetal killings). This research has been cited in most of the major newspapers in the country and in an *amicus curiae* Supreme Court brief. In 2001, she was awarded the American Political Science Association’s prestigious Victoria Schuck Award for this research. Schroedel is also the author of more than two dozen articles. Her research has been supported by grants from the Haynes Foundation, Bradshaw Foundation, Irvine Foundation, Fletcher Jones Foundation, and the Social Science Faculty Research Fund. She is currently at work on two projects: a book about the foster care system, and a series of articles analyzing the impact of socially conservative Christians on state and local politics.

C. Products

The primary product of the conference will be a conference volume, *The Values Question: Christian Conservatives and the Strength of American Democracy*. I will be approaching publishers before the conference, and I expect to find substantial interest, given the timeliness of the issues and the quality of the authors who have already agreed to participate.

D. Dissemination

The conference will be open to the public, and we will invite members of the press to attend. Major findings of the conference papers will be summarized and distributed as a release to members of the press. Speakers with excellent communications skills will be designated to discuss the major findings of the conference with members of the press.

IV. Implications

American society has been described as closely divided on social issues between conservative “absolutists” and liberal “relativists.” A series of conflicts have emerged between leaders of these two value “camps” on issues ranging from abortion to homosexuality to the study of evolution in the schools. However, the actual division among Americans on the full range of moral values dimensions is not well known, and more overlap likely exists on some of these dimensions than is commonly believed. The conference will help to improve public understanding of these issues. Concerns have

been raised, too, about the threat represented by mobilized religious voters to traditional separations of church and state and to the inclusiveness of American society. A better understanding of the Christian conservative movement will lead to a clearer assessment of the validity of these concerns. Finally, the conference could lead to a better appreciation of the potential contribution of Christian conservatives to the institutional structure and vitality of American society. Similarly, it could lead to a better appreciation among Christian conservatives of the strengths of values traditions in American society that are equally, but differently moral.

V. References

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