



ABRIDGED TRANSCRIPT

**Religious Voters in the 2016 Election:
What it Means for Democrats, What it Means for Republicans**

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December 2016

**Please note that part of this presentation makes reference to a handout that can be downloaded on the session page.*

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Every four years, we take up this topic after a national election for obvious reasons. We want to know how religious voters voted in any election, and it seems like every four years we have two of the best people in the country, and those are our guests today.

So first we welcome Karlyn Bowman from the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Mike, thank you very much.

It's a great pleasure to be back at the Faith Angle Forum.

In their post-election analyses, the Pew Research Center and the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) described the election in very similar terms. Pew's preliminary report on



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how the faithful voted began this way:

"The 2016 presidential exit polling reveals little change in the political alignments of U.S. religious groups."

Dan Cox, writing for PRRI, said this: "In an election that provided a slew of unpredictable turns, the religious vote broke along strikingly familiar lines." While the alignments were familiar, there were many interesting stories in the data in 2016, and I'm going to talk about a few of them.

In an article written shortly after the election, the Democratic pollster Stan Greenberg discussed yet again what many Democrats and progressives call the Rising American Electorate, the collection of millennials, minorities, and single women that were expected to be the key to the Democratic Party's victory in 2016 and forever after.

But in Stan's post-election summing up for the Democratic Strategist e-newsletter, he added another group -- secular people. Those who check the box "None" on the exit poll when asked about their religion voted solidly for Hillary Clinton by 68 to 26 percent. They were more supportive of Clinton than were millennials or single women, two key parts of the Rising American Electorate.

In 2016, the Nones were 15 percent of all voters, up from 12 percent in 2012. In Pew's 2014 data looking at the religious landscape the unaffiliated are a larger share than Catholics or mainline Protestant. In Pew's data, 3.1 percent of the religiously unaffiliated called themselves "atheists," 4 percent "agnostic," and 16 percent "nothing in particular." In every presidential election since 2000, more than 6 in 10 of the Nones have voted for the Democratic candidate.

The Nones are one of the big religion stories of recent years. But in thinking about them,



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I'm reminded of questions that Gallup asked many years ago about whether gambling and, separately, drinking had ever been a cause of problems in your family. Over time, more people said these were problems in their families. Did the levels of drinking or gambling really change? Or did more people just feel comfortable talking about it? Are the Nones growing or are more people simply willing to say they have no religious affiliation than gave that response in the past? And are they out in the open today because it is socially acceptable?

We know that 9 in 10 Americans, including a majority of millennials, still say that they believe in God, and nearly half nationally, 49 percent, say they pray daily according to a 2016 Survey of American Political Culture at the University of Virginia, and an additional 15 percent pray several times a week.

PRRI pointed out that Trump performed very well in states with large Christian populations, such as those in the industrial Midwest, and less well in states such as California where there are fewer White Christians and fewer believers. Trump won nearly every state with a majority White Christian population. According to PRRI, the proportion of White Christians in a state was correlated more strongly with Trump support than the proportion of white working-class voters.

These Midwestern states are older and whiter, and one of the big themes in this election was the cultural nostalgia and alienation these voters supposedly felt. Some in those states clearly did feel left behind by a changing economy and a changing demographic mix.

Nostalgia has long been a powerful current in our society and our politics. Bob Dole remembered a time when things were better, and he wanted to build a bridge to the past, and Bill Clinton countered that he wanted to build a bridge to the future.

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When Gallup asked in 1939 whether people were happier and more contented in the horse-and-buggy days, 62 percent said that they were. When they followed up that question with would you rather live in those days, 70 percent said that they would not.

Before 1965 in a Gallup series, people said that religion was increasing its influence on everyday life. But since that time in a question that's been asked fairly frequently, more people say that it's losing influence.

When those people who say it is losing influence are asked whether that's a good or bad thing, most people say it's a bad thing. Seventy percent of the unaffiliated say it's losing influence, but even they are divided about whether this is a good or a bad thing. Thirty-four percent of the seventy percent say it's a good thing, and thirty percent say that it's bad.

Coinciding roughly with the rise in religious de-identification, we've also seen significant movement in the liberal direction on many social issues in the polls and a rise in non-judgmentalism. Gallup asks about 16 different behaviors, everything from wearing fur to euthanasia to abortion, and people say that a lot of these behaviors are not acceptable for them personally, but they believe that they're morally acceptable for society.

Let's take having a baby outside marriage, a question that Gallup's asked since 2000. In 2000, 45 percent said it was morally acceptable for society. That increased to 62 percent in 2016. There were denominational chasms. Eighty percent of those with no religious affiliation in an earlier Gallup compilation said it's morally acceptable compared to sixty-eight percent of Jews, fifty-nine percent of Catholics, forty-seven percent of Protestants, and twenty-five percent of Mormons.

Self-identified liberals have moved dramatically on this issue. Self-identified conservatives in a 2015 Gallup compilation hadn't moved much all in 15 years. Denominational gaps



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aren't new, but they're especially large now.

Another story from the campaign touching on religion wasn't related to either of the candidates. We spent a lot of time looking at Ivanka and Chelsea as representatives of a new emerging female electorate. Both of these young women married outside their faiths.

According to Pew, about 4 in 10 people who have married since 2010 are in religiously mixed marriages, compared to 19 percent who got married before 1960. Pew says that this appears to be linked to the growth of the religiously unaffiliated.

Looking at another group, White Catholics continued their impressive track run of voting for the winner, in 10 out of 12 recent elections. They're one of only a few groups that have a near perfect record of voting for the winner.

As we all know, White born-again and evangelical Christians voted overwhelmingly for Trump, giving him 81 percent of their votes. They voted for Mitt Romney and George W. Bush by similar margins. Trump won the vote of this group in 19 of the 27 GOP primaries, and Cruz won them in the other 8.

It probably makes sense to change some of the exit poll categories. Many also argue that it doesn't provide a true picture of the views of many people on the religious right, many of whom resisted Trump from the start. In terms of size, the evangelical vote is about the size that it was four years ago in the exit poll.

In the exit poll, there were not significant differences in the votes of White evangelicals or born-agains based on religious attendance, as some had predicted. We know that is true for other groups, and it can be significant. Those who attend church more often tend to be more conservative and Republican. But it wasn't true for the evangelical vote.



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Fifty-four percent of White born-again or evangelical Christians attended church once a week or more, and they voted 81 percent for Trump, while 20 percent of these voters who attended church a few times a year voted 79 percent for Trump. So there were really no differences in those who attended frequently and those who attended a few times a year in terms of Trump support.

Many different kinds of voters took a gamble on Trump because they wanted change. They didn't have a high opinion of him. The white working-class and religious conservatives, I think, felt under siege in this election for different reasons, and they voted for Trump.

It's hard to know exactly what people meant when they said that they wanted a candidate who would bring needed change. That was the top response when asked about four qualities that were important to you on Election Day. We know that these people are pretty disgusted with the way that Washington works, but in a July release from Pew about what regular churchgoers were hearing from the pulpit, nearly half, more than any of the other groups that they asked about, said that they were hearing a lot about religious liberty.

In a Pew poll in January in 2016, only 15 percent of White evangelicals said that the Democratic Party was friendly to religion, while nearly half, 46 percent, said it was unfriendly, and a third, neutral. Nearly half, 48 percent, of White evangelicals said the Republican Party was friendly to religion, and in a Pew poll released this week, 41 percent said that there was a lot or some discrimination against evangelicals today, the lowest of any of the eight groups that Pew inquired about. Fifty percent of Republicans said that there was a lot or some, and thirty-three percent of Democrats gave that response, so the threat mentality, the siege mentality was real in the evangelical community overall.

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The exit poll clearly showed that they cared about the Supreme Court. Three-quarters said appointments to the Supreme Court were either the most important or an important factor in deciding their votes, and they voted 85 percent for Trump.

The exit pollsters didn't ask about abortion or gay marriage this year. None of the public polls that I saw asked about abortion after the third debate where Clinton and Trump debated the issue. Views remain deeply contradictory, with Americans continuing to believe that it is murder and that it should be a personal choice between a woman and her doctor; those are profoundly contradictory responses.

When people hold deeply contradictory views in their own hearts, they tend to pull away from an issue, leaving the playing field to the activists who don't see the gray that most Americans see on the issue. Perhaps the scrutiny Trump's nominee for the Supreme Court will have will change this.

On gay marriage, we've clearly hit a pause, but probably not a plateau. Around a third of Americans in nearly all the polls this year, including 26 percent of young people in the latest Harvard IOP poll of millennials, are opposed to gay marriage and/or describe it as morally wrong. That response has not moved significantly over the course of this year. With generational replacement, we'll probably see a change.

I know you're all pretty familiar with the overall data. So I tried to focus on a few things that you might not have seen overall. And now I'll turn it over to Bill.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Thank you. Thank you, Bill, for coming again. I think it's your third or fourth time with us.

DR. WILLIAM A. GALSTON: It's my third time, and I have to say that this is an invitation that I will, you know, move Heaven and Earth to accept, if at all possible.



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WILLIAM GALSTON: Let me just review some of the basics quickly. First of all, for those of you who perhaps are not full-time or regular religion reporters, there are some long-term trends, if you'll take a look at the chart on Page 1, that are worth attending to.

This is the composition of the electorate, and as you can see, starting on the left, the blue at the bottom is White evangelical voters as a share of the electorate, and that's a story of continuity rather than change. For the orange, which is mainline Protestants, it's a story of change rather than continuity. In fact, mainline Protestants, White Protestants as a share of the electorate, have been cut just about in half during the 20 years from 1996 to 2016.

African Americans, a story of continuity, White Catholics, like White mainline Protestants, a story of change -- a decline in the electorate from 21 percent to only 13 percent. Interestingly, 13 percent of the population as we speak, according to Pew, is made up of former Catholics -- one of the largest religious groups in the country. Of the people who were raised Catholic a generation ago, about 13 percent have left.

As you can see from this chart, the green, representing the unaffiliated share of the electorate, has risen quite dramatically during this period.

Now, moving right along to the unaffiliated voters, this is an interesting story, and it corresponds to some larger trends in American politics. If you'll take a look at the period between the middle of the 1990s and roughly the middle of the first decade of the 21st Century, it's a period of substantial continuity.

Then unaffiliates took off like a rocket starting a little bit more than a decade ago, and the unaffiliated share of the population is rising very rapidly.



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If you go to Page 4, you'll see a generational picture where, if you start on the right and work backwards, White Christians are 67 percent of the 65 and older. They're 29 percent of the 18-to-29s. And similarly, if you work backwards from the oldest to the youngest, unaffiliateds are 11 percent of the oldest cohort of Americans and fully 34 percent of the youngest.

In one 10-year period, unaffiliateds, as a share of 18-to-29-year-olds, went from 23 percent to 39 percent. This new generation is different. That's my takeaway.

We don't know why. We don't know what it means. We don't know whether it will last. But what we know as a snapshot right now is that something big has happened to the young adults in the past 10 years.

If you take a look historically at the party religious coalitions starting with Republicans, you can read across from '96 to 2016. And what you see is substantial continuity of Republican reliance on White evangelicals, dramatically diminished reliance on White mainliners, and continuity among White Catholics.

Take a look at Page 10. These are from the CNN exit polls. Take a look at the findings on White born-again or evangelical Christians. What they show is, of course, a dramatic Trump victory in this group.

But here's what struck me. I gawked at it. If you look at the three-quarters of the population that does not regard itself as part of the White evangelical group, Hillary Clinton carried them by almost 2-to-1 -- 60-to-34 -- and that underscores the importance of the White evangelical group for the Republican Party.

This is where I did the back-of-the-envelope calculation. I said to myself, well, White evangelicals are to the Republican Party as African Americans are to the Democratic Party

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-- you know, the most solid and reliable and enduring block.

But then I asked myself, well, how important? A back-of-the-envelope calculation shows that Hillary Clinton got about 25 percent of her total vote from African Americans. Donald Trump got about 45 percent of his vote from White evangelicals -- 45 percent. That's how important that group was, and that is how important, I believe, Mr. Trump's list of 21 Supreme Court justices turned out to be.

Basically, the Republican Party is about as reliant on White Christian voters as it was when Bill Clinton was first elected president. But look at what happened to the Democrats.

If you'll go to Chart number 15, the line on this chart represents the least squares line, and what you'll see is that there is a reliable linear relationship between the White Christians as a share of the total electorate in the state and the overall vote in the state. That's what you'd expect, but the fact that that is such a smooth line with such a steep angle shows the importance of that electorate.

This beautiful color chart with grays and whites, and reds and dark reds -- illustrates visually the states where White Christians remained dominant.

And you'll see West Virginia and Kentucky, Iowa, substantial portions of the upper Midwest all in that category. Once again, the Trump campaign knew exactly what it was doing, and it, I think, strategically targeted precisely the populations that would be needed to produce victory over very considerable odds.

But I do want to get, in conclusion, to what I think is one of the most interesting and significant questions posed by the 2016 election. Namely, what is the nature of the religious vote in America today? Is it a vote where religious doctrine, belief, practice shapes a political outlook? Or does the causal arrow run more strongly the other way



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around? That is to say, different religious groups have different political outlooks, and as circumstances change, they will retrofit their convictions in order to make doctrine and political preference align.

Now, why do I raise this question? Please take a look at Page 21. Question: "Do you think an elected official who commits an immoral act in their personal life can still behave ethically and fulfill their duties in public and professional life?" Here is that question put to White evangelicals.

In 2011, only 30 percent gave an affirmative answer to that question, and oddly, in 2016, 72 percent gave an affirmative answer to that question. I wonder what happened in the interim. Could it have been a doctrinal revolution? Somehow I don't think so.

Now, I don't mean to single out any particular religious group, so why don't we flip now to Page 22, the final page, because White evangelicals were not alone in making this switch. As you'll see among all Americans, it went from 44 to 61, among evangelicals, as I said before, from 30 to 72, among mainliners, from 38 to 60, among Catholics, from 42 to 58. Only unaffiliateds who separated the public and private all along were relatively unchanged.

Now, it would be presumptuous of me as a reasonably practicing Jew to characterize this as a crisis of faith or doctrine or conscience, or what have you. I have no standing to say that. But it does seem to me that this is something worth thinking about because those of us who study these questions, we have always taken seriously religious upbringing -- faith, doctrine, practice -- as a driver of political outlook and political behavior, and we are both asking ourselves the same question: can we do that? What impact does Catholic social thought have on Catholics, particularly White Catholics? What impact do personalistic doctrines of ethical conduct, whether in private or in public, have on the mainstream evangelical outlook?

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Those are not rhetorical questions, but I think they go to the heart of the matter. When we're studying religion in politics, what are we studying? Are we studying religion in politics? Or are we studying politics in religion?

I can put that question on the table; I have a feeling the table collectively is better qualified to answer that question than I can. But in my judgment, that is the principal question about religion that this election put on the table.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Thank you, Bill. Thank you. Carl, bring the mic over.

CARL CANNON, RealClearPolitics: Is there any reason to believe that millennials will get more conservative as boomers have, and does becoming more conservative politically correlate with becoming more religious? These are what I wonder about.

KARLYN BOWMAN: We've seen it in every previous generation, but perhaps the millennials will be different. They're saying they're spiritual as opposed to religious, and that could be because they lack confidence in organized religion. Of those Gallup numbers that I mentioned, they're really quite dramatic for younger people overall over time.

We're going to have to wait and see. They've not moved the other way on abortion. They look pretty much like the population as a whole perhaps because they've seen that picture of their little brother and sister on a sonogram. So they haven't moved uniformly, and different groups of millennials have moved in different directions. For example, young female millennials voted for Romney. Young women are a bit more conservative on a lot of issues overall, whether it's registering for the draft or marijuana, for all the familiar reasons.



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WILLIAM GALSTON: Good question, Carl, and I can't fully answer it. But here are three points to keep in mind.

First of all, data from the Public Religion Research Institute indicates that unaffiliateds are increasingly likely to remain unaffiliated as they age. If you go back a couple of generations, unaffiliateds, when young, tended to reaffiliate when older.

But still, the second point that I'm about to make I think supports that, namely, that millennials tend to be very suspicious about institutions in general, especially organized religion. And I do think that the period of the most intense participation by Christian conservatives in the political scene pushed a lot of millennials away, and pushed them away from trust.

The third point [is that] younger evangelicals, if anything, are more liberal than older evangelicals on a range of social questions. And there is evidence of diminished intensity among younger evangelicals around those questions.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Will Saletan.

WILL SALETAN, *Slate*: I wanted to pick up on something both of you said, but especially Bill's closing remarks about the mixture of politics and religion and the change there.

Let me just put on the table three different kinds of issues that someone might vote for -- vote on in this area. Deal killers, where you have an absolute standard, transactional issues, and the third one is sort of an interest group appeal.

There were some cultural issues in this election that Democrats thought would be deal killers that weren't. In the Civil Rights Movement, racism was a moral issue. It was a religious issue.

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We had a candidate this year, obviously, who said that a Mexican-American judge couldn't fairly judge him, who said that we should ban a religious group, a non-Christian religious group, from this country at least on a temporary basis. Those turned out not to be deal killers for a lot of people, including a lot of White Christians.

What a lot of the White Christians seemed to have gone for instead, as you guys discussed, was, first, a transactional appeal, a list of Supreme Court justices; disregard the candidate, focus on this list of people he'll give you for the Supreme Court.

Secondly, an interest group appeal, which was the religious freedom argument, but it was religious freedom for Christians, but not for the group of people, namely Muslims, who would be excluded from the country. So that was not a universal argument; it was something for this group.

So this brings me back to what Karlyn said, that there's been a shift on the left among Democrats, a decline of some of this religious affiliation and, perhaps, moral voting, but not on the right.

Are we actually seeing a change on the right consistent with what Bill was saying? Are we seeing a shift from deal killers, from absolute standards to a transactional mentality and to an interest group mentality?

WILLIAM GALSTON: Here's my problem, Will. I almost think that you need to be an insider in communion with the group we're talking about in order to give a responsible answer to that question.

WILLIAM GALSTON: Pete Wehner and I took the taxi from the airport to a hotel, and I put a version of your question to him as -- you know, as a faithful member of the group that

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we're talking about. And he provided a very interesting series of answers to that question.

And I wonder, rather than answering it myself, whether I might turn to Pete as someone who lives this. It's not just an object of study.

PETER WEHNER, *The New York Times*: Sure. Yeah. The -- during the cab ride over when we were talking about the explanation for why evangelicals had such large supports for Trump, this is essentially what I told Bill. One was a deep antipathy for Hillary Clinton, which I think shouldn't be underestimated. Whether one thinks that's fair or not, it was something beyond anything that I've seen within American politics.

I had breakfast with a pastor a few weeks ago. And he told me that there was someone within the church that he knew that he said that if Hillary Clinton was on the ballot against Satan, the person would vote for Satan, and I think he meant that only half kiddingly. The intensity was that deep.

Some of it, I think, is specific to Hillary Clinton. Some of it was really specific to the Supreme Court. If there was one issue that you could tie it to that I think animated a lot of Christians, it was the Supreme Court and religious liberties.

So if you're part of the evangelical community and you think same-sex marriage is the driving issue, I think you're probably wrong. It's actually the religious liberties, at least in my experience. That's what I have heard the most, this fear that these institutions will not be allowed to abide by their own conscience.

The other thing that I heard a lot about was this kind of apocalyptic rhetoric and, as Karlyn said, people feeling under siege. The language that I heard was some variation of we're losing the country. And they meant by that a kind of cultural loss more than an economic loss. I sensed fear, which often gives rise to anger. That was my sort of short version of

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what I saw with a lot of evangelicals -- the sense of the siege mentality.

Then there was some group of White evangelicals that, I think, voted for Trump sort of through gritted teeth. But then there were a fair amount that were actually enthusiastic, and that was the part I, frankly, didn't get.

Part of what I think the answer to me was that they view Trump as strong. It went deeper than a set of issues. It was a kind of cultural event, or a sort of visceral event. And I got the sense that the sort of disrespect and dishonor that blue collar voters feel has happened is now with White evangelicals.

And I just wanted to say one other thing, a propos of what Bill said. I do think that there was a lot of retrofitting for exactly what you said on the numbers of morality in public leaders. But it was complicated because I do think that a lot of White evangelicals felt like Trump on his kind of core religious liberties was right, and they put that as a higher priority and so they took these issues that had animated them, you know, decades earlier as it relates to the importance of character in public life and set those aside.

But that chart that you showed was a kind of CAT scan on hypocrisy, and I remember during the Clinton years the same evangelicals who were talking about the importance of virtue and character in public leaders are now -- were now, in this election, saying they were electing a president.

WILL SALETAN: It just sounds to me like the decline of Christianity or of Christian voting into a form of identity politics. It seems to be a surrender of universal values in favor of a sense of personal identity and a sense of the country that they feel that they're losing that can't be construed as universal. But maybe I'm misreading that.

PETER WEHNER: No, I think that's a reasonable assumption. I think it's a more reasonable

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assumption, given the election this year.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Kirsten Powers.

KIRSTEN POWERS, CNN: Yeah. So all my questions have been asked. But maybe Pete can answer this, though.

When you look at this hypocrisy on the issue of ethics but then you consider the fact that White evangelicals and, quite frankly, some conservative White Catholics, do feel that there's an existential threat, the Democrats pose an existential threat to them, that they actually feel that they are in danger of not being able to voice their views of their faith, perhaps maybe that they may not be able to, you know, practice their religion with the freedom that they think that they should.

Is there actually anything wrong with retrofitting if they really believe that? And second of all, if they do believe that, isn't this -- wouldn't this just be the normal thing that you would do?

Yeah, and also, is anything I just said captured in the data? Do you see this anywhere?

WILLIAM GALSTON: What I put on the table at the very end of my chart pack is all I know about this, and I put it on the table to raise the question, not to answer it, because I can't. I will say this. And by the way, I did not use the word hypocrisy.

I will say this. Invoking a point of personal privilege as a former member of the Clinton administration during which this principle of the previous formulation of the relationship between private ethics and public life was presented not as something negotiable, but as a deontological threshold issue, right? If you didn't clear the bar of personal rectitude, it didn't matter what you believed.

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All right? And it didn't matter how sincere an evangelical you were doctrinally. If you sinned -- you know, obviously, if you sinned, you could be forgiven -- there was not a lot of evidence of forgiveness during that period. So suddenly, something deontological has turned into something negotiable.

And if it is now negotiable, then that represents an important doctrinal shift. That's all I'm saying.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Exactly. Exactly.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Just a comment about retrofitting. I don't think there's anything in the data on that question. Bill and I have talked about it, and I wonder whether the differences might be related to political polarization.

I remember we were taught by the feminists in the '60s and the '70s that the personal was political. Then all of a sudden, Bill Clinton comes on the scene, and the personal is no longer the political. I mean, you had this extraordinary 180-degree turn.

I tried to look at that to see whether women had become more Democratic. What in the world was going on there that changed their views so dramatically on something that had been a core principle they had schooled us in the 1960s and '70s. And you really couldn't find a lot in the data. But there certainly is more political polarization now, and that may be contributing to the retrofitting.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Pete.

PETER WEHNER: My original question, Bill, was that you had said that this new generation is different and that something has happened, and I guess you answered it.

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But if you wanted to elaborate, I'd be interested in very specifically what happened.

But beyond that, on this issue of less trust in institutions -- and both of you weigh in on this -- and the failure of institutions, I'm wondering for the millennial generation, is that something that is driven by a kind of empirical assessment, that is, that institutions have failed and they, therefore, have said look, these institutions are incompetent and they don't deserve our trust?

Another one is it's a kind of philosophical detachment. That is, there's a deinstitutionalization that is happening because of views toward authority, something deeper. I imagine it's probably both, but I'd be interested in how you disaggregate that, and if you have any thoughts, either of you, on this, what for the millennial generation would cause a reattachment to religious institutions? Clearly, they're not identifying with them now. And I'm wondering if religious institutions, in general, are saying something that isn't connecting with where that generation is and where that connection might occur if it could.

KARLYN BOWMAN: If you look, for example, at trust in the '60s and '70s when it was higher than it is right now, we had a kind of tacit compact with our government. Government wasn't very active. There wasn't a lot to criticize. But when government started to get so much bigger in the 1960s, you see the criticisms starting.

And another reason, I think, contributing to the lack of trust -- and I'm not sure this relates specifically to millennials -- is a lot of big moral issues were decided by Constitutional amendment, and we do that very differently now. States were deciding an issue overall. There wasn't the kind of national drama on these issues.

But what might reattach millennials to church? This is completely anecdotal, but I've seen an interesting change in the smart young kids who come to AEI to be research assistants

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over the 37 years I've been there.

The first ones who came all wanted to spend two years at AEI. We tell them they're going to come to AEI for two years, and then they should go back to graduate school or do something different. And many decided they wanted to get a law degree or Kennedy School degree, and then they wanted to come back to Washington.

That's completely changed now. They still want to get the degree from the Kennedy School or law school, but they want to go back to their local communities where they think they can make a difference. It's just amazing how many of them are talking this way.

And I think if there is going to be a reattachment, it's going to be to things at the local level where, conceivably, they'll see the work that churches and other groups do to solve problems in local communities compelling. People are much more positive about what's happening at their local government and state government than they are about what's happening in Washington.

WILLIAM GALSTON: With regard to the attachment, I won't even say reattachment because for many millennials it would be a first attachment to an organized religious institution. You have to distinguish, as the demographers do, between lifecycle effects and cohort effects, and I am sure that as millennials age and as more of them grow into more traditional patterns of family and homeownership that you will see an uptick in religious attachment.

But where you start as a generation has a lot to do with where you end up as a generation. So if you begin at the age of 25 a lot farther down in the attachment scale than your parents and grandparents, then when you're 45, as a cohort, as a generation, you're going to be lower than that.



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I really believe that the crucial variable here is family. I know that doing sociology introspectively with an N of 1, namely myself, that, you know, if we hadn't made the decision to send our son to a religious school, I would not be who I am today. I would not be institutionally affiliated. I would not be doctrinally serious, et cetera, et cetera.

And the fact that millennials are taking a lot longer to get married -- probably a record share will never marry, a record share will have no children -- I think this does not auger well for institutional reattachment, at least to religious institutions, because everywhere I look, it's the children that lead parents to religion and not the other way around, oddly enough. Maybe not in your community, but in mine for sure. And I don't think mine is an idiosyncratic experience.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Sally Quinn.

SALLY QUINN, OnFaith: It was, I thought, mind-boggling and appalling that the feminists would suddenly be accepting of what Bill Clinton did. You know, the mantra was if she says it's rape, it's rape, except when Juanita Broaddrick said it was rape, it wasn't rape and on and on.

But that wasn't a religious issue, and I think that was in terms of retrofitting. I think that was all about politics. So I think there's a difference there.

I spoke recently to Anne Graham Lotz, who's Billy Graham's daughter and who's very, very religious. This was before the campaign. She said, "I can't vote for Hillary, but I just can't vote for Trump because, ethically and morally, he just doesn't stand for the values that I stand for." And we have the example of Russell Moore, who sort of basically had a nervous breakdown over Trump.



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MICHAEL CROMARTIE: He's feeling better now.

SALLY QUINN: So you did have that, you know, that there were those people. But I'm still baffled by the evangelical vote. I don't understand it, and I don't understand it because every time Donald Trump would say something that was mean or untrue or hateful or disrespectful -- I mean, when he mocked the reporter who was disabled, I mean, I have a disabled child. I know a lot of people who have disabled children. There were things like that that were so over the top, and all I could think about when he was saying those things was WWJD -- what would Jesus do? It just seemed to me that his behavior on every level was un-Christian. His values, his morals, his ethics were un-Christian. Now, that may not be a bad thing to some people.

Well, I think I'm sort of asking the question at the same time because I'm saying I don't understand at what point did the evangelicals say is this the example that I want to set for my children. Is this how I want my children to be raised? Is this what I want them to believe in? Is this how I want them to interact with other people and the church and leadership and parents and with other people?

I just -- I don't understand, and retrofitting doesn't work. I mean, that word just doesn't work. Where is it in their Bible, in their prayers at night, in their interaction with other people? Where is it that that behavior was okay for the leader of our country and an example of who we are in the world?

WILLIAM GALSTON: Well, Karlyn and I are going to say the same thing about that.

While you're looking for the numbers, I'll just say that the preliminary apples-to-apples, unreliable exit poll data suggests that evangelicals as a share of the electorate this year were almost exactly the same as they were four years ago. So there's no evidence either of an evangelical surge or an evangelical retreat.



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I will also say that when you add up 81 percent and 16 percent, you get 97 percent of evangelicals, which -- you know, which suggests that relatively few of them as a share of the total cast a vote for an independent candidate. You see evidence of that on the Mormon side, but not the evangelical side for obvious reasons.

KARLYN BOWMAN: That is exactly what I would say.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Perfect. Okay, good. Tom?

TOM GJELTEN, NPR: I was struck by the same point that Pete Wehner called attention to, and that is the idea that millennials are different.

And then, between the two of you, you elaborated on that, the distrust in institutions from marriage to voting. But to take that one step further because those struck me as being rather benign interpretations of how millennials are different. I'm wondering if either of you have any thoughts on this study that was published in the *Journal of Democracy* a couple of weeks ago that shows that millennials, by striking margins, are less likely than older generations to think it's essential to live in a democracy.

What you said, Karlyn, about the military being the one institution that they seem to have trust in would, perhaps some would say that there's consistency there. But I mean, this is, to me, sort of the more alarming angle on how millennials are different.

KARLYN BOWMAN: I've wanted to read that study, and I haven't had time to do so yet. I notice there's been some pushback on *The Monkey Cage* last week. But again, I apologize. I haven't had a chance to look at it yet.



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I don't think, for example, that they embrace socialism -- we saw hints of things like that during Occupy Wall Street, but I don't think it was serious. And again, I haven't looked at this new study, so I really can't comment on it.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I can't help seeing this shift among young people in the United States in the context of broader trends throughout the Democratic west. If it were just a one-off, I think I wouldn't take it seriously. But the fact that you're seeing similar trends among young people in democracies throughout Europe, a deep impatience with institutions that seem incapable of acting, right?

This entire generation is looking at a world that doesn't make a place for them, or doesn't seem to have a place for them, and from their standpoint, nobody's doing anything about it.

What worries me is that during a similar period about 80 years ago, there was a turning away from parliamentary democracies seen as feckless towards various sorts of undemocratic alternatives. The idea that there is an arc of history that moves forward and forecloses previous bad options is, in my judgment, a progressivist delusion that we would be well served to set aside in the name of a more cyclical view of history where bad stuff is inherent in human possibility and can return under adverse circumstances. I'm not a Christian, but it seems to me that would be a more squarely Christian view, would it not?

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Yes. Robert Draper.

ROBERT DRAPER, *The New York Times Magazine*: I'm wondering if there is some religious or cultural underpinning to the depth of antipathy for Clinton since I think a number of us are in agreement with what Pete said, that that antipathy is real, but which the data suggests is the one group without which Donald Trump could not have been

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president. I'm specifically wondering whether this is more a cultural and religious thing or if it's more party identification since, after all, White evangelicals have been among the constants in this.

I think specifically of the Supreme Court list that Trump put together. I think most of us know that Trump, in fact, had nothing whatsoever to do with that list, that it was put together by Heritage and Federalist Society, that he did not know any of the names on the list. He did not add anyone to the list. He did not subtract anyone from the list. He did not ask about anyone on the list. It was purely, 100 percent, transactional.

Had Hillary Clinton produced that very same list for the purposes of transactionality, evangelical voters would have likely said we're not buying it because we know she is an uber Democrat. Trump instead did. And I think, to me, it was not so much a ratification of their hope that he would be committed to their causes, but, rather, a ratification of his pretending to be a Republican.

So what I'm wondering is whether, you know, the antipathy is really that she has seen more in this kind of uber partisan context or if there's anything in the data to suggest a religious or cultural explanation for the depth of antipathy.

KARLYN BOWMAN: I didn't see anything in the data that suggested anything deeper in terms of culture. Hillary is somebody they've watched for an incredibly long time. And the antipathy has just grown. They didn't like Trump either, remember.

This was such a negative election. Only 2 percent of voters had a positive view of both candidates.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I'd like to meet them, even one of them.



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(Laughter)

WILLIAM GALSTON: How does someone who's a mixture of virtues and vices, who is certainly not everybody's cup of tea, how does that person over a period of 30 years get transformed into a figure who is compared unfavorably to Satan?

And by the way, Pete, I don't mean to globalize your anecdote, but I do think it captured something quite real about the intensity of the feeling. And you're not the first person I've heard this from.

She clearly has come to stand for everything that this group despises -- everything.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Professor Wacker, you're up.

GRANT WACKER: Michael asked a big part of my first question, and that is that people who elected to vote for neither candidate, who otherwise might have voted, but found -- people have found both candidates unfit, all right?

And Michael's question referred to evangelicals, and I'm wondering if we can broaden that out beyond evangelicals. We find Catholics and Mormons and non-affiliated coming to that kind of conclusion. That's my first question, and the second one may be more for Karlyn is we've talked about the visceral feelings about Hillary Clinton, and I'm wondering if your instruments are precise enough that you could break that down.

What I am thinking about, in particular, is resentment about her attachment with the intellectual establishment -- Yale, the *New York Times*, and before that, Obama and Harvard. So we get Harvard, Yale, *New York Times*, and so forth. Those are the two questions.

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WILLIAM GALSTON: Well, with the exception of Mormons, most of the faith communities broken down for survey purposes voted overwhelmingly either for Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. So if you look at all Protestants and other Christians, that is to say basically all Christians other than Catholics, you find that 97 percent of them voted for either the one or the other, so you don't have a big residue left over.

If you look at Catholics, 45 percent overall went for Clinton, 52 percent for Trump, again 97, so you don't have a huge residue. You do have a -- you do have something significant when you look at the Mormons this year because Donald Trump got 61 percent of the Mormon vote versus Mitt Romney's 78 percent. And 4 percent of the difference went to Hillary Clinton, but the rest went to Evan McMullen.

KARLYN BOWMAN: A lot of data throughout the campaign showed that Hillary Clinton's ties to the establishment did not help her in any way. This wasn't a good year to be an establishment person, and Donald Trump didn't seem like the same kind of establishment candidate that Hillary Clinton did.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Phil Rucker.

PHILIP RUCKER, *The Washington Post*: So my question's an extension of the discussion we had earlier about White evangelicals voting or believing they can support a candidate who had immoral acts in his personal life for the public duties and that shift over the last five years, and it has to do with Trump's rhetoric and message.

Historically, candidates, especially George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004, won over evangelical voters with enthusiasm by having a message and a policy set tailored to those voters. I mean, he talked about traditional marriage, about abortion. Those were things we hardly ever heard Trump talk about.

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And so my question is, was the enthusiasm of evangelical voters for Trump because of the unique binary choice we had in this election, or is there some broader shift in the way religious voters are viewing candidates where they don't necessarily need to hear policy positions articulated on a stump on those issues but, you know, are looking more to economic themes or foreign policy themes or leadership qualities or so forth?

KARLYN BOWMAN: For these voters, I think the Court was for Trump what abortion and the other issues had been for George W. Bush. I think it was just so important to them overall.

This has been building for a very long time, and with very negative feelings about the media, which we haven't talked about yet, things combined to push these voters solidly to Trump.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I agree with all of that. I would back up a step. We're going to be looking at this issue for a long time because the data that we have suffice to put the question on the table, but not really to answer it. I think the answer will have to be in part quantitative with some good follow-up work but, in part, qualitative and perhaps even participant observer, a conversation that Pete started for us.

But let me just share with you a sense that I can't prove. And that is that a lot of people in this community felt not only embattled, but also silenced, that much of what they come to believe was no longer respectable to say publicly.

And here is someone who comes along and breaks every convention of public discourse. I have to believe that it amounted to a kind of joyous de-sublimation for lots of people, you know. This is not to defend it, but it is to explain it.

I mean, if someone says something out loud that you don't dare to, but you can say

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yourself, damn right, and you can look at your buddy and say, damn right, it's about time someone said that, not only is that personally gratifying, but it creates a visceral connection between you and the person who said the thing that you nod and say damn right to.

I think this whole question of the boundaries of publicly permissible speech is one that deserves further inquiry because, if you look at it, a majority of Americans believe in a couple of surveys I've seen that the constriction of public discourse has gotten to a point where it's genuinely a problem. That's not necessarily my position when you get down to details, but you'll find 55 or 60 percent of Americans assenting to that position, and we have to pay attention to that.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Two survey organizations in the last month, the big UVA poll on culture and the PRRI survey, asked about political correctness. And you could see the public's pushback. You had majorities in both of them saying that this has gone too far.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: And let me just add this: Philip used the phrase "evangelical enthusiasm" for Trump. I think that word is too strong.

You take, for example, a leading evangelical magazine with a wide circulation, *World Magazine*, extremely ambivalent about Trump. And then all the sudden when the audio came out about Trump's conversations out in Hollywood, they did a major cover story saying Trump should step down and get out of the race. Now, they got creamed for it, but a lot of readers wrote in and said thank you for being courageous and telling the guy to just get out of the race. So there's still a lot more to be done about the word enthusiasm. Deep reluctance probably would be a better use of word.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I think this is an interesting question, Michael, because a couple of surveys that I saw suggested that the community was split almost down the middle



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between the enthusiasm group and the reluctance group, and I can well believe that the thought leaders in the evangelical community were more reserved in their support for Trump than the rank-in-file. There may be a real gap there that we should pay attention to.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Yeah. Matt Lewis, you're up next, and then Cathleen.

MATT LEWIS: Yeah. So just to follow up on what Philip asked. I think it's very obvious to all of us, even though the data doesn't necessarily prove this that a lot of the reason for the shift has to do with people reverse engineering justification for voting for Trump.

But there's the other possibility as well, which would say that maybe Americans and religious Americans and White evangelicals are organically becoming less concerned about the personal morality of their elected officials.

But I also think that even religious Americans are becoming more tolerant, probably less devout. Which is more concerning, actually? Is it hypocrisy, or is it a legitimate organic shift?

WILLIAM GALSTON: To be blunt and just to state my personal point of view, there is a lot of evidence to suggest that, in fact, private virtue and public virtue are not exactly the same thing.

Now, if you get really radical along those dimensions, you end up with Machiavelli praising Hannibal for his "cruelty and infinite other virtues." That's a quote, right? I think it is too easy by half to assume that those two sets of virtues are simply isomorphic when there's so much evidence that they aren't.

KARLYN BOWMAN: I agree with that, and I would also say that the sort of rise in non-

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judgmentalism that you see in the polls starting in that Gallup battery they began asking in 2000 may be extending to other kinds of things, and this could be one of them.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Cathleen.

CATHLEEN KAVENY: I guess I have one question on the public-private split.

If you go back to the founding of this country, especially by, religiously inspired people, the Puritans, and what you saw was a community that was seen holistically as both religiously motivated and politically ordered to do justice to God's favored way of organizing a society. If you look at the sermons in that time, you had a lot of -- maybe it's not rigging or reverse engineering as much as it's reflective equilibriums.

So when you had King Charles in charge over in England who had too many Catholic sympathies, you saw the Puritans really referring more to the book of Judges for their inspiration for political life, not to the kingship.

When you had William and Mary come in later on, you see all of the sudden we're referring way more to the Biblical verses that talk about the importance of having a strong and mighty king.

So people draw from scripture inspiration, but they also draw from politics, and this has been as long as the country's been around, you know, attention to different verses and different passages and different ways of organizing themselves in scripture.

So maybe we need to start, at least for these religious groups -- evangelical, Protestants, and Roman Catholics -- not with a sense that these two spheres are separate, but for the sense that they're, in some messy way, integrally related. So that would be the first question. And where I've seen in the Trump thing is I see a lot of references, you know --

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maybe not a lot, but enough references to Cyrus of Persia, that, you know, the -- you know, he's not a believer, but he could be sort of a messiah from the outside who's going to save the religious community as an instrument of God. So that's the first question.

The second question that follows from that is, is part of the problem on the political correctness thing, you know, for evangelicals and Catholics, the sense that progressives were pushing too far and too fast. Where I see this was, you know, you just got Obergefell, you know, putting in place same-sex marriage, and then the next thing you know, we're right on the train to full transgender acceptance and the sense that, you know, gender fluidity is something that we have to accept. We have to call everyone by the gender they say they want to be called. That's another big step.

And you could argue that the country was not even given a moment to breathe and absorb the big step of Obergefell before you're moving on to, you know, transgendered issues. I think that that in religious communities -- and I wonder what the data shows about this -- says well, there's never going to be enough, we're never going to be able to be at a resting point. It's going to be one thing after another after another thing, so we have to stop it now before it -- you know, it all goes, you know, apocalyptic, which is another very big strand, as someone pointed out, in American thought.

So I just wondered on those two questions – transgender, and maybe religion and politics aren't separate and are being mixed, but they were always together.

WILLIAM GALSTON: Well, first of all, to say that private virtue and public virtue are not isomorphic is not at all to say that religion and politics aren't integrally related. I mean, you used the Rawlsian phrase, reflective equilibrium. The political theorist in me recognizes that. That's one way of looking at it. But this strikes me as sort of unreflective disequilibrium, to be honest with you.

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It's not clear to me that this represents a stable point of equipoise, so much as a reaction formation, at least what we're now talking about. But yes, I would certainly hope that anybody who absolutizes a principal of conduct, whether in private life or in public life, will eventually, through experience, be brought up against an example that really challenges whether there is that kind of bright line between actions that are thinkable and actions that should be regarded as unthinkable when there are circumstances in which the unthinkable has to become thinkable in order for moral integrity to be preserved. That's a profession of faith you just heard out of me.

Now, with regard to the second point about the pace of change, I think that's very important. I have long believed that societies have absorptive capacities which they exceed at their peril. It's not just the direction of change, but also the pace of change that tells us whether we're on a sustainable course.

Speaking personally and politically, I think I agree with the thrust of your second question. I think that the pedal was put to the metal. The pace was forced. My understanding is that the shock of Obergefell and the evangelical community was profound.

Every sustainable social advance rests on an either nascent consensus or emerging consensus. And if you look at the same-sex marriage issue -- and Karlyn may have a different view -- I have never seen public opinion on a fundamental social question change as fast as it did on that issue. By the time the Supreme Court made its decision, it wasn't a leading indicator; it was a trailing indicator. It wasn't anything like Brown.

It was a ratification of what more than 60 percent of the American people regarded as a done deal. And if you looked to people under the age of 40, they couldn't even understand why there was a question.

But what happened with that letter was a completely different order. It put an issue that

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was unfamiliar to most Americans -- outside a very small circle of advocates, one for which public opinion hadn't been prepared anyway -- and it said this is what you have to do.

So setting aside the substance of it to act on that kind of emotional issue with no public political preparation at all is just, on its own terms, a political mistake. And then we can have a long debate about some of the deeper questions.

KARLYN BOWMAN: I agree completely with what Bill said on the second question but I can't prove it from the data. There are no questions that really ask about whether you think things are moving too fast, and if there were, I have a feeling people would say yes.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. E.J. Dionne and then Elizabeth.

E.J. DIONNE: As Bill alluded, I'd like to ask both the panelists and the group to help me resolve an argument I'm having with myself, which is that there's part of me that thinks this is the most godless, religion-less election we have had in a long time.

Just to add one data point, I looked at the Catholic vote, and White Catholics voted almost identically to all White people, and Latino Catholics voted almost identically to all Latinos.

But there is a backup reply to that position, which Cathy and you, Bill, and others have alluded to, that if you talk to conservative evangelicals, they would say A), the Supreme Court, which covers a lot of issues, and B), I have run into fear of, if you will, liberal statists overreach. You know, one example you heard a lot from conservative religious people is Christian universities losing their ability to get student loans because of their stand on gay marriage.

So there were clearly some issues in the minds of these voters that pushed him in this election, and as Pete suggested, there is also the fascinating theological issue of Hillary

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Clinton as a demonic figure or worse than a demonic figure.

I'm just curious if you could sort of talk about these two alternatives because, in some ways, this election -- again, Bill alluded to this at the beginning -- may be just returning to where we were a long time ago. White evangelical voters started shifting Republican back in 1964. The issue clearly was race and civil rights then. There was an interruption in 1976 because Jimmy Carter was a White southern evangelical, and then it shifted right back by 1980 to where it had long been since 1964.

KARLYN BOWMAN: I have sympathy with view number one, that the patterns in many ways were striking familiar, with the possible exception of views of the Supreme Court. So I think that's where I come down with view number one.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: There didn't seem to be any attempt on the Clinton campaign to reach out to religious voters.

E.J. DIONNE: Or, just to add to the point to emphasize her own religious character except at certain moments of the campaign.

WILLIAM GALSTON: Well, first of all, to your point--as you know, I agree emphatically. But my agreement is much less important than Michael Wear's agreement because he is sort of a leading Democratic liaison to faith communities and, particularly, evangelicals.

And I've talked to him since the election, and he's really beside himself at the total failure of the Hillary Clinton campaign to reach out in any way. That's one of many sort of self-narrowing nasty surprises that the retrospectives are turning up.

And you know, there's other anecdotal evidence from the campaign to the effect that they were very, very brusque about dismissing certain classes of voters as "not our

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targets," forgetting about the fact that you don't have to win majorities. All you need to do is narrow the other side's majority in order to get what you want. If you don't talk to people, a majority of whom will give their votes to the other side and you know that, then that majority is bound to increase and bite you.

But now let me return to E.J.'s point. I suspect that a lot of evangelicals believe that Donald Trump was the godless instrument of God's purpose. Bet you. Now, Cyrus had many virtues that Donald Trump lacks and lacked many vices that Donald Trump has.

So I don't mean to equate them in any way, but certainly, you know, my people way back when got back to Jerusalem because of Cyrus, so I'm not going to complain about Cyrus. I don't care what he believed.

E.J. DIONNE: Make Israel great again.

WILLIAM GALSTON: Absolutely. That would take some doing, although greater Israel may be in the offing.

(Laughter)

WILLIAM GALSTON: Here's another datum. Donald Trump gave the first victory speech by a newly elected President in at least 30 years that did not mention the word God.

So that would be further evidence in favor of the godlessness of the election on both sides. But that, I think, is consistent with the proposition that people who voted -- at least some of them -- were animated by fears rooted in a religious outlook.

So these fears are not groundless. You can see a process that would lead from where we are now to the evangelical nightmare -- more generally, the conservative religious



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community nightmare.

And so if you'll permit me just a more theoretical note here, if you take deep moral and religious pluralism seriously as the organizing principle of sub-communities within the United States, then you have to recognize some limits to the reach of public norms. That's what taking pluralism seriously means. And then the question is where is the line to be drawn?

But the idea that you can have universal public norms and robust pluralism of morality and religion at the sub-community level is simply not possible, right? If you're going to have any private and communal sphere at all, there must be a limit to the reach of public morals.

E.J. DIONNE: Could I just ask a quick follow-up -- which is I think that's broadly right, except that we renegotiate those boundaries all the time. And so the difficulty right now is that we are in the middle of an elaborate renegotiation of those boundaries, which is creating a lot of political static.

WILLIAM GALSTON: There's no question about that, but this renegotiation is not going to be a linear process. There's going to be a lot of pushback, and there's no guarantee that, for example, where the line was drawn in the Obama administration on the contraceptive mandate is where the line is going to end up in a year or two. I rather suspect it won't.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Elizabeth, you're next.

ELIZABETH DIAS: So jumping off of points made by E.J., Phil, Sally, and others, it seems like the data that you all have presented this morning really suggests religion isn't as strong as things like Whiteness, how people marry, how people have and raise children.



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All of those things are also tied up in the formation of religious identity.

So when it comes to the issues of the election like abortion, religious liberty, I'm wondering more how those are coming from a religious place, like, meaning more the philosophical side of religion versus all these other factors, which as we're saying today seemed to have reached a new boiling point and at least a new outcome or raising different issues in the election. Or at least we're being more aware of their influence.

So is there good polling statistics, analysis, that you would point to on how those intersectional factors are shaping what we've called the faithful electorate and how they have changed over time in shaping Christian America?

KARLYN BOWMAN: Polls are such a blunt instrument. There are just so many things they can't tell you, and also they can't even get it right sometimes.

But I think if you look at the work of Pew or John Green and some of the others who've really dug into these data, you might be able to learn a little bit more about your broader question. But we relearned in this election, that party is enormously powerful in elections, and it seemed to trump a lot of other of things overall.

We expected a surge of women to Hillary. That didn't happen. Party was more important.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I absolutely agree with that. I would just underscore, Elizabeth, one word that you used in your question that I think we need to think hard about. That word is tribe.

I am really struck--relative to my youth--I'm struck by the tribalization, or maybe the re-tribalization, of America. Political parties have become tribes in important respects, and I think we're wrestling with this question of how to do the nation's business in the midst



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of this re-tribalization.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Ken Woodward?

KENNETH WOODWARD: Yes. What I find interesting is the research that's being done that would indicate that the young, including the children of people who are here, have an instrumental relationship to institutions like high school and, particularly, college and also to jobs. Talk about rapidation. I should be in a job five years, and then I should be moving on in five years.

The anticipation of that sort of reminds me of the talk about the family in the past. You know, "This marriage will be a starter marriage because I know there's another one coming a few years down the line." It's that attitude that nothing is stable, and certainly institutions aren't.

And it seems to me that the whole business of preparing yourself for a resume to get into college, which kids learn very young, represents the instrumental relationship to institutions, where things are to be used. The only one that isn't instrumentalized is the family, and that's the institution the young people today are most dependent on for whatever progress they make.

The other question I wanted to ask, I was very interested that we have the data and all of that sort of thing, and then some of the richest comments were comments, anecdotal comments, that we have been making, which raises a question for me. I have always had a real problem in listening to conversations and participating in conversations that talk about the evangelical vote, the Catholic vote, and so forth.

If you look at one of the more recent maps of American religion, you'll see that Massachusetts, for example, is Catholic red, as opposed to Baptist blue or whatever, and

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yet only 17 percent of Catholics probably go to church in Massachusetts.

There are such degrees of belief, behavior, and belonging that people who identify, except with what's going on with the Nones. I don't see that your instruments, other than asking a question about how often do you go to weekend services, can really get at the range, I think, of people who identify but don't have it close to the center of their lives.

And I think that, therefore, what Peter Wehner said early on, all these other range of reasons why, in this case, evangelicals voted, really had nothing to do with religion. So my skepticism continues about how worthy these categories -- evangelical, Catholic, and so forth -- are.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Let me just say a word about the millennials and their instrumental attachment to institutions.

I'm not sure these numbers are absolutely correct, but I think people in my generation when we were 18 to 24 expected to have three jobs, and millennials now expect to have 13 over the course of their lifetimes. That's an extraordinary change, and your relationship to your job and everything else is changing because of that experience.

So the social script, as you called it, makes them think differently about their attachments to institutions than earlier generations did. So I think that's very well taken.

And as to getting at more -- I think several pollsters are trying to do more, particularly PRRI, from a liberal progressive perspective.

WILLIAM GALSTON: On the previous point, on the first point that you made, I would add a couple of qualifications. Qualification number one, millennials don't believe in institutions that other people have constructed, but they are very good, indeed, they are

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driven to form networks of attachments of their own.

For example, my son is 32, so he certainly qualifies as a millennial. He keeps up with friends from different stages of his life in ways that I never dreamed of doing, right? They really do form network communities that they take very, very seriously. Whether that will translate down the road into parallel developments in the area of religion strikes me as a very interesting question.

I can only pose the question. I have no data to answer it, but my guess is that there may be groups of millennials who come together for religious purposes outside the framework of a church or a synagogue or, down the road, a mosque, but which have a more than passing relationship to the moral and doctrinal questions that traditional religions pose. Can't prove that.

With regard to the jobs issue, I don't think it's that millennials have instrumentalized jobs. It's that jobs have instrumentalized the workforce, and if you have in the space of 40 or 50 years, you know, employers who have shifted from, in effect, lifetime employment of people who walk in the gates at the age of 18 or 19 or 20 to ones where the workforce is seen as an instrumental cost center to be minimized, well, I think it's only reasonable for people to adjust their sense of the appropriate relationship to a job. It's just realistic. You know, to go into a job at the age of 23 these days with the assumption that you're going to be there for 30 years is preposterous.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Daniel Lippman.

DANIEL LIPPMAN: My first question might be what would you suggest Democrats do to lessen the concern that, you know, a lot of religious Americans have about the party and they think that they're trying to stop them from believing and saying what they want?



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My second question might be do you expect evangelicals and other religious Americans who had supported Trump over the election to, you know, notwithstanding his personal shortcomings, if he continues as president saying some of the things that he's doing in the transition, are they going to continue to cut him a break, or would you see their support lessening over time as they see him, you know, as president?

WILLIAM GALSTON: Yeah. Spend more time talking to people you don't agree with. This is probably the wrong occasion for me to offer advice to my party, which is invariably ignored anyway.

You have to begin with some humility. You have to begin by listening to people that you don't agree with. By the way, listening to people you don't agree with doesn't mean that you're going to come to agree with them or them with you, but it is a sign of respect. And then just to build on something that I said previously, if you run a presidential campaign and you don't even try to make your case to a wide swath of the population, they will draw the conclusion that you don't particularly want their vote.

So you know, get the conversation started -- no guarantee how it's going to work out. But if you don't have the conversation, the situation is bound to persist. Very simple.

KARLYN BOWMAN: But I think to the second question, like all Americans, evangelicals' judgments are going to be performance-based. They always are. So we'll just have to wait and see.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Jamie Weinstein.

JAMIE WEINSTEIN: There was some discussion earlier about why evangelicals voted for Trump and the numbers that did, and some of the theories do seem reasonable -- the Supreme Court, for instance, as a pick. It seems less reasonable of a theory if a significant

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number of evangelicals, a majority of evangelicals, pick Trump as their first, second, or third choice in the Republican primary.

And I guess my question is, is there a dataset of what percentage of evangelicals had Trump as one, two, three, or four in the Republican primary. If a majority had him in that position, does that change our understanding of why evangelicals actually supported Trump?

WILLIAM GALSTON: We do know some things. My understanding is that Trump carried the evangelical vote in about twice as many states as it went for Ted Cruz.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Right, Trump won these votes in 19 of 27 primaries.

WILLIAM GALSTON: 19 out of 27, okay. So there's a datum.

Secondly, from very early in the campaign, if you look at Ted Cruz's theory of the case, it depended on a dominant position among evangelicals. From the very beginning of the race, he did not get that dominant position. I think he was shocked. Lots of other people were shocked. But even early on, Donald Trump -- Pete, correct me if I'm wrong -- but I have the impression that almost from the beginning, Trump made surprising inroads into the evangelical vote in Republican primaries. Would that be an accurate summary?

PETER WEHNER: Yeah. That was the assumption of the Cruz campaign, and what was interesting was Cruz made the appeal to evangelicals on the old model when in previous elections one would have assumed that that would've had a lock on them.

It was really, I think, Trump that changed the paradigm. Either evangelicals changed from the past -- that is, their own criteria of what they want in a candidate changed -- and Trump filled it, or that Trump himself embodied something that caused them to change.



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I think the new model would have been Trump's form of engagement. I think what Bill said was quite right, which is a sense of a kind of pervasive political correctness and that they viewed Trump as someone who just broke it apart, and there was some sense in which they said, as you were quoting, damn right.

So rather than the usual kind of issue set that you would say, and the usual semantics that evangelicals use, he brought something else. What they heard in Trump, whether everyone agrees or not, they just seemed to associate it, and there was an affinity to it, and it was just different, in my experience, than anything else.

I don't think that you can break it down to policies, *per se*, certainly not to religious experience like it was with George W. Bush when he said in the 2000 election, Jesus is my favorite philosopher. That created a kind of instant connection with a lot of evangelicals.

They had a connection, a lot of them, with Trump, but it was for something that was entirely different. And I do think that a lot of it is largely anecdotal, but I think it's also somewhat research-based as well, which was a sense of him being a vehicle for a lot of frustration and anger under siege. He was unafraid to take on the very kind of elite figures that they felt had been dishonoring them and disrespecting. And he not only took them on, but he refused to back off.

And so I think that -- again, this is impressionistic -- there was some kind of deep, visceral attachment with him that was different than everything that had come before.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Miranda Kennedy is up next.

MIRANDA KENNEDY: In answer to the previous question about whether we have more data about self-described evangelical voters other than that they go to church once a

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week, I wonder what you think of that Barna nine-point survey. Have you seen that?

KARLYN BOWMAN: I just don't know the Barna data well enough to comment on it, but I think that there should be more work out there. And there probably is privately that we don't see publicly on this very question.

MIRANDA KENNEDY: Yeah. I mean, because those -- there -- they asked, like, very, very specific questions about, like, whether, you know -- doctrinal questions, and about the role of God and faith in your life. If that radically reduces the number of people who self-describe as an evangelical, that seems really significant, doesn't it?

WILLIAM GALSTON: On the face of it, yes. And I read about that survey when it came out almost a decade ago, but I certainly don't have the details firmly enough in mind. But it underscores the point, which is related to the question that Ken Woodward asked, about the gross categories versus more fine-grained inquiry.

I think in this morning, we've identified a range of questions that could well use more fine-grained qualitative as well as quantitative inquiry. So we have a lot more questions than answers this morning, you probably noticed.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Eugene, over here.

EUGENE SCOTT: Yes. So I've seen quite a bit of conversation among journalists throughout the election about how evangelicals, what we're seeing the data support, just differs from what we have historically known or believed evangelicals to be, which would lead me to believe maybe we need to redefine our idea of what an evangelical is. I think for one of the first times, we saw during this election conversations about the diversity of evangelicalism. So it's worth noting that Black and Latinos who historically do not refer to themselves as evangelicals but who hold many of the same convictions as traditional

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evangelicals overwhelmingly did not support Donald Trump and the same with many millennial evangelicals.

In addition to the concept of nominal evangelicals, which we haven't I don't think historically used, perhaps we have to go back to figuring out what we believe an evangelical is and maybe in our reporting explain what types of evangelicals we're actually talking about when we're writing about evangelicals.

Have you seen any data looking at how the faith, evangelicalism, is just different from what we historically have thought it to be?

KARLYN BOWMAN: As Bill said to the last question, we need a lot more fine-grained research. The exit poll is a single piece of paper with a bunch of questions on one side and a bunch of questions on the back. The exit poll consortium partners (the networks and the AP) spar every year over what questions are going to be included in the poll. They drop some and add some.

I'm not even sure the exit poll is going to be around in another four years. I think it's going to change in some significant ways. I think we do need to change the White evangelical born-again question in the poll.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Okay. Mark.

MARK STRICHERZ: To what extent, or do you have data on, was being in a union household more important than being religious? The evidence suggests that unionization counts for less and less today. In the 1990's, Hillary Clinton's husband carried the Westmorland County in Pennsylvania twice, and in 2016 she lost the county by 47,000 votes -- 59,000 votes were her to 116,000 for Donald Trump. And she lost the whole state

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of Pennsylvania by 44,000 votes.

So it was often said that Philadelphia was the big county in Pennsylvania. But it seems like areas that had become de-unionized have, at least in this election, were important.

WILLIAM GALSTON: I've actually drilled down into Pennsylvania. But let me begin with a datum that I think has been underemphasized, and that is that Hillary Clinton's share of the White Catholic vote was lower than it has been for a Democratic presidential candidate for a very long time.

She substantially or significantly underperformed Barack Obama 2012 among White Catholics, and Obama 2012 had already significantly underperformed Obama 2008 among White Catholics.

Now, I mention this because if you look at Pennsylvania, White Catholics in small town and rural areas are thick on the ground.

Here's what happened in Pennsylvania, and most people, I think, don't understand this. Hillary Clinton did as well as Barack Obama 2012 did in Alleghany County, AKA Pittsburgh. She did almost as well in Philadelphia. She did better than Obama 2012 in the suburban colored counties around Philadelphia. She ended up with almost as many votes in Pennsylvania as Barack Obama got in 2012. What happened?

Trump mobilized 300,000 new voters into the system, you know, into the Pennsylvania electorate, to vote for a Republican candidate -- 300,000. That sea of red surrounding Pittsburgh and the Philadelphia area, almost all those counties had been red in 2012. That's not the point. The point is the turnout. The point is the margins, and the turnout was very, very strong. This is part of a more general pattern about the 2016 election.

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Most people believe it was a low turnout election. Wrong. Most people believe turnout will end up to be roughly equivalent to 2012. Most people believe that Democrats didn't turn out to vote for Hillary Clinton. Wrong. When all the votes are counted, she will probably have roughly as many votes as Barack Obama got in 2012. The difference is that Donald Trump is going to end up with about two-and-a-half-million more votes than Mitt Romney got in all the right places like Pennsylvania.

MARK STRICHERZ: Right. But my question is, to what extent does -- just in Westmoreland County when I was talking with voters in 2003 and 2004, we talked to White voters, as in members of my extended family.

WILLIAM GALSTON: Right.

MARK STRICHERZ: Maybe this evidence suggests -- but again, maybe it's wrong -- that in places like Westmoreland County that you have fewer union members, and maybe unionization is not as important a factor as it was 12 years ago.

WILLIAM GALSTON: It can't be because the economic base that supported the union movement is a whole lot weaker than it was 12 years ago. So those two things go together. You can't have unions if you don't have steel plants.

And if those sorts of industries are going down the tubes, then the union base is, and a lot of the people who used to have a sense of solidaristic participation in the union, which was seen as fighting for them, well, they're on their own now, which is why they're looking for a strong man to help them, because the collective instruments that they used to have to defend them and to advance their interests are weakened or disappeared altogether. So yeah.

KARLYN BOWMAN: Union households were -- or at least people who answered the



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question does anyone in your household belong to a labor union, 18 percent of voters said someone did, and they voted 51 to 43 percent for Clinton. The White evangelical vote was 26 percent. So the union vote was a smaller share.

MICHAEL CROMARTIE: Ladies and gentlemen, But please join me in thanking both of our speakers.

♦ END ♦

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