“CULTURE WARS” IN THE AMERICAN PARTY SYSTEM
Religious and Cultural Change Among Partisan Activists Since 1972

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This article uses surveys of the parties’ national convention delegates from 1972 to 1992 to examine the emergence of a religious cleavage between Republican and Democratic activists. The findings indicate that the religious cleavage between the two parties has grown over time, with the Republicans becoming more traditionally religious and with the Democrats growing more secular and religiously modern. This religious polarization has been associated with a growing partisan polarization on “cultural” issues such as abortion, women’s rights, and homosexual rights. Finally, the article demonstrates that the impact of religious change within the parties on interparty differences on cultural issues has been even broader than a model focusing only on religious replacement would predict. Not only is religious replacement within the parties occurring, but within religious groups, Democratic activists are becoming more culturally liberal relative to Republican activists.

There is a religious war going on in our country for the soul of America. It is a cultural war . . .

—Patrick J. Buchanan at the 1992 Republican National Convention

Pat Buchanan’s cultural call to arms at the 1992 Republican national convention certainly was laced with political motivations. However, his observation echoes the argument of recent scholarship that a new form of religious and cultural conflict has emerged on the American social and political landscape (Green, Guth, Smidt, & Kellstedt, 1996; Hunter, 1991; Wuthnow, 1989). This research con-

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tends that the traditional tensions between Protestants, Catholics, and Jews have given way to divisions both within and between religious traditions. This new cleavage pits individuals who remain committed to orthodox religious beliefs and practices against individuals who have abandoned traditional orthodoxy in favor of more modern views. These religious tensions have escalated into a full-scale “culture war” in which religious “conservatives” battle with religious “liberals” and secularists to shape and define American cultural norms (Hunter, 1991; Wuthnow, 1988, 1989).

A number of scholars demonstrate that these divisions have come to affect party politics in the United States. Among both activists and voters, religious conservatives tend to support the Republican party, whereas the Democratic party draws its support disproportionately from the ranks of religious liberals and secularists (Green, Guth, & Fraser, 1991; Green et al., 1996; Layman, 1997; Miller & Shanks, 1996; Miller & Wattenberg, 1984; Rozell & Wilcox, 1995). Most of these studies, however, have examined only cross-sectional data. Thus, political scientists do not know how long the religious and cultural divisions in the party system have existed and whether or not they have grown over time. Without such information, we lack not only the context to judge the extent of partisan change but also the ability to make sound predictions about the future amount of change. Furthermore, a purely cross-sectional examination of this religious cleavage hinders our ability to address questions about how it has become manifest in the party system. For instance, how closely has the religious polarization of the parties been tied to polarization on particular types of policy issues? Have particular candidates played a significant role in bringing this religious division into party politics?

This article attempts to provide some answers to these questions by examining religious and cultural change over time among the parties’ activists. It chooses this focus because party activists are a driving force in the partisan change process. Activists often bring new issues into party politics (Carmines, 1991; Carmines & Stimson, 1989); they exert substantial influence on the selection of party candidates and the drafting of party platforms (Aldrich, 1995; Miller & Jennings, 1986); and they serve as “opinion leaders” in their local communities, playing a crucial role in shaping the images that the mass public forms of the parties’ policy stances (Berelson, Lazarsfeld, & McPhee, 1954;
The role of activists in effecting partisan religious change may be particularly important. Hunter (1991, 1994) argues that the culture war is fought primarily by elites and highly committed activists, whereas most ordinary citizens have less well-defined attitudes toward the issues that define the conflict.

**ACTIVISTS, CANDIDATES, AND THE GROWTH OF THE PARTISAN RELIGIOUS CLEAVAGE**

The religious polarization of the party system should result from religious replacement: secularists and religious liberals disengaging from Republican party activity and being replaced by newly active religious conservatives; religious conservatives disengaging from Democratic party activity and being replaced by newly active religious liberals and secularists. Thus, in order to understand why and how religious polarization has occurred, it is necessary to understand why individuals with various religious orientations become active in, remain active in, or cease to be active in party politics.

In a prominent account of party activism, John H. Aldrich (1983a, 1983b, 1995) modifies the Downsian (1957) spatial model of voting behavior to explain the decisions of individuals to engage in or refrain from party activity. Aldrich argues that an individual is more likely to become active in or remain active in a party as the distance between the policy positions of that party and the individual’s own positions grows smaller relative to the distance between the individual’s positions and those of the other party. Because the issues most closely associated with the contemporary religious cleavage are the social or “cultural” issues such as abortion, women’s rights, prayer in the public schools, and homosexual rights (Jelen, 1991; Layman & Green, 1998), change in the aggregate religious characteristics of party activists should be closely related to change in the parties’ stances on cultural issues. According to Aldrich’s logic, a move by the Republican party to the right on cultural issues should draw more religious conservatives into the Republican party and lead more religious liberals and secularists into Democratic party activity. A shift by the Democratic party toward the cultural left should have the same effect on the religious composition of the two parties.
If individuals’ decisions on whether or not to participate in party activity are driven by their perceptions of the parties’ positions on certain issues, then how do potential activists form these perceptions? One possibility is that individuals evaluate the parties’ positions on an issue through the mean positions of current activists (Aldrich, 1983a, 1983b). This implies that the growth of the religious cleavage between Republican and Democratic activists should follow a steady pattern. The mobilization of religious conservatives into the Republican party should shift the mean position of Republican activists on cultural issues to the right. This should increase the attraction of Republican party activity for religious conservatives and make Democratic party activity more appealing to secularists and religious liberals. This change in the religious composition of the parties should result in further polarization of the parties’ mean cultural positions, which in turn should attract even more religious traditionalists into the GOP and even more religious liberals and secularists into the Democratic party.

Empirical evidence supports the assumption that the positions of current party activists shape individuals’ perceptions of the parties’ policy stances (cf. Carmines & Stimson, 1989). However, it is likely that the participation decisions of current and potential activists are shaped also by the stances of the parties’ leading candidates. Candidates are a party’s most visible activists, and survey data show that support for particular candidates is the most prevalent motivation for party activity (Miller & Jennings, 1986). The parties’ nominees should have the greatest impact on potential activists’ perceptions of the parties’ positions. However, candidates who lose nomination campaigns also may affect these perceptions in that they often exert a substantial impact on the positions taken in the parties’ platforms. Moreover, even if potential activists do not see the positions of a candidate for the nomination as the party’s positions, they may be attracted to party activity by a desire for the party to adopt that candidate’s stances. Because the policy stances of party candidates generally diverge from the mean position of current activists, the growth of religious polarization between Democratic and Republican activists should not occur at a constant rate. Instead, the rate of religious change should be accelerated or decelerated in particular years by the cultural-issue positions of the parties’ leading candidates. When leading Republican and Democratic candidates take cultural positions that are more cen-
trist than the mean position of activists in their respective parties, the
growth of partisan religious polarization should be less—and in fact
the extent of polarization may decline from previous levels—than it
would be if candidates were located at the activist mean. When Demo-
cratic and Republican candidates take cultural positions that are more
polarized than are the activist means in their respective parties, the
growth of partisan religious polarization should be greater than it
would be if candidates were located at the activist mean.

DATA AND THE MEASUREMENT OF RELIGION

The analysis employs the five Convention Delegate Studies (CDS)
conducted by Warren E. Miller and others from 1972 through 1992.5
In addition to their role as party activists, there are at least two reasons
why national convention delegates may be a particularly appropriate
focus for this study. First, party reforms have made the presidential
nomination process open to infiltration by new groups of activists.
Because the composition of the parties’ convention delegations
reflects the outcomes of the nominating process, newly emerging par-
tisan cleavages may be evident first among convention delegates. Sec-
ond, because they play a role in shaping party platforms, delegates
may have more influence than most activists on the policy positions
with which a party is associated. In this sense, they not only mirror an
ongoing process of partisan change but also may be catalysts for that
change.

In addition to providing the best time series available on party
activists, the CDS is the only national-level longitudinal study of
activists to consistently contain indicators of religious orientations.
Each of the CDS studies contained questions about denominational
affiliation and frequency of church or synagogue attendance.6 Each
CDS from 1980 to 1992 included a question concerning religious sali-
ence, or the amount of guidance provided by religion. The 1988 and
1992 CDS asked respondents if they considered themselves to be Fund-
damentalist Christians.

All of these religious indicators should be useful in measuring dif-
ferent aspects of the contemporary religious cleavage. Religious
affiliations play a key role in shaping political behavior, and a number
of scholars have shown substantial theological and political differences between members of different denominational “traditions” (Green et al., 1996; Kellstedt & Green, 1993; Kellstedt, Green, Guth, & Smidt, 1994; Miller & Shanks, 1996). Following this research, the analysis combines the various denominations in the CDS into eight religious traditions: Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Black Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, Eastern Orthodox, and secular. The impact of denominational preference on political behavior is strongest for the most religious and active members (Kellstedt & Green, 1993; Wald, Owen, & Hill, 1988). Thus, the analysis divides some of the religious traditions into “regular” attenders—those individuals who attend church almost every week or more—and “non-regular” attenders: those who attend less often than almost every week.

One difficulty with the CDS data is that their denominational codings include only a very small number of Evangelical denominations (see Appendix A). Thus, many Evangelical Protestants are probably hidden in the CDS’s “other Protestant” category and, since the CDS coding includes most of the Mainline Protestant denominations, it is likely that most “other Protestants” are Evangelicals. Thus, I examine the growth of Evangelical Protestantism in the GOP in two ways. First, I use all of the CDS surveys to examine change in the percentage of Republican delegates affiliated with particular Evangelical denominations. Second, using the 1988 and 1992 CDS, I broaden the Evangelical category to include not only those delegates affiliated with the Evangelical denominations contained in the CDS coding but also those “other Protestants” who identify themselves as Fundamentalist Christians (cf. Green et al., 1996). I then use these two studies to examine differences in the percentage of various cohorts of Republican delegates included in this broader, and likely more accurate, category of Evangelical Protestants.

In addition to changes in the types of religious traditions with which Republican and Democratic activists are affiliated, it is possible that partisan differences in religious commitment may be growing. The Republicans may simply be turning into a more religious party while the Democrats become less religious (Guth & Green, 1993; Layman, 1997). I use the church attendance and religious salience variables to test this hypothesis.
THE RELIGIOUS DIVISION OF PARTY ACTIVISTS

There are two religious traditions that seem to be at the forefront of the cultural conflict. Evangelical Protestants have very traditional religious and moral views, high levels of religious commitment, and very conservative attitudes on cultural issues (Green et al., 1996; Hunter, 1983). They have provided most of the leadership of and grassroots-level support for the Christian Right (Oldfield, 1996; Wilcox, 1992). The principal opponent of politically active Evangelicals has been seculars: Those individuals who affiliate with no religious denomination and who tend to reject traditional religiosity (Oldfield, 1996; Wuthnow, 1989). If the parties are being polarized along religious and cultural lines, it should be most apparent among these two groups. An increasing proportion of Republican activists should be Evangelicals, particularly committed Evangelicals who attend church regularly. An increasing proportion of Democratic delegates should be seculars.

Part A of Figure 1 shows the percentage of regularly attending Evangelical Protestants among Republican delegates from 1972 to 1992, and Part C shows the percentage of seculars among Democratic delegates over this period. They show this for both all delegates and first-time delegates, a group of particular interest in that shifts in the parties’ positions on cultural issues should lead to the mobilization of new party activists. In Part B of Figure 1, Evangelical Protestants are defined as all members of Evangelical denominations and all “other Protestants” who are self-identified Fundamentalists. It shows the percentages of Republican cohorts from 1972 to 1992 who are regularly attending Evangelical Protestants according to this broader definition.

Parts A and B of the figure clearly demonstrate the steady ascendance of committed Evangelicals within the Republican party after 1976. The consistent nature of this pattern could be explained in large part by a model of partisan change that did not consider the effects of candidates: the increase in Evangelicalism among Republican activists between 1976 and 1980 made Republican activity more attractive for other Evangelicals, and their entry into the party increased the appeal of GOP participation for even more conservative Protestants. However, the effect of Republican presidential candidates on this pat-
tern of partisan change should not be discounted. The noticeable increase in the proportion of regularly attending Evangelicals between 1976 and 1984 was surely aided by the culturally conservative rhetoric of Ronald Reagan, and the religiously and culturally conservative campaign of Pat Robertson certainly contributed to the unusually high percentage of Evangelical Republican delegates in 1988.

The pattern of secularism among Democratic delegates is considerably less consistent, clearly reflecting the influence of candidates’ stances on the characteristics of a party’s activist base. The delegates to the 1972 Democratic convention were quite secular: 21% of all delegates and 24% of first-time delegates fell into the secular category. Undoubtedly, many secular activists were attracted by (and many religious traditionalists were turned off by) the candidacy of George McGovern, who took liberal stances on noneconomic concerns such as abortion, equal rights for women, and the Vietnam War en route to the Democratic nomination. The drop-off in secularism between 1972 and 1976 likely reflects the shift from McGovern to Jimmy Carter as the Democratic standard-bearer. In contrast to McGovern’s thoroughgoing liberalism, Carter was a born-again Christian from the culturally traditional South who attracted substantial support from Evangelical Protestants (Miller & Wattenberg, 1984; Oldfield, 1996). The influx of secularists into Democratic politics in 1972 should have attracted even more secularists to Democratic activity, but the strength of the Carter candidacy may have reduced that attraction.

There was a clear growth in Democratic secularism between 1976 and 1992, but it took shape in fits and starts. Reflecting the nomination of a more culturally liberal candidate, Walter Mondale, in 1984 and the growth of religious traditionalism in the Republican party, the proportion of secular Democratic delegates increased noticeably between 1976 and 1984. However, that proportion declined again between 1984 and 1988, and the explanation again may lie in particular presidential candidacies. Although the party nominated Michael Dukakis, the “first truly secular” presidential candidate in American history (Wills, 1990, p. 60), in 1988, the campaigns of two of Dukakis’s chief rivals—Jesse Jackson and Al Gore—may have attracted a more religious set of activists to Democratic activity. Jackson’s 1988 campaign relied heavily on African American churches to mobilize support and
Figure 1: The Percentage of Regularly Attending Evangelicals Among Republican Delegates and the Percentage of Secularists Among Democratic Delegates From 1972 to 1992


NOTE: The number of observations ranges from 631 to 955 for all delegates and from 484 to 784 for first-timers in Part A, from 168 to 519 in Part B, and from 839 to 1,425 for all delegates and from 815 to 1,351 for all delegates in Part C.
therefore attracted unusually large numbers of Black Protestants to
Democratic activity (Hertzke, 1993). Gore’s campaign focused its
efforts on winning the support of moderate and conservative voters,
especially in his native South (Hadley & Stanley, 1996). As a result, it
mobilized an unusually large number of committed Mainline Protes-
tants into Democratic politics.

After 1988, the growing influence of religious and cultural conser-
vatives in the Republican party and the threat that Supreme Court
decisions such as the 1989 *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services*
posed to abortion rights apparently increased even further the attrac-
tion of Democratic activity to seculars. In 1992, the percentage of
secular Democratic delegates reached its highest level since 1972.

These trends among secular Democrats and Evangelical Republi-
cans should have consequences for the presence of other religious
groups in the two parties. The ascent of committed Evangelicals in the
GOP should decrease the appeal of Republican activity for secularists
and the less religious members of other traditions. In contrast, the
more committed members of other religious traditions—for instance,
Mainline Protestants and particularly Catholics—may share some
aspects of the moral traditionalism and cultural conservatism of Evan-
gelicals. Their percentages should not decline as those of committed
Evangelicals rise. Similarly, the post-1976 growth of secularism in the
Democratic party should decrease the attraction of Democratic activity
for Evangelicals and highly committed members of other traditions.
However, it should not lead to a decline in the proportion of the
nominally religious Democratic activists who affiliate with a religious
tradition but are not active in that religion.

Table 1 shows the percentage of first-time Republican and Demo-
cratic delegates to national conventions from 1972 to 1992 in each of
the eight religious traditions. The three largest traditions—Mainline
Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, and Catholic—are divided into
regular and nonregular attendees. It is apparent that the parties are not
close to being full participants in a religious “war” as both are centered
in the mainstream of American religion. Even by 1992, a clear major-
ity of first-time Republican delegates (60.8%) and a near majority of
first-time Democrats (47.8%) were Mainline Protestants or Catholics.

At the same time, Table 1 does provide further evidence of growing
religious differences between the parties. The strength of most of the
religious traditions in the Democratic party has not changed very much. However, the growth of secularism in the party since 1976 has been accompanied by a change in the type of activists coming from its largest tradition: Catholics. In 1976, there were more regularly attending Catholics than less committed Catholics among first-time Democratic delegates. By 1992, the situation was clearly reversed so that, as has been consistently the case among Mainline Protestants, the majority of Democratic Catholics were nonregular church attenders. The Democratic party now appears to be a party whose core of support comes from secularists and the less committed members of the major religious traditions.

The growth of Evangelicalism in the GOP has been accompanied by some increase in the percentage of regularly attending Catholic delegates, particularly between 1976 and 1984. More striking, there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of less committed Mainline Protestants, a group that represented a clear plurality of Republican activists through 1980. Meanwhile, the proportion of regularly attending Mainline Protestants changed very little. What is clear is that the Republican party is no longer a party of the nominally religious: upper status individuals who affiliate with a Mainline denomination but do not take an active role within it. It is becoming a party of the traditionally religious and the religiously committed, one whose core of support consists of the highly active members of the Evangelical, Mainline, and Catholic traditions.11

To assess whether the changes in the religious affiliations of Republican and Democratic delegates have been accompanied by a growing religious-versus-secular cleavage between the parties, Figure 2 shows the percentage of all delegates and first-time delegates in both parties from 1972 to 1992 who attended church almost every week or more and who received a great deal of guidance from their religion.12 The figure clearly demonstrates a growing difference in the religious participation of the two parties’ activists. The proportion of Republican activists who attend church regularly increased steadily from 1976 (42.1% among first-time delegates) to 1992 (56.8% among first-time delegates). The Democratic pattern again shows peaks and valleys corresponding to the stances of leading presidential candidates. However, there was a noticeable decline in the presence of regular church attenders at Democratic conventions between 1980 (38.2%
The growing partisan difference in religious salience is due entirely to the increasing commitment of Republican activists. The percentage of Democratic delegates who find religion to be highly salient was quite low in 1972 and changed very little over this period. Among first-time delegates, the highest percentage of religiously salient Democrats were from the Catholic tradition in 1992 (16.07%) and the lowest were from the Eastern Orthodox tradition in 1972 (0.22%). Among Republicans, the highest percentage of religiously salient delegates were from the Catholic tradition in 1992 (13.65%) and the lowest were from the Eastern Orthodox tradition in 1988 (0.58%).

### TABLE 1

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NOTE: Percentages do not sum to 100 because the “other Protestant and other religion” category is not included.
period. In contrast, the percentage of first-time Republican delegates who received a great deal of guidance from religion increased from 35.2 in 1976 to 49.0 in 1992. It appears that the Republican party is becoming not only more closely associated than the Democratic party
with conservative religious traditions but also just a more religious party than the Democrats.

RELIGIOUS POLARIZATION AND THE POLARIZATION OF DELEGATES’ CULTURAL ATTITUDES

This article predicts a close association between partisan religious change and partisan change on cultural issues. As the Republican and Democratic parties become increasingly polarized along religious lines, the ideological distance between the two parties on cultural issues should grow. In order to test this hypothesis, Figure 3 shows the differences in the orientations of Republican and Democratic convention delegates from 1972 to 1992 toward two of the issues—abortion and the Equal Rights Amendment—and four of the groups—the women’s movement, the Moral Majority, gay rights groups, and pro-life groups—associated with the cultural conflict. The scores for each issue and group were coded to range from the most liberal attitude to the most conservative attitude and were standardized to have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 25 for the entire sample in each survey. The partisan-difference measure is the mean Republican position minus the mean Democratic position.

The figure demonstrates that differences in the cultural attitudes of Republican and Democratic activists grew considerably over the time period of this study. Partisan polarization increased with regard to each of these issues and groups, and the growth was especially impressive in attitudes toward the abortion issue and antiabortion activists. The level of partisan differences increased from 9 in 1972 to 30 in 1992 on abortion and from 11 in 1972 to 25 in 1992 on attitudes toward prolife groups.

Given the individual-level relationship between religious orientations and cultural attitudes, it is tempting to say that there is an empirical connection between the growing religious differences between the parties’ activists and the growing partisan differences in cultural attitudes. However, a bit more analysis is necessary to establish that connection. Since abortion is the only cultural issue or group included in
all of the CDS surveys, the remainder of the article examines the relationship between religious change among party activists and change in activists’ attitudes on abortion. Although the focus on abortion is undertaken for practical reasons, the substantive importance of abortion to the contemporary cultural conflict is indisputable. Abortion is the defining issue in contemporary cultural and moral politics (Hunter, 1994; Oldfield, 1996). It is the issue that is most likely to arouse passion and to stir individuals to action. It is also the issue that
has been most central to the cultural debate both within and between the parties.

Due to the very small number of time points in this analysis, a rigorous time series analysis of the relationship between the parties’ religious compositions and their aggregate position on abortion is impossible. However, it is possible to examine this relationship graphically and with some very basic statistical tests. Figure 4 shows the percentage of Republican and Democratic delegates holding certain attitudes on abortion and belonging to certain religious groups from 1972 to 1992. The changes in the parties’ aggregate positions on abortion should be associated with broader changes in the religious composition of the two parties and not simply with the growing proportions of Evangelical Republicans and secular Democrats. Thus, the first panel of the figure shows the percentage of Republican delegates from 1972 to 1992 who took the most prolife attitude on abortion—abortion should never be permitted—and who are in “traditionalist” religious categories: regularly attending Evangelical Protestants, regularly attending Catholics, and Mormons. The second panel shows the percentage of Democratic delegates from 1972 to 1992 who took the most prochoice position on abortion (see Appendix A) and who are in “modernist” religious categories: seculars, Jews, non-regularly-attending Mainline Protestants, and non-regularly-attending Catholics.15

The figure demonstrates an extremely close relationship between the percentage of Republican delegates holding very conservative views on abortion and the presence of highly committed individuals with traditional religious affiliations in the party. The relationship between aggregate abortion attitudes and religious composition is more complicated among Democratic activists. The growth of pro-choice attitudes is fairly steady, whereas the growth of religious modernism follows a much more erratic pattern. Nevertheless, the figure does provide some indication that there is an empirical connection between the growth of liberal abortion attitudes among Democratic activists and the changing religious face of the Democratic party.

Some simple statistical tests provide some confirmation of these relationships. Despite the tiny sample, the correlation between the abortion series and the religious series is statistically significant for Republicans \((r = .94, p < .01, \text{one-tailed test})\) and approaches significance for Democrats \((r = .66, p < .08, \text{one-tailed test})\). Because all of
these series clearly trend, these results may be spurious. However, even when the trends are removed by taking first-differences, the correlations still approach significance for both Republicans ($r = .76, p < .07$, one-tailed test) and Democrats ($r = .75, p < .07$, one-tailed test). With so few cases, these statistical results are far from conclusive.

Figure 4: The Percentage of Republican Delegates Taking the Most Prolife Abortion Stance and in Traditionalist Religious Categories. The Percentage of Democratic Delegates Taking the Most Prochoice Abortion Stance and in Modernist Religious Categories

NOTE: All of these percentages were standardized to a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 25.
However, they and the graphical representations of the relationships both point to the same conclusion: Religious trends among the parties’ activists have been associated with the polarization of the parties on cultural matters.

### RELIGIOUS POLARIZATION AND THE EMERGENCE OF PARTISAN DIFFERENCES WITHIN RELIGIOUS GROUPS

The analysis in the previous section points to a relatively simple process of partisan polarization, directly related to religious replacement within the two parties. However, it is possible that intraparty religious replacement has an even broader impact on interparty ideological conflict. Although the entry of religiously and culturally conservative activists into the Republican party should decrease the attraction of Republican activity for many secular and nominally religious activists, there may be some secular and less religious individuals who remain active in the GOP. However, in order for Republican activity to continue to appeal to these remaining activists, they should have, in the aggregate, more conservative cultural attitudes than did previous groups of less religious Republican activists. In other words, the mobilization of religious conservatives into the Republican party may contribute to a growing cultural conservatism of Republican activists of all religious stripes. Following this same logic, the growing secularism of the Democratic party and the concomitant growth of cultural liberalism may lead Democratic activists of all religious orientations to adopt, in the aggregate, more liberal stances on cultural issues.

In order to test these hypotheses, I pool data on convention delegates in each year from 1972 to 1992 and estimate the following equation:

\[
Y_i = \alpha + \sum_{k=1}^{K} \beta_k X_{ik} + \sum_{j=1}^{J} \beta_j D_j + \sum_{m=1}^{M} \beta_m D_m + \epsilon_i
\]

In this equation, \(Y_i\) is the abortion attitude of each delegate in the sample. \(X_{ik}\) are six control variables—education, income, gender, age, ideological self-identification, and residence in the South—shown by past work to be important determinants of abortion attitudes (cf. Cook,
Jelen, & Wilcox, 1992; Guth, Smidt, Kellstedt, & Green, 1993; Leege, 1983). \(D_i\) are separate dummy variables for Democrats and Republicans in each of 10 different religious categories: regularly attending Evangelical Protestants, non-regularly-attending Evangelical Protestants, regularly attending Mainline Protestants, non-regularly-attending Mainline Protestants, regularly attending Catholics, non-regularly-attending Catholics, secularists, Black Protestants, Jews, and Mormons. The comparison category includes delegates from both parties in “other religions.”\(^{16}\) \(D_t\) are dummy variables for each convention year from 1976 through 1992. The comparison category is 1972.

There are four sets of parameters to be estimated in this model. \(\alpha\), the intercept term, represents the mean abortion attitude of delegates in other religions in 1972—the comparison categories in the model—when all of the control variables equal zero. The \(\beta\) terms represent the effects of the control variables on delegates’ abortion attitudes. Because these variables are not interacted with convention year, their effect on abortion attitudes is assumed to be constant over time. The \(\beta\) terms represent the difference, controlling for demographic characteristics and ideology, between the mean abortion attitude of a particular partisan and religious group—for example, Republicans who are regularly attending Mainline Protestants—and the mean abortion attitude of delegates in other religions in 1972. The \(\beta\) terms represent the difference between the mean abortion attitudes of delegates in other religions in a particular year and the mean abortion attitudes of delegates in other religions in 1972. The \(\beta\) terms are the coefficients on interactions between each of the dummy variables for partisan and religious groups and each of the dummy variables for convention years. The difference between the mean abortion attitude of a particular partisan and religious group in a particular year and the mean attitude of that group in 1972 is given by the sum of the \(\beta\) term for the particular year and the \(\beta\) term for the interaction between that year variable and the variable for the particular group. Taken together, the coefficients on all of the interactions for a particular religious group and the coefficients on all of the convention year variables indicate the extent to which the abortion attitudes of Republican and Democratic activists in the same religious group have diverged over the 1972-1992 period.
Owing to the extremely large number of variables in this model, I will not discuss the parameter estimates in detail but will instead focus on the model’s predictions regarding change in the abortion attitudes of Democratic and Republican activists within various religious groups. The estimates are presented in Appendix B, which shows that the large majority of variables, including almost all of the interactions between the dummy variables for religious and partisan groups and the year variables, are statistically significant. Figure 5 shows the predicted abortion attitudes of Democratic and Republican activists among regular and nonregular attenders in each of the three major religious traditions—Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, and Catholic—and among Democratic and Republican secularists from 1972 to 1992. In order to compute these predicted values, all of the control variables were held constant at their means for the respective parties’ delegates.

The figure clearly shows that the partisan differences between activists within the same religious groups have grown over time. In 1972, Republican activists had slightly more conservative abortion attitudes than Democratic activists. As expected, the growth of partisan polarization within religious groups since 1972 has been sporadic, but it is nevertheless evident within each of these religious categories. In several groups, Republican activists grew more prolife in the aggregate. In every group, Democratic activists grew more prochoice in the aggregate. For the most part, the growth in partisan differences was not enormous, but it is clear that the growing partisan gap on cultural issues has not resulted simply from religious replacement within the parties.

This growing partisan polarization within religious groups may be explained both by turnover or replacement among activists and by attitudinal conversion among those activists who continue to participate in party politics. Activist turnover should contribute to the growth of partisan cleavages within religious traditions because as the presence of religious traditionalists in the Republican party grows and as Republican candidates become more likely to take conservative stands on cultural issues, the types of individuals within any religious tradition for whom Republican activity is attractive increasingly should become those with the most conservative cultural attitudes. Thus, within a particular tradition, the individuals who remain active
Figure 5: Predicted Positions on Abortion of Republicans and Democrats in Various Religious Groups, 1972 to 1992

SOURCE: Computed by the author from the regression analysis shown in Appendix B.

NOTE: Abortion attitudes range from 1 (*most prochoice*) to 4 (*most prolife*). "Regular" refers to those members of the tradition who attend church almost every week or more. "Nonregular" refers to those members of the tradition who attend church less often than almost every week.
in the GOP or become active in the GOP should have more conservative cultural attitudes than those individuals who disengage from Republican activity. Similarly, as religious and cultural liberalism becomes more prevalent among Democratic activists and candidates, those individuals who remain active in the Democratic party or become active in the Democratic party should have more liberal cultural attitudes than those individuals who disengage from Democratic activity. Attitudinal conversion may contribute to partisan polarization within religious groups because the cultural stands of party candidates and of other activists may influence those held by individual activists (Layman & Carsey, 1998). For example, a secular Republican activist may hold a liberal attitude on abortion. However, if she remains active in Republican politics, she will be increasingly likely to come into contact with Republican activists and candidates who espouse prolife views, and this may lead her to become more conservative on abortion. Meanwhile, a secular Democrat who holds a pro-choice attitude and remains active in Democratic politics may become even more prochoice owing to the growing social and political pressures within the Democratic party to hold a liberal view on abortion.

My analysis of CDS panel data from 1980 to 1988 indicates that both replacement and conversion processes contributed to the growth of partisan differences on abortion within religious traditions. Within most traditions, the individuals who were newcomers to Republican activity in 1988 and the individuals who were active in Republican politics in both 1980 and 1988 were more prolife than the individuals who were active in the GOP in 1980 but dropped out of Republican politics before 1988. Within most traditions, Democratic newcomers in 1988 and Democrats who were active in 1980 and 1988 were more prochoice than the Democrats who were active in 1980 but dropped out before 1988. Moreover, within most traditions, the Republicans who were active in both 1988 and 1980 were, in the aggregate, more conservative on abortion in 1988 than they were in 1980. The Democrats who remained active in both years were, in the aggregate, more liberal on abortion in 1988 than they were in 1980. Because there is a high level of turnover among convention delegates from one election year to the next, it is likely that most of the aggregate change within religious traditions in both parties resulted from replacement. How-
ever, attitudinal conversion on abortion also played a part among both Democratic and Republican activists.

Regardless of the process that has caused the growth of partisan cleavages on abortion within religious groups, the consequences of that growth are clear. Although there are significant intraparty religious divisions on cultural issues (cf. Green et al., 1991), interparty cultural differences within religious groups are growing larger than intraparty cultural cleavages between religious groups. Taking Catholics as an example, the differences between the abortion attitudes of regular attenders and nonregular attenders within the same party were clearly larger than the differences between Democrats and Republicans within the same category of church attendance in 1972. By 1992, the reverse was true. The differences between Democrats and Republicans in the same category of church attendance were clearly larger than the differences between regular and nonregular church attenders within the same party.²⁰

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This article has shown that the current division of the Republican and Democratic parties along religious lines is not an entirely new phenomenon. As early as 1972, Democratic activists were considerably more secular than their Republican counterparts. However, this religious cleavage has grown. Since 1976, there has been a relatively steady increase in the percentages of regularly attending Evangelical Protestants, regular churchgoers, and individuals with high levels of religious salience among Republican activists. The ascendance of religious traditionalism in the GOP does not mean less religious Republicans have disappeared or given up the fight for party control. However, their ranks are clearly thinning. Mainline Protestants with low levels of religious participation were once numerically dominant in the Republican party. Now, they make up a much smaller percentage of party activists, and the GOP is a party of the committed members of the Evangelical, Mainline Protestant, and Catholic traditions.

The trends have been neither as consistent nor as impressive in the Democratic party. I argue that religious change among a party’s activ-
ists should not occur at a constant rate, but instead should occur sporadically in response to the cultural stands of the party’s leading candidates. This has clearly been the case among Democratic activists as their aggregate religious characteristics seem to correspond to the liberalism of candidates’ cultural appeals. However, since 1976, there has been a clear increase in the percentage of Democratic activists who are secular and who do not attend religious services regularly. This trend has been accompanied by a decline in the proportion of the party’s Catholic activists with high levels of religious participation.

The growing religious and cultural cleavage between the parties’ activists has a number of important implications for contemporary American politics. Clearly, it should affect the type of support the parties receive from the mass electorate. Activist-level differences often result in changes in the images that the mass public holds of the parties’ policy positions (Carmines & Stimson, 1989). Thus, the expanding religious differences between Democratic and Republican convention delegates may contribute to a restructuring of the parties’ mass coalitions along the lines of the contemporary religious cleavage, a phenomenon that seems to already be well under way (cf. Green et al., 1996; Layman, 1997).

This activist-level religious polarization also may influence the amount of support the parties receive from the American public. E. J. Dionne (1991) argues that the inability of the parties to find common ground on cultural issues is one of the reasons for the weakening of party ties in the United States and Americans’ general disaffection from politics. While the parties and their activists move toward the cultural extremes, most Americans continue to have ambivalent attitudes toward these issues and find other political concerns to be more pressing (see also Hunter, 1994).

At the same time, it appears that the losses that may be due to cultural polarization have been suffered disproportionately by one party: the Democrats. Journalists and political scientists have focused a good deal of attention on the intra-GOP battles between religious conservatives and upper status “traditional Republicans.” However, while cultural conservatism has attracted a new constituency of Evangelical activists and voters into the GOP, the party’s support from upper income voters has declined only slightly, if at all (Carmines & Lay-
man, 1997). Meanwhile, the Republicans have made substantial inroads among southern whites, a group attracted not only by the party’s racial conservatism but also by its cultural traditionalism (Black & Black, 1987). In contrast, the Democratic party has lost a considerable amount of support not only from southern whites but also from Catholic and lower income voters (Carmines & Layman, 1997). The party’s racial liberalism and the growing distaste of working-class whites for large-scale social welfare programs certainly contributed to this decline. However, given the religious and cultural conservatism of these three groups, the influence of secularism and cultural liberalism in the Democratic party also must have helped. Cultural conservatism may have long-term costs for the GOP, but thus far it appears to have enhanced its competitive position.

A final consequence of the religious and cultural polarization of party activists may be an inability of the parties to foster solutions to cultural policy problems. Hunter (1994) argues that the political parties have not advanced a democratic solution to issues such as abortion. Instead, they have contributed to the polarized nature of the debate by offering “the slogans of solidarity for the already committed” (p. 218). The blame for this failure on the part of political leaders cannot be placed entirely on their parties’ activists. However, the religious polarization of party activists raises the specter of political defeat for anyone advocating compromise solutions to cultural issues. In fact, that polarization may discourage politicians from engaging in any sort of reasoned discussion with the American public about their cultural stances. The stances of their parties’ activists are more extreme than those of most voters, and most voters are more concerned about other matters. So, the strategy often adopted by candidates is to take ideologically extreme cultural stances during the nomination campaign and then avoid these issues altogether in the spotlight of the general-election campaign.
APPENDIX A
Coding of Religious Orientations and Abortion Attitudes

Religious Traditions
Secular—Agnostic, Atheist, or no religious preference
Jewish
Catholic
Eastern Orthodox—Eastern Orthodox in 1972, Greek Orthodox in all other years
Mormon
Mainline Protestants—non-black members of the following denominations: Episcopal, Congregationalist, United Church of Christ, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist.
Evangelical Protestants—non-black members of the following denominations: Southern Baptist, other Baptist, Church of Christ, Pentecostal, Assemblies of God
Black Protestants—black members of Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, or “other” Protestant denominations
Other Religion—“other” Religion and non-black members of “other” Protestant denominations

Church and Synagogue Attendance
1. Don’t attend religious services
2. Almost never
3. A few times a year
4. Once or twice a month
5. Almost every week

Religious Salience—Amount of Guidance Provided by Religion
1. None
2. Only some
3. Quite a bit
4. Great deal

Abortion Attitude
(1972-1988)
1. Abortion should never be prohibited
2. Abortion should be permitted if, due to personal reasons, the woman would have difficulty in caring for the child.
3. Abortion should be permitted only if the life and health of the woman is in danger.
4. Abortion should never be permitted.

(1992)
1. By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.
2. The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman’s life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established.
3. The law should permit abortion only in cases of rape, incest, or when the woman’s life is in danger.
4. By law, abortion should never be permitted.
APPENDIX B

Delegates’ Abortion Attitudes as a Function of Religious Tradition and Participation and Their Interactions With Year, 1972-1992

Control Variables a

<p>| | | | | |</p>
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<tr>
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<td>Constant</td>
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<td>Gender (Female)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ideology (Conservative)</td>
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</table>
| Convention Year (Reference = 1972) a
| 1976 | −.08  |       |       |       |
| 1980 | −.03**|       |       |       |
| 1984 | −.01* |       |       |       |
| 1988 | .06   |       |       |       |
| 1992 | −.29  |       |       |       |

Coefficients on Religious/Partisan Dummy Variables and Their Interactions With Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Regular Evangelicals</th>
<th>Non-Regular Evangelicals</th>
<th>Regular Catholics</th>
<th>Non-Regular Catholics</th>
<th>Regular Mainline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>−.24</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>−.09</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>.07*</td>
<td>−.31</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Interactions
| Republicans × 1976 | .19                    | .25                     | −.02*              | .42                   | −.07             |
| Republicans × 1980 | .02**                | .42                     | −.10              | .38                   | −.05             |
| Republicans × 1984 | −.02**               | .13                     | .001*             | .23                   | −.07             |
| Republicans × 1988 | .15                  | .31                     | −.21              | .41                   | −.04**           |
| Republicans × 1992 | .43                  | .57                     | .04               | .44                   | .27              |
| Democrats × 1976 | .13                  | .45                     | .01**             | −.004**               | .14              |
| Democrats × 1980 | .20                  | .21                     | .09               | .08                   | .02              |
| Democrats × 1984 | .33                  | .26                     | −.19              | −.13                  | −.03*            |
| Democrats × 1988 | .18                  | −.02*                   | −.55              | −.26                  | −.25**           |
| Democrats × 1992 | −.17                 | .06**                   | −.53              | −.29                  | −.44             |

(continued)
### APPENDIX B Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dummy variables for partisans within a particular religious group (reference = other religion)</th>
<th>Non-Regular</th>
<th>Secular</th>
<th>Black Protestant</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>Mormon</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.66</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.18</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Interactions**

| Republicans × 1976 | .08 | .19 | -1.34 | -.25 | .14 |
| Republicans × 1980 | .12 | .21 | -.78 | -.48 | .37 |
| Republicans × 1984 | .001* | .33 | -1.04 | -.05** | .28 |
| Republicans × 1988 | .09 | .09 | -.98 | -.31 | .13 |
| Republicans × 1992 | .22 | .58 | -.28 | -.13 | .12 |
| Democrats × 1976 | -.12 | -.08 | -.25 | -.19 | .02* |
| Democrats × 1980 | -.01* | -.19 | .04** | -.15 | .21 |
| Democrats × 1984 | -.15 | -.13 | -.16 | -.23 | -.02* |
| Democrats × 1988 | -.32 | -.24 | -.52 | -.26 | -.10 |
| Democrats × 1992 | -.24 | -.14 | -.48 | -.12 | -.37 |

N = 9,340  
Adjusted $R^2 = .44$

**SOURCE:** 1972-1992 Convention Delegate Studies (pooled).  
**NOTE:** Entries are unstandardized regression coefficients. Abortion attitudes range from 1 (most pro-choice) to 4 (most pro-life). Tests of significance are two-tailed and are based on Huber robust standard errors.  
*p > .05.  **p > .01.

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**NOTES**

1. There has been research examining temporal change in the partisan ties of different religious groups (cf. Layman, 1997; Miller & Shanks, 1996). However, these analyses have limited their focus to the mass electorate.

2. Although activists are motivated by factors other than relative policy distances, research shows that a sizeable and growing majority of activists are motivated primarily by policy-related incentives (Aldrich, 1995; Layman & Carsey, 1998).

3. By potential activists, I, like Aldrich, mean both individuals who are not currently active and current activists. Just as nonactive individuals look to the parties' policy positions to determine whether or not to become active, individuals who are currently active look to the parties' policy positions to determine whether or not to remain active.
4. There certainly are reasons to expect the positions of party candidates and those of current activists to be similar. Being active members of the same political party, candidates and activists should hold many of the same political principles. Moreover, candidates need enthusiastic support from activists to win both nominations and general elections, and thus have incentives to minimize the discrepancies between their stances and those of the average party activist (Aldrich, 1995; Chappell & Keech, 1986). On the other hand, there are also reasons to expect candidates’ stances to diverge from the mean position of activists. Some candidates may take positions that are closer to the ideological center than is the activist mean in order to increase their chances of winning the general election (Chappell & Keech, 1986). In an attempt to improve their prospects in a nomination campaign, other candidates may seek the support of the more ideologically extreme activists who may be more likely to take part in primaries and caucuses (Brams, 1978).

5. Miller was joined by Elizabeth Douvan, William J. Crotty, and Jeane Kirkpatrick for the 1972 study; M. Kent Jennings and Barbara G. Farah for the 1980 study; Jennings for the 1984 and 1988 studies; and Richard Herrera for the 1992 study. The 1992 Convention Delegate Studies (CDS) surveyed 1,858 Democratic delegates and 995 Republican delegates to the 1992 national conventions. See Miller and Jennings (1986) and Herrera (1992) for the number of observations in and response rates to the 1972-1988 CDS.

6. Since there was no Convention Delegate Study (CDS) conducted in 1976, values for all of the religious items were taken from the 2,035 respondents to the 1980 CDS who said they were delegates in 1976. The 1980 CDS was specifically designed to study both 1980 delegates and 1976 delegates (Miller & Jennings, 1986). It surveyed all of the delegates to both the 1976 and 1980 conventions and included roughly the same number of delegates from both years.

7. Appendix A shows the religious groups included in each of these categories, as well as the exact coding of all of the religious items used in the analysis. Mormons are generally included in a larger family of “conservative nontraditional” religions, which also includes Jehovah’s Witnesses and Christian Scientists (Green, Guth, Smidt, & Kellstedt, 1996). Mormons are the only one of these groups included in the Convention Delegate Studies’ denominational codings. A final religious group that is used for statistical purposes includes those respondents who identified their affiliation as “other Protestant” or “other religion.”

8. Respondents are assigned to cohorts based on the year in which they were first delegates. Data on the 1992 cohort come from the 1992 Convention Delegate Study (CDS), and data from the 1972-1988 cohorts come from the 1988 CDS. Since the 1988 CDS contained a panel component, it surveyed a large number of individuals who were delegates to the conventions from 1972 to 1984 even if they were not delegates in 1988. It included 461 respondents in the 1972 cohort, 673 in the 1976 cohort, 833 in the 1980 cohort, and 1,093 in the 1984 cohort.

9. As Table 1 shows, the percentage of Democratic delegates who were black Protestants was higher in 1988 than in any other year in the analysis. Most of these delegates (74.7%) supported Jackson.

10. As Table 2 shows, the percentage of regularly attending Mainline Protestants among Democratic delegates was higher in 1988 than in any other year of the analysis. The clear plurality (45.5%) of these delegates supported Gore. Gore’s support base also included a smaller percentage (3.5%) of seculars than that of any of the serious contenders—those candidates who were the first choice of more than 10% of the Democratic delegates—for the Democratic presidential nomination from 1972 to 1992.

11. There has not been a Convention Delegate Study conducted for 1996 delegates. However, data from polls of Republican and Democratic convention delegates in 1996 conducted by CBS News and The New York Times indicate that the religious polarization of party delegates continued through 1996. Only 13% of Democratic delegates considered themselves to be “Evangelical or Born-Again Christians,” as compared to 31% of Republican delegates. Meanwhile,
21% of Republican delegates considered themselves to be members of the religious right (a figure up from 8% of Republican delegates identifying themselves as religious right members in response to a comparable question in the 1992 Convention Delegate Study), as opposed to a mere 1% of Democratic delegates. The percentage of delegates with a favorable opinion of the religious right was 55 among Republican delegates and only 4 among Democratic delegates.

12. The patterns on the guidance item are shown only from 1976 to 1992 because it was not included in the 1972 Convention Delegate Study.

13. The difference between the mean position of Republican delegates and the mean position of Democratic delegates is statistically significant ($p < .001$) for each issue in each year.

14. According to polls conducted by CBS News and *The New York Times*, the polarization of Republican and Democratic delegates on cultural issues continued through the 1996 conventions. On a question about government promotion of traditional values, 56% of 1996 Republican delegates and only 27% of 1996 Democratic delegates said that the government should do more. On the question of prayer in the public schools, 57% of Republicans and only 20% of Democrats said that it should be permitted. On the abortion issue, 61% of Democratic delegates and only 11% of Republican delegates indicated that it should be permitted in all cases. Meanwhile, 69% of Republicans and only 16% of Democrats responded that abortion should be permitted never, or only to save the life of the mother, or only in the cases of rape, incest, or if necessary to save the life of the mother.

15. I use the percentage of Republicans taking the most prolif attitude and the percentage of Democrats taking the most prochoice attitude, rather than the parties’ mean positions on abortion, because the wording of the two middle response options on abortion changed between 1988 and 1992 (see Appendix A). Although the change should not have affected the difference between the parties’ abortion means shown in Figure 3, it may have affected the absolute position of each party on abortion. In order to ease comparison between the parties’ religious compositions and aggregate abortion attitudes, each of the variables (percentages) in the figure has been standardized to a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 25.

16. Eastern Orthodox is included along with “other religions” in the comparison category because of the very small number of respondents in that tradition.

17. The use of data that are pooled from various years may present an array of statistical problems (Beck & Katz, 1995; Stimson, 1985). Although including dummy variables for each year may reduce some of these problems, some problems such as the errors being larger in some years than in others may remain. Beck and Katz (1995) note that ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates of the parameters in pooled models are consistent. The major problem created by the heteroskedasticity and correlated errors inherent in such models is that the standard errors are inaccurate. In order to correct OLS standard errors for panel data—data on the same individual units over time—Beck and Katz suggest a variant of Huber’s (1967) and White’s (1980) formula for heteroskedasticity-consistent standard errors. The data used to estimate this model of convention delegates are not panel data; they are data on different individuals drawn from different years. Thus, I use the original Huber/White formula to compute robust standard errors.

18. Given the highly emotional nature of the abortion issue, it is generally assumed that most of the partisan change on it is due to replacement, rather than changes in individual attitudes (cf. Adams, 1997). However, recent research shows that there has been a good deal of conversion on abortion among both Democratic and Republican activists (Layman & Carsey, 1998) and that conversion has contributed a great deal to activist-level partisan change on abortion (Carsey & Layman, 1999).

19. The patterns among non-regularly-attending Catholics provide a good example of these replacement and conversion processes. On an abortion scale ranging from 1 (*most prochoice*) to
4 (most prolific), the Democrats in this religious group who were active in 1980 but not 1988 had a mean of 2.44. In contrast, those activists who were new to Democratic politics in 1988 had a mean of 1.63. Those Democrats who were active in both 1980 and 1988 were already more pro-choice in 1980 (mean = 2.15) than their counterparts who dropped out after 1980, and these individuals who remained active had become even more prochoice, in the aggregate, by 1988 (mean = 1.67). The Republicans who were active in 1980 but not 1988 had a mean of 1.5 on abortion. In contrast, newcomers to Republican politics in 1988 had a mean of 2.54. Those Republicans who were active in both 1980 and 1988 were already more prolife in 1980 (mean = 2.45) than their counterparts who dropped out after 1980, and they had become even more prolife, in the aggregate, by 1988 (mean = 2.55). Owing to the small number of individuals who were convention delegates in both 1980 and 1988, these analyses were performed for those Convention Delegate Study respondents who were active in presidential politics in the relevant years (cf. Miller & Jennings, 1986), rather than just among convention delegates in those years.

20. Among Catholics in 1972, the difference between the predicted abortion attitudes of Republicans and Democrats who were regular attenders was .47 and the difference between Republicans and Democrats who were not regular attenders was .31. Meanwhile, the difference between Republicans who were regular attenders and Republicans who were not regular attenders was 1.04 and the difference between Democrats who were regular attenders and Democrats who were not regular attenders was .78. Among Catholics in 1992, the difference between the abortion attitudes of Republicans and Democrats who were regular attenders was 1.04 and the difference between Republicans and Democrats who were not regular attenders was 1.05. Meanwhile, the difference between Republicans who were regular attenders and Republicans who were not regular attenders was .53 and the difference between Democrats who were regular attenders and Democrats who were not regular attenders was .54.

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