

# Christian Right Horticulture: Grassroots Support in a Republican Primary Campaign

Paul A. Djupe  
*Denison University*

Jacob R. Neiheisel  
*University of Wisconsin at Madison*

Seizing upon the opportunity afforded by a Republican primary contest in which a candidate backed by the Christian Right took on a candidate with connections to the party establishment, we examine the strength of the Christian right at the grassroots in Ohio. Using individual-level data compiled from an original survey instrument administered to over 1,000 Republican primary voters just after the May, 2006 primary, we present a more comprehensive model of both Christian Right support and the effect of Christian Right support on the vote choice. Instead of assuming a grassroots presence underpinning the movement, we assert and test the argument that natural elements of the social structure inhibit effective group access to collections of supporters. In doing so, we provide an explanation for the often observed gulf between movement identifiers and opinion-based supporters.

The electoral aspirations of any movement are dependent on links the movement can establish between voters and the movement's preferred candidate. The components involved in establishing this link are many, but tend to be some manifestation of group, especially interest groups and their leadership and grassroots organizations, like churches. Over

An initial version of this paper was delivered at the 2007 annual meeting of the MPSA, Chicago. Data gathered for this paper were funded by a small grant from the Denison University Research Foundation; any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DURF. The authors would like to thank Anand Sokhey, Sarah Sokhey, Mike Meldonian, David Woodyard, Emmett H. Buell, Marisa Lopes, Aaron Bestic, Jeff Kurtz, Gregory Gwiasda, Kate Djupe, Meagan Fleisch, and the anonymous reviewers for their assistance in survey preparation and for helpful comments along the way.

Address correspondence and reprint requests to: Paul A. Djupe, Department of Political Science, Denison University, Granville, OH 43023-0810. E-mail: [djupe@denison.edu](mailto:djupe@denison.edu)

41 the last 30 years, many have studied support for the Christian Right (CR)  
 42 and its influence from varied theoretical perspectives, all with different  
 43 conceptions of the most politically salient meaning of group, but all  
 44 assuming an essential grassroots component. Noting the diverse array  
 45 of methodological approaches and the number of competing theoretical  
 46 constructions of the CR that scholars have forwarded, Regnerus,  
 47 Sikkink, and Smith (1999, 1376) find that “This methodological and  
 48 theoretical diversity suggests that the CR, as a social, political, and reli-  
 49 gious entity, is much more complex than often assumed and deserves  
 50 closer scrutiny.”

51 We take just such a closer look to address two questions in this paper:  
 52 what affects support for CR organizations and leaders? In addition, how **Q1**  
 53 does a broad set of movement support factors affect voting for the move-  
 54 ment’s preferred candidate? We place the dominant schools of thought on  
 55 CR influence in a broader and yet more tightly specified portrait of the  
 56 movement. We argue that establishing movement ties, which allow for  
 57 CR influence, is dependent on the structure of a citizen’s social relations  
 58 in ways that affect how we will think about the power of organizations  
 59 and movements.

60 We first articulate our own suppositions about the grassroots underpin-  
 61 nings of the movement as well as the findings of a generation of research  
 62 into the nature of support for the CR. We then detail the setting for our  
 63 test of movement influence, which is essential to reaching valid infer-  
 64 ences about movement support, before going on to test these approaches  
 65 on affect toward Ohio CR groups and elites and assessing their collective  
 66 effect on the vote.

## 69 **A CONTEXTUAL THEORY OF CR INFLUENCE**

70  
 71 Since the very beginning of scholarly inquiry into the workings of the  
 72 “New Christian Right” in the early 1980s, many observers have believed  
 73 that “The centerpiece of [the Christian Right’s] mobilization campaign  
 74 was the local church” (Liebman 1983, 72). According to some CR  
 75 studies, clergy, in their historical role as prophets speaking truth to  
 76 power, were expected to relay the message of CR organizations to their  
 77 congregations couched in terms of Christian duty (Oldfield 1996). If it  
 78 is indeed the case that churches are homogenous social groupings as  
 79 some observers assume (Mutz 2006; Scheufele et al. 2004), then the  
 80 delivery of political cues from an influential leader would essentially

81 flip a participation switch. It is no wonder that studies of the CR often  
82 begin with a militaristic metaphor, though that metaphor almost never  
83 lasts through the conclusion.

84 Few scholars adhere to a strictly “top-down” view of the effects of the  
85 church environment on political behavior, however, as most emphasize  
86 the important role that social interaction can play in influencing  
87 church-goers’ electoral decisions (Gilbert 1993; Jelen 1992; Wald,  
88 Owen, and Hill 1988). Typical examinations of the effects of the  
89 church social context have conceived of such influence in direct terms.  
90 That is, individuals involved in the church are exposed to contagious  
91 norms that eventually serve to bring them in line with the dominant pol-  
92 itical view of the congregation. There is little doubt that this process  
93 affects voting patterns, but how it relates to connections with movement  
94 organizations is not so clear. It is possible that social networks could  
95 transmit interest group mobilization as a byproduct of political discussion  
96 and thereby expand the influence of group action. However, if the acqui-  
97 sition of political norms is rooted in the observation of behavior and  
98 explicit political discussion is generally limited to issues and not the  
99 groups, parties, and candidates involved in elections, then the diffusion  
100 model (Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988) is an unlikely one to build and  
101 sustain a movement.

102 A more productive use for social networks in this case was advanced by  
103 Granovetter (1973), who argued that the real power of social networks lay  
104 in the diffusion of information moderated by the strength of social ties.  
105 Instead of thinking only of the degree of the homogeneity of information  
106 content supplied through networks, the crucial measure of the power of a  
107 network is located in another variable — the strength of ties. Strong ties,  
108 where everyone knows each other, serve to limit the diffusion of the opinions  
109 and values of the network — strong ties make the network inaccessible to the  
110 broader context. Weak ties, however, serve to spread a message to a broader  
111 audience; those with weak ties are accessible to society.

112 This perspective is particularly important when we consider the poten-  
113 tial connection of individual church members to social movement orga-  
114 nizations. Greater insularity in the network may actually inhibit the  
115 formation of interest group ties. Insular networks (those with strong  
116 ties) are exposed to fewer cues from the broader context, where interest  
117 groups operate. Moreover, insular networks with agreeable discussants  
118 easily satisfy citizens’ need for trusted information, undermining  
119 a need to search further. If citizens’ need for information is satisfied  
120 by immediate social sources, they will not expend further energy to

121 learn about interest groups, even those that accurately represent their  
122 opinions and values (Paul A. Djupe, unpublished work).

123 The implications of this pattern are profound for understanding the  
124 connection of groups to the grassroots. The more obvious one is that  
125 high concentrations of a natural constituency may be inaccessible to  
126 the very groups attempting to represent their interests to government.  
127 Such insulated citizens may still act in concert with the movement leader-  
128 ship, but that action is purely serendipitous.

129 Second, the types of citizens who seek out information about interest  
130 groups are those exposed to a broader array of information and hence  
131 more likely to be exposed to political dissonance. Arguments gained  
132 from a group search may then be folded back into social discussion,  
133 enhancing the deliberative possibilities of political talk. However,  
134 social interaction with those holding dissonant opinions is simultaneously  
135 likely to shift the values and opinions of the information seeker  
136 (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995). That is, in the strongest case, individuals  
137 exposed to difference in the network may learn about and identify with an  
138 interest group despite growing gaps in value agreement with the interest  
139 group due to the social exposure to political difference.

140 Third, if citizens seek out information about interest groups when  
141 exposed to social difference, then any subsequent mobilization from  
142 the group will likely be limited by the very difference that spawned the  
143 information search. That is, the implication is the exact opposite of the  
144 traditional assumption about interest group membership. Instead of  
145 platoon commanders, members might be better considered lone wolves,  
146 and group mobilization attempts may be limited to the member instead  
147 of diffusing through a broader network.

148 Last, social networks are not synonymous with social contexts  
149 (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1987). Attributes of a discussant should not be  
150 mapped on to the social context and network effects should be under-  
151 stood as contingent on the context (Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague  
152 2004). In the context of the church, network insularity may be overcome  
153 by a cascade of political information in the church, which may be the  
154 result of clergy speech, small group discussion, or other sources (Djupe  
155 and Gilbert 2003, 2006). Without such contextually-supplied infor-  
156 mation, however, the context can serve as an additional access barrier  
157 to external mobilization attempts (such as from interest groups).

158 We do not deny the frequent assumption that churches are important  
159 components of the CR. Under certain (and generally rare) conditions,  
160 a church might be considered an extension of the larger movement.

161 Otherwise, the connections individuals make with the movement will be  
162 dependent, in part, on their relationships with other intimates that may  
163 encourage them to seek additional political information or that may  
164 limit their exposure to external information sources.

165 Of course, research on the CR has offered a number of competing ideas  
166 about what drives support for the CR. But, as Regnerus, Sikkink, and  
167 Smith (1999, 1375) note, “little research to date has examined an import-  
168 ant means of Christian Right influence in the contemporary political  
169 process: helping people decide how to vote in elections.” They contend  
170 that any study of CR support must do more than simply gauge  
171 “support,” which very many have done. Rather, they suggest that a far  
172 more focused approach to measuring support for the CR entails measur-  
173 ing the effects of CR mobilization efforts on vote choice. In fact, the best  
174 approach is to assess the determinants of support and how those forces  
175 affect the selection of a movement’s candidate.

176 Even though most existing theories of CR mobilization typically fail to  
177 make the distinction between “influence” and “support,” the literature has  
178 forwarded a number of promising perspectives on CR attachments —  
179 perspectives that are frequently offered as clear alternatives. The domi-  
180 nant themes can perhaps best be categorized as social-psychological  
181 (most often represented as religious commitment) and psychological  
182 (group consciousness explanations).

183 Each perspective contends, in its own way, with the most politically  
184 relevant connection of citizens with groups, and therefore attempts to oper-  
185 ationalize what is seen as the likely residue of the group taint. As Green  
186 (1999b, 154) summarizes the psychological approach, “[C]ollective iden-  
187 tity is a cognitive encapsulation of group values, group attachments, and  
188 orientations toward group action. [It is] . . . relevant to the mobilization of  
189 resources for the movement activity.” Individuals identify with salient  
190 groups, such as CR organizations or religious groups (e.g., evangelical  
191 identification) and thus are mobilized through their attachments to such  
192 groups (Jelen 1993; Wilcox, Jelen, and Leege 1993). Those who identify  
193 with the CR then rally to help the cause when CR leaders and religious  
194 elites speak out on an issue or a candidate (Kellstedt 1993). According  
195 to some formulations of the psychological approach, these identity connec-  
196 tions are likely fashioned through social interactions among like-minded  
197 individuals — a type of exchange often referred to as enclave deliberation  
198 (Sunstein 2000).

199 In contrast to the psychological approaches, social-psychological theo-  
200 ries of CR mobilization that emphasize the fundamental differences

201 in religious commitment (or religiosity) between religious groups have  
 202 dominated the field (e.g., Green et al. 1996; Layman 2001). In part, the  
 203 religious commitment approach has been popular because it lends itself  
 204 to a culture wars storyline pitting religious liberals against conservatives  
 205 (see Wuthnow 1988). Religious commitment perspectives on how religion  
 206 influences political behavior involve specifying the degree of individual  
 207 religiosity within a religious tradition or, somewhat more pointedly,  
 208 within a denomination. In this way, proponents purport to tap the  
 209 “social embodiment of religion” and, consequently, the “mass  
 210 constituency of the Christian Right” (Green et al. 1996, 174). Such a  
 211 conceptualization of how religion influences political behaviors is not  
 212 without its critics, however (see Djupe and Gilbert 2004, 2006; Hart  
 213 1996; Gilbert 1993; Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988).

214 A clear problem in this and related literatures is that “group” is a  
 215 loosely used term that refers to social categories, organizations, and  
 216 social networks with little differentiation made in theory or analyses.  
 217 Moreover, the “Christian Right” is an academic classification that has  
 218 little meaning outside the specific groups, leaders, and issues that  
 219 compose the movement. With this confusion, few systematic attempts  
 220 have been made to link the various levels of “groups” despite the wide-  
 221 spread assumption that the CR has its roots in churches. It is our view that  
 222 the particular way in which these group levels are linked matters greatly  
 223 in understanding the movement. Therefore, a way forward lies in provid-  
 224 ing greater specificity of groups — identifying specific interest groups,  
 225 leaders, information that is conveyed in churches, and the opinions and  
 226 values of close confidants — and how they are linked. The setting for  
 227 testing such links must in our view satisfy a number of conditions.  
 228 That is, it should involve a primary election (so as to remove party ID Q2  
 229 from the equation) in which the movement is in play and in which  
 230 there is a clear CR candidate — just the type of electoral contest in  
 231 which CR organizations are most likely to have an effect on voters’  
 232 decisions at the polls.

## 235 DATA AND DESIGN: THE CR IN OHIO

236  
 237 Our setting is Ohio, where fresh off of the passage of Issue 1 in 2004 —  
 238 a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage — elements of  
 239 the CR took on the Republican establishment in pushing for their candi-  
 240 date for Ohio governor in 2006. That candidate, Ohio Secretary of State

241 J. Kenneth Blackwell, stood out among other candidates vying for the  
242 Republican nomination as one of the only statewide officeholders to  
243 have supported the ban on gay marriage.<sup>1</sup> His ultimate opponent in the  
244 primary, Ohio Attorney General Jim Petro, was one of many  
245 Republicans who spoke out against the ballot initiative as being  
246 unnecessary, while at the same time maintaining an opposition to gay  
247 marriage. As a social conservative with all the right stances on moral  
248 issues, the religious right saw Blackwell as having more than just  
249 sympathy for their cause — they saw him as a national leader in their  
250 movement. Blackwell's status as a conservative Christian and faithful  
251 supporter of the CR's policy initiatives brought him the support of  
252 prominent conservative religious leaders and moral concerns organiz-  
253 ations. For CR activists, Blackwell's candidacy represented a unique  
254 opportunity for homegrown CR organizations to push their agenda in  
255 Ohio — a state in which the movement's efforts to make a direct political  
256 impact had often been checked by its close ties with Republican Party  
257 organizations (Green 2006, 81).

258 Disheartened by the fact that its contributions as a coalition partner in  
259 the Republican Party had accomplished little in terms of its policy initiat-  
260 ives (see Green 2006, 81), and emboldened by its victories in 2004,  
261 elements of the religious right broke ranks with the Republican Party  
262 and threw its support behind Blackwell in his quest for the governor's  
263 mansion in 2006. This split seemed to signal a return to the kind of ideo-  
264 logical purism that had characterized the movement's approach to politics  
265 prior to the demise of the Moral Majority and subsequent turn toward a  
266 more pragmatic tack (Green and Guth 1988; Moen 1992; Rozell and  
267 Wilcox 1996).

268 But while uprisings against the Republican establishment led by move-  
269 ment purists are not altogether unusual (Green 1999a; Green, Rozell, and  
270 Wilcox 2001; Rozell and Wilcox 1996), scholarly studies that have seized  
271 upon such occurrences to advance our understanding of this important  
272 social movement are indeed rare. Previous studies of the CR's involve-  
273 ment in electoral politics and the influence that it has on voters have  
274 often gauged the movement's success by the degree of Republican  
275 voting in general elections (e.g., Green et al. 1996) when such a  
276 measure is clearly over-determined.

277  
278  
279 1. State Auditor Betty Montgomery and Treasurer Joseph T. Deters also supported the ban. But  
280 Montgomery's pro-choice stance on abortion ultimately kept her from drawing much support from  
the CR as a candidate for Ohio governor (Hallett 2005).

281 The primary contest between Ken Blackwell and Jim Petro, although  
282 provides an occasion for a more independent, more conclusive test of  
283 the movement's ability to influence voters' decisions. While anyone  
284 can cast a ballot for Blackwell for his or her own reasons, the choice  
285 helps to distinguish among Republicans. Ohio's primary contest therefore  
286 provides an ideal setting in which to make such a distinction for a number  
287 of reasons. The CR clearly backed one candidate, with CR leaders  
288 and organizations using the resources at their disposal to push for  
289 Blackwell's nomination over the more moderate Petro. In addition, the  
290 CR's favored candidate, Ken Blackwell, hit the campaign trail as any-  
291 thing but a "stealth" candidate for the movement, as he openly courted  
292 the CR in many of his public statements and appeared with CR leaders  
293 at public rallies around the state.

294 Blackwell and Petro were separated by more than just their respective  
295 stances on the hot-button social issues that came to occupy much of each  
296 candidate's focus during the campaign though. There were other issues  
297 that, while they did not perhaps attract as much attention as their differing  
298 stances on abortion (Petro supported a woman's right to an abortion in  
299 cases where the woman's life was in danger, whereas Blackwell sup-  
300 ported no such exemptions), distinguished the candidates from one  
301 another. One such issue was the Tax Expenditure Limitation amendment  
302 (known throughout the campaign as TEL) that Blackwell heartily  
303 endorsed as a way to cut government spending. Petro, on the other  
304 hand, feared that the amendment would hurt local government, and  
305 spoke out against the proposal. Republican primary voters were therefore  
306 likely able to discriminate between the two candidates on issues on which  
307 the various CR groups in Ohio were largely silent. It seems altogether  
308 possible then that the bulk of Republican primary voters made their  
309 decision between Blackwell and Petro on the basis of an issue far  
310 removed from those most commonly associated with the core platform  
311 of the CR — yet another reason as to why the 2006 Ohio Republican  
312 primary provides an interesting test case for the grassroots strength of  
313 the movement.

314 We take full advantage of this setting in order to test several hypoth-  
315 eses with regard to the influence that the CR enjoys at the polls.  
316 Immediately following the May, 2006 gubernatorial primary, a random  
317 sample of 4,000 Republican primary voters in Franklin County, Ohio  
318 was drawn immediately after the voter file was released to the public  
319 and was surveyed by mail. Franklin County was selected, in part,  
320 because the county is among the quickest in Ohio to compile and

321 release its voter file. In all, 1,062 usable surveys were received from three  
322 waves of mailing for a response rate of 26.6%; the total return was a few  
323 percentage points higher. The response rate is not high, though it is in line  
324 with or greater than typical mail surveys. The sample is representative of  
325 primary voters in at least one important respect — the vote. According to  
326 the Secretary of State’s report on the gubernatorial primary, Jim Petro  
327 won the majority of the vote in Franklin County with 52.3% of the  
328 vote; the sample records Petro receiving 49.7%, with his rival Ken  
329 Blackwell (the controversial Secretary of State) besting him with  
330 50.3%. Though it is just one county, Franklin County is a favorite for  
331 marketing surveys because of its rough representativeness of Americans  
332 (Hawkings and Nutting 2003), and others have argued that Ohio is a  
333 decent proxy for American politics as a whole (e.g., Green 2006).

334 Ohio is also home to a wide variety of religious traditions (Green  
335 2006). Moreover, the state has long been the focus of a variety of CR  
336 organizations, as different elements of the movement have been active  
337 in Ohio since the late 1970s (Green 2006; Green, Guth, and Hill 1993;  
338 Wilcox 1992). A number of prior studies have detailed the organizational  
339 landscape of CR groups in Ohio and have been able to shed a measure of  
340 light on the grassroots workings of organizations such as the Ohio  
341 Christian Coalition (Berkowitz and Green 1997). Franklin County in par-  
342 ticular has often been a hotbed of CR activity, as several different CR  
343 organizations targeted houses of worship around the urban center of  
344 Columbus in making a push for the passage of a proposed ban on gay  
345 marriage in 2004 (Djupe, Neiheisel, and Sokhey 2007).

346 Perhaps most importantly, Ohio’s primary contest provides a unique  
347 opportunity to test the efficacy of the CR, as the movement is seldom  
348 in contention, while at the same time in confrontation with the  
349 Republican Party (see Green 2000, 6). Though the CR has challenged  
350 the establishment GOP (Grand Old Party, another name for the  
351 Republican Party) in other states, those states have been non-primary **Q1**  
352 (that is, convention or caucus) states, and the fights occurred largely in  
353 the past. The combination of a seemingly viable candidate and coming  
354 on the heels of a successful push to ban same-sex benefits brought on  
355 a very public fight.

356 Unlike many previous studies of the CR, the survey instrument utilized  
357 in this study was specifically designed to adjudicate between various  
358 ways in which scholars have suggested that the CR affects voters’  
359 decisions at the polls. Voters were queried about their contacts with  
360 CR organizations (whether they received any information about the

361 candidates from a religious or moral concerns organization), their  
362 opinions on issues that form the core of the CR's political agenda,  
363 such as gay rights and abortion, and their feelings toward a number of  
364 CR groups and leaders—a measure included to assess the extent to  
365 which voters identify with the movement. Moreover, the survey included  
366 substantial church and social network batteries that allow us to map  
367 grassroots connections with prior indicators of movement support.

## 370 **GOD AT THE GRASSROOTS: THE CR IN OHIO**

371  
372 From the movement's inception, scholars have encountered a number of  
373 difficulties in identifying CR supporters. As a result, investigations of the  
374 CR have operationalized support variously, but generally by either mem-  
375 bership in a CR organization or by strongly positive feelings toward CR  
376 groups and leaders (e.g., Green et al. 1996; Jelen 1993; Shupe and Stacey  
377 1983; Wilcox 1992). Others, though, (e.g., Simpson 1983) argue that the  
378 CR's constituency is perhaps better identified by those who agree with  
379 the movement's agenda. Thus, we begin our investigation of CR influ-  
380 ence in the 2006 Ohio Republican primary contest by examining what  
381 portion of primary voters might be considered CR supporters according  
382 to the different measures used in previous studies.

383 We began by asking Republican primary voters how they felt toward  
384 eight political elites, including Rev. Rod Parsley and Rev. Russell  
385 Johnson — the most visible representatives of the Ohio CR. Because  
386 feeling thermometer scores have a tendency to reflect systematic posi-  
387 tive or negative bias, we adjusted score by subtracting feelings toward  
388 CR groups from the mean for all groups (see Wilcox, Sigelman, and  
389 Cook 1989). Consistent with previous studies of CR support (e.g.,  
390 Shupe and Stacey 1983), we find that only 10.7% of respondents held  
391 favorable opinions of both Parsley and Johnson. The unadjusted  
392 feeling scores toward CR elites are lower still in the case of Rev.  
393 Johnson. Less than 6% (61 respondents) of the total sample rated  
394 Johnson positively (6 or higher on the 0–10 scale). Slightly more,  
395 however, felt warmly toward Parsley, as 11.6% of all respondents  
396 rated him positively.

397 Respondent's evaluations of CR organizations were higher across the  
398 board than their feelings toward CR leaders might suggest — a strange  
399 finding given the extent to which the CR leadership in Ohio presumably  
400 contributed to the public image of Ohio's CR organizations. Such

401 a finding is curious indeed, as Wilcox (1992, 191) found that CR  
402 elites enjoyed *more* support than did CR groups. On the whole,  
403 16.9% of respondents expressed net positive feelings toward listed  
404 groups on an adjusted index (see the appendix) including feelings  
405 toward four CR organizations: Ohio Christian Coalition, Ohio Right to  
406 Life, Citizens for Community Values, and Ohio Restoration Project.  
407 This figure compares with the roughly 15% base of popular support  
408 that the CR is said to hold among the U.S. population (Regnerus,  
409 Sikkink, and Smith 1999).

410 Since this sample is of GOP primary voters, however, the low level of  
411 affect for CR organizations runs counter to expectation. Given the  
412 number of previous studies that have found CR supporters have been  
413 moving steadily toward the Republican Party, we would have expected  
414 a much higher proportion of CR identifiers. On the other side of  
415 things, 39% of respondents held unfavorable feelings toward Ohio's  
416 CR organizations. The rest of those who rated their feelings toward the  
417 different groups were neutral toward the CR. That is, 27.6% of respon-  
418 dents reported feeling scores that, once adjusted, were zero — meaning  
419 that their scores for CR groups were no higher or lower than those for  
420 all other listed groups (the overwhelming balance of which were  
421 conservative).

422 The movement's platform elicits much more support than do the  
423 organizations and leaders that stand as the most visible representatives  
424 of the CR (Wald 2003, 225; Wilcox 1992) and the same was true here.  
425 We asked respondents if "We need an amendment prohibiting all abor-  
426 tions," and whether "Homosexuals deserve all the same rights as  
427 others." Given a sample of Republican primary voters, it makes sense  
428 that over 30% of respondents agreed that there needs to be an amendment  
429 prohibiting all abortions. Similarly, almost half of respondents registered  
430 their disagreement with the statement: "Homosexuals deserve all  
431 the same rights as others." Of the total sample, 21.5% agreed with the  
432 CR's stance on both issues.

433 The perils of using a solitary measure of CR support, however, is  
434 evident by finding that those who expressed positive feelings toward  
435 CR organizations *did not* overwhelmingly support the CR's core plat-  
436 form. While affect toward CR organizations is positively correlated  
437 with support for the movement's policy agenda, the relationship is  
438 strong, but not overwhelmingly so ( $r = .325$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $n = 874$ ).  
439 Examined more closely, it appears that only 39.4% of those with positive  
440 adjusted evaluations of CR groups agreed with all items on the CR's

441 agenda (represented by abortion and gay rights). Support for individual  
442 components, however, was higher: roughly 60% of respondents who  
443 expressed warm feelings toward CR groups agreed with the statement:  
444 “We need an amendment prohibiting all abortions,” and about 65%  
445 of this same segment registered their disagreement with the statement:  
446 “Homosexuals deserve all the same rights as others.” In some ways,  
447 however, such findings are not entirely surprising. Since the reemergence  
448 of the CR in the late 1970s, scholars who have used measures of  
449 group affect to identify CR supporters (e.g., Shupe and Stacey 1983;  
450 Wilcox 1992) have found that there is a great deal of variance  
451 among CR sympathizers in terms of support for the movement’s policy  
452 agenda.

453 Also striking is the lack of overlap between those who felt close to  
454 CR organizations and those who felt close to CR elites. Only 34  
455 respondents — just over 3% of the total sample, and roughly 13% of  
456 those who felt close to either of the CR referents — had positive  
457 adjusted feeling scores for both CR organizations and CR elites.  
458 Wilcox (1992) reported similar findings using a nationally-representative  
459 dataset (see also Jelen 1993). When taken together, however,  
460 nearly a quarter of the sample (24.5%) felt close to at least one  
461 element of the Ohio CR, and thus by most rubrics, might be considered  
462 to be CR supporters. These findings beg the obvious question: about the  
463 factors that influence support for the movement as a whole, but also  
464 suggest another question: How do those who feel close to CR  
465 organizations differ from those who feel close to CR elites? Clearly,  
466 there is overlap among the two different groups of supporters as  
467 the two measures are correlated ( $r = .253$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $n = 776$ ).  
468 However, the relationship is weaker than expected given the clear con-  
469 nection that existed between the movement’s leaders and organizations  
470 in Ohio.

471

472

473

## 473 **THE DETERMINANTS OF CR SUPPORT**

474

475 To begin to assemble the group layers and test the varied theories of CR  
476 influence, we assess separately the determinants of affect toward CR  
477 organizations and leaders. In the two models in Table 1 (of organizations  
478 in the first column and leaders in the second), we include measures of  
479 support for the CR agenda, discussion of CR agenda issues in the  
480 social network, contacts from CR groups, and traditional measures of

481 *Table 1.* Factors influencing support for the Christian Right among Ohio  
 482 Republican Primary voters (OLS regression estimates)

483 484 485 <i>Variables</i>	<i>Christian Right Groups</i>		<i>Christian Right Leaders</i>	
	<i>Coeff</i>	<i>(S.E.)</i>	<i>Coeff</i>	<i>(S.E.)</i>
486 Social Context				
487 Discussant partisan disagreement	.027	(.019)*	.204	(.102)
488 Discussant candidate agreement	-.004	(.018)	.167	(.095)
489 CR issue discussion in network	.075	(.048)*	-.281	(.252)
490 CR issue presentation in church	.064	(.033)**	.253	(.180)*
491 Opinion Effects				
492 CR policy support	.067	(.013)***	.280	(.069)***
493 Group Effects				
494 Contact with a religious or moral concerns organization	-.009	(.013)	.088	(.072)
495 Religious Traditions				
496 Mainline Protestant	.000	(.025)	-.548	(.132)***
497 Catholic	.075	(.027)	-.380	(.146)***
498 Evangelical Protestant	.199	(.027)**	.442	(.145)*
499 Charismatic	.008	(.032)	.961	(.167)***
500 Religious commitment	.127	(.018)***	.135	(.095)
501 Demographic Controls				
502 Female	.011	(.015)*	-.257	(.081)**
503 Education	.029	(.009)**	.046	(.046)
504 Income	-.027	(.005)***	-.074	(.028)
505 Constant	-.382	(.059)***	-1.524	(.336)***
506 Number of Cases	1,997		1,946	
507 Adjusted $R^2$	.173		.128	
508 S.E.E.	.327		1.714	
509 F Test	30.824***		21.387***	

509 *Source:* 2006 Ohio Republican Primary Study. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.05$ ; \*  $p < 0.10$ .

512 religious identification and involvement. The data are constructed at the  
 513 dyad-level,<sup>2</sup> allowing a test of measures of network discussion and  
 514 agreement alongside the measures found in previous scholarly treatments  
 515 of the CR.  
 516

517  
 518 2. The survey collected responses on up to four political discussants. For the purposes of assessing  
 519 social influence, we use each respondent-discussant pair as a case instead of averaging over the  
 520 network. Both strategies are used in the literature, though the dyad approach is the more common  
 (e.g., Huckfeldt and Sprague 1995; Mutz 2006).

521 In line with theories that argue that group identities are forged through  
522 social interaction, Table 1 shows that the more discussion of the CR's  
523 core policy issues that took place within a respondent's social network,  
524 the greater the affect toward CR organizations, though it has no effect  
525 on affect toward CR elites. Moreover, the more presentation of core  
526 CR issues in various settings in the church, the more positive affect  
527 CR groups and elites gain. It seems possible that discussions about  
528 social or moral issues help individuals to connect their beliefs with  
529 groups that best represent the same views.

530 One could argue that these relationships work in the opposite way,  
531 however, that identifiers are more likely to have conversations about  
532 issues on the agenda of identified groups. There is certainly some truth  
533 to this, but, by and large, individuals do not have much control over  
534 the content of their conversations (Huckfeldt and Sprague 1988) and cer-  
535 tainly not much control over the political content transmitted in churches  
536 (Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988). Only a panel design, however, can sort out  
537 this issue conclusively.

538 Contrary to the implicit expectation that group affect is developed in  
539 homogenous circumstances with perhaps limited exposure to disliked  
540 people, discussions among partisan fellow travelers do not seem to gener-  
541 ate higher levels of support for CR organizations. Instead, more *cross-*  
542 *cutting* political discussion in a social network appears to increase  
543 support for CR organizations (it points in the same direction for CR  
544 elites, but is not significant). Such a finding seems to be counterintuitive,  
545 as it goes against much of the research that has been done in recent years  
546 on deliberation. As some scholars have suggested (e.g., Sunstein 2000),  
547 deliberation — a concept often operationalized as ideological heterogen-  
548 eity within a social network (e.g., Mutz 2002) — may serve to push  
549 people to extremes on an issue after mulling it over with an ideological  
550 compatriot (a phenomenon known as enclave deliberation).  
551 Presumably, it is within these enclaves of like-minded discussants that  
552 group identities are forged.

553 This finding suggests that a different process may be at work.  
554 Discussions that take place between political opposites likely force sup-  
555 porters of a particular viewpoint to seek out additional stores of  
556 information in order to present the best possible case for their point of  
557 view. An individual's search for information to reinforce a viewpoint  
558 likely leads to investigations that may include interest groups that  
559 promote the same values. Ready-made arguments for such exchanges  
560 are easily available from interest groups. And, an information search

561 may thus stimulate the formation of affective ties with interest groups. On  
562 this view, individuals do not come to support organizations like the Ohio  
563 representatives of the CR through their involvement in homogeneous net-  
564 works, but rather through social networks in which political discussions  
565 make salient differences between their own views and those of their  
566 discussants (Paul A. Djupe, unpublished work).

567 Note that this theory also provides a plausible explanation for why  
568 scholars have long found that substantial proportions of those who sign  
569 on to the CR's policy agenda fail to register any kind of affective ties  
570 with the movement's most visible representatives. In essence, supporters  
571 of the CR agenda likely exist in homogenous social networks and are not  
572 motivated to seek out additional information, which may include infor-  
573 mation about interest groups. Homogenous, insular networks may build  
574 a potential constituency of issues supporters but inhibit organizational  
575 ties that underpin movement formation.

576 Table 1 also shows that support for the movement's policy agenda has  
577 a positive effect on support for CR groups and elites. Such a finding is  
578 unsurprising to say the least. Somewhat unexpected, though, is that con-  
579 tacts from religious or moral concerns organizations do not have an effect  
580 on support for those organizations nor their leadership.

581 The question still remains as to why the overlap between respondents  
582 who felt close to CR organizations and those who felt close to CR leaders  
583 was so slight. The second model displayed in Table 1 provides a few  
584 insights into what separates supporters of CR elites from supporters of  
585 CR organizations. The short answer is that the two groups are separated  
586 by religious particularism. Mainline Protestant and Catholic identifi-  
587 cations drive down support for CR leaders. Identification as a charis-  
588 matic,<sup>3</sup> however, has a positive and strong influence on support for  
589 Revs. Parsley and Johnson, who are charismatic Christians themselves.  
590 On the other hand, evangelicals, who are different than charismatics  
591 (Smidt 1989), are more likely to support CR groups. Identification with  
592 the other traditions or as a charismatic has no systematic effect on CR  
593 group affect.

594 To be sure, others have often noted that the CR is fragmented along  
595 religious lines (e.g., Jelen 1993; Wilcox 1992; Wilcox and Larson  
596 2006). Indeed, one of the explanations given for the collapse of earlier  
597 incarnations of the CR is that the movement's leaders and organizations  
598

599  
600 3. A charismatic is a member of any religious tradition who displays physical signs of spiritual  
inspiration, sometimes through speaking in tongues, faith healing, or prophecies.

601 failed to put aside theological differences. With the movement's revival,  
602 however, CR leaders seemed to be making overtures in an effort to garner  
603 the support of all people of faith (e.g., Wilcox and Larson 2006). For their  
604 parts, Revs. Johnson and Parsley, too, sought to attract a wide range of  
605 people of faith, and their public pronouncements during the primary cam-  
606 paign suggested little in the way of the exclusionary rhetoric that pre-  
607 vailed in the earliest incarnations of the CR. The most likely  
608 explanation here is that positive affect is generated in charismatic  
609 churches.

610 Religious commitment, too, has a positive effect on support for CR  
611 groups (though it approaches significance for CR elite support).  
612 Consistent with a contextual theory of religious influence, however, we  
613 suspect that the effects of religious commitment differ not only by reli-  
614 gious tradition (e.g., Green et al. 1996), but also in accordance with the  
615 specific congregational context in which individuals reason through the  
616 political implications of their faith. There may be nothing inherent  
617 about religious commitment, *per se*, that leads to higher levels support  
618 for the CR, as the individual is committed to a particular church environ-  
619 ment, complete with a number of potential fonts for congregants to obtain  
620 politically-relevant information.

621 To test the contextual nature of religious commitment, we interacted  
622 religious commitment with three of the major religious traditions —  
623 Mainline Protestant, Catholic, and Evangelical Protestant — and tested  
624 their joint effects on CR group affect under two conditions: for respon-  
625 dents who reported that they attend a politicized church and for respon-  
626 dents who attend non-political churches (the models are otherwise the  
627 same as those listed in Table 1). All of the interaction terms were statisti-  
628 cally significant, except for Catholics and evangelicals in political  
629 churches. The results are displayed graphically in Figure 1, where all  
630 non-political church results are shown with dashed lines and political  
631 church results are shown with solid lines.

632 Figure 1 presents a varied portrait of religious linkages to the CR.  
633 Higher religious commitment does not function the same way in each  
634 tradition and varies based on the political nature of the church. In  
635 non-political churches, more religious commitment modestly boosts  
636 positive feelings toward CR groups, which is the expected result.  
637 However, in political churches where a desired connection between  
638 faith and political choices is articulated, the degree to which an individual  
639 expresses religiosity disappears for both Catholics and evangelical  
640 Protestants. This suggests that alternate mechanisms, such as social

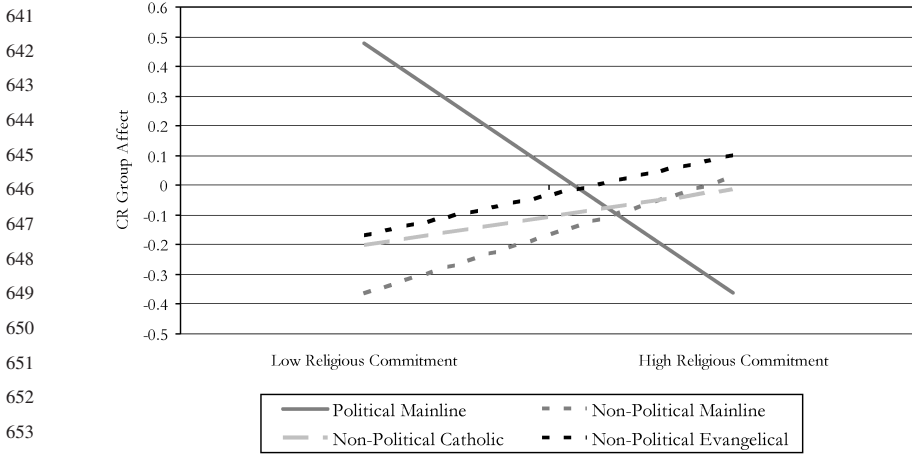


FIGURE 1. The estimated effect of religious commitment for different religious traditions in political versus non-political churches on affect toward christian right groups.

transmission, suffice to transmit the dominant message of the church. Among mainline Protestants, however, we see a considerable difference based on religious commitment. Contrary to the arguments advanced by proponents of the “culture wars” thesis (e.g., Hunter 1991; Wuthnow 1988), higher degrees of religious commitment among mainline Protestants only have a positive effect on support for CR groups among those who do *not* attend political churches. Those with high religiosity in political churches, on the other hand, are the most negative toward CR groups, which is expected given the antipathy for the CR expressed by various mainline clergy (especially in the form of the organization formed in 2006 called “We Believe Ohio” to counter the CR). However, those with low religiosity in political mainline Protestant churches are also the most positive toward CR groups, hinting that their low religiosity is actually an expression of dissatisfaction with their church.

These results seem to reinforce Wald’s (2003, 195) point that, “Churches are not equally successful in prompting members to perceive connections between religious and political ideas.” The specific political nature of the church context is essential to consider and easy assumptions made at the denominational or greater levels are likely to miss an important story.

681 **DISCUSSION**

682  
683 Some argue that it is the cognitive attachment to the religious reference  
684 group that allows individuals to self-select supportive social environ-  
685 ments that would produce greater levels of affect for relevant reference  
686 groups. However, the primacy of group identification may be misguided,  
687 as it assumes the ability of individuals to self-select to a degree that  
688 simply is not supported by close studies of church influence on political  
689 behavior (Gilbert 1993; Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988). Instead, it seems  
690 likely that interaction in church and other social networks helps in the  
691 creation of group identities in unforeseen ways. Most often scholars  
692 have thought such identities to be the product of homogeneous groups  
693 that reinforce a certain set of views and aid in identity formation.  
694 These results suggest that it may be exposure to *difference* and the expli-  
695 cit examination of the political implications of faith in church that help  
696 individuals to construct affective ties with interest groups.

697  
698  
699 **VOTING WITH THE CR**

700  
701 Unlike a number of previous studies that have attempted to gauge public  
702 support for the CR, this study does not end with an examination of  
703 support for the movement’s most visible elements. Instead, a true test  
704 of CR support must determine whether higher levels of CR support trans-  
705 late into CR influence at the polls. And while previous studies (e.g.,  
706 Green et al. 1996) have taken the degree of Republican voting in  
707 general elections as a measure of CR influence, we probe the connections  
708 between support for the movement and voting for the movement’s clearly  
709 preferred candidate in a non-partisan contest.

710 Clearly, greater proportions of CR supporters than non-supporters  
711 voted for Blackwell. Two-thirds of those few who supported CR organ-  
712 izations voted for Blackwell, compared to 40% voting for Blackwell  
713 among those who had negative adjusted feeling scores toward CR  
714 groups. Seventy percent of CR elite supporters (of whom there were  
715 far fewer than group supporters) voted for Blackwell, while only 47%  
716 of non-supporters voted the same way. Not surprising, either, is that  
717 the vast majority of those who supported the CR’s policy agenda voted  
718 for Blackwell. Almost three-quarters of those who supported the CR’s  
719 agenda cast their ballot for Blackwell, whereas Petro received the  
720 majority of the vote among those who did not support the movement’s

721 policy agenda (56.4%). The relationships are far from deterministic,  
722 raising the question of what additional factors were at play in shaping  
723 the primary vote.

724 The logistic regression estimates shown in Table 2 examine the factors  
725 that influence voting for Blackwell. To assist in the substantive interpret-  
726 ation of the estimates, we also present the probability difference gener-  
727 ated by first differences and the full variable range for significant  
728 effects. Given Blackwell's sponsorship of the Tax Expenditure  
729 Limitation (TEL)—a ballot initiative that proposed to curb drastically  
730 government spending in Ohio – it makes sense that those with higher  
731 incomes and who are more conservative are more likely to be  
732 Blackwell voters. Indeed, next to political ideology, support for the  
733 TEL amendment is the strongest predictor of voting for Blackwell. In  
734 more concrete terms, support for the TEL amendment increases the like-  
735 lihood of being a Blackwell voter by more than 30%. Despite the fact that  
736 opposition to gay rights motivated Blackwell to run and the CR to offer  
737 their support to him, CR agenda support was a relatively weak predictor  
738 of the primary vote choice, though it is still a significant one.

739 The social context has a potent effect on helping voters choose a  
740 primary candidate. Partisan disagreement within the social network,  
741 which generally means the respondent has a Democratic discussant in  
742 this sample, drives up voting for Petro, just as the perception of the dis-  
743 cussant voting for Blackwell tugs the respondent toward the same choice  
744 (these two measures are correlated, but not overwhelmingly so). A CR  
745 discussion agenda within the network does not drive the vote in either  
746 direction, but a focused CR issue agenda in church moves a vote for  
747 Petro, controlling for the perception of the clergy's vote preference.  
748 Thus, outside of a small set of churches where the clergy's preference  
749 for Blackwell was perceived, largely Catholic churches in which an  
750 agenda was focused on abortion helped voters perceive a difference  
751 and vote for Petro. Although it is possible that some churchgoers  
752 project their own views on to others around them, these relationships  
753 hold even when controlling for value congruence. Moreover, most  
754 church members were not able to provide the likely stance of their  
755 clergy, intimating that the cues must be clear to make an assessment.  
756 While the effect would seem to align with the CR's own claims of its  
757 strengths and the fears of many of the movement's most virulent  
758 critics, the actual paucity of available cues from clergy about their own  
759 candidate support undermines the ability to make broad claims of  
760 clergy influence.

Table 2. Determinants of the Ohio Gubernatorial Primary vote choice (logistic regression estimates)

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Coeff</i>	<i>(S.E.)</i>	<i>First Difference</i>	<i>Total Difference</i>
<b>Social Context</b>				
Discussant partisan disagreement	-.430	(.134)***	-.096	-.107
Discussant voted for Blackwell	.914	(.124)***	.223	.224
CR issue discussion in network	.403	(.403)		
CR issue presentation in church	-.382	(.278)†	-.031	-.095
Clergy supportive of Blackwell	.613	(.309)**	.039	.146
<b>Group Effects</b>				
Pro-Blackwell group contacts	-.067	(.066)		
CR group affect	.604	(.189)***	.108	.421
CR leader favorability	.120	(.038)***	.108	.321
<b>Opinion Effects</b>				
Ideology	.904	(.101)***	.339	.686
CR policy support	.217	(.129)*	.064	.342
TEL opposition	-.548	(.074)***	-.246	-.390
<b>Religious Traditions</b>				
Mainline Protestant	-.323	(.214)†	-.064	-.081
Catholic	-.057	(.227)		
Evangelical Protestant	.542	(.242)**	.105	.133
Charismatic identification	.162	(.308)		
Religious commitment	.074	(.150)		
<b>Demographic Controls</b>				
Female	-.077	(.130)		
Education	-.315	(.078)***	-.148	-.293
Income	.168	(.047)***	.126	.206
Constant	-1.326	(.635)		

Source: 2006 Ohio Republican Primary Voter Survey. \*\*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \* $p < .10$  (two-tailed tests) † $p < .10$  (one-tailed test).

Model statistics:  $N = 1,639$ ; % correct = 77.5; % error reduction = 53.8;  $-2LL = 1617.088$ ; Cox & Snell  $R^2 = .328$ .

Note: First difference is the probability difference from  $\pm$  one standard deviation from the mean holding all else at their means. Total difference is the probability difference from the minimum to the maximum value, holding all else constant.

Table 2 also shows that support for CR organizations, support for CR elites, and Evangelical Protestant identification all drive up voting for Blackwell, suggesting that each form of group interface has an independent effect on vote choice for the movement's candidate. Each of these connections increases the likelihood of voting for Blackwell by about 10%. While there is clearly overlap among identifiers, the fact that

801 each variable has an independent effect on voting for Blackwell speaks to  
802 the lack of unity within the CR. Moreover, the lack of effect from group  
803 contacts signals the inability of groups to dictate elections through cold  
804 contacts (see also Green and Gerber 2004).

805 While it seems likely that a sizeable portion of Blackwell's vote came  
806 from strong fiscal conservatives who were brought to his side because of  
807 his sponsorship of the TEL, the findings displayed in Table 2 also suggest  
808 that Blackwell drew much of his vote from a loosely-knit coalition of  
809 those with strong affective ties to CR groups and leaders, Evangelical  
810 Protestants, those who supported the CR's stance on social issues, and  
811 those who received a clear cue from their clergy. This may seem surpris-  
812 ing given recent studies that have found the movement's claimed influ-  
813 ence at the grassroots to outstrip its actual mass appeal (e.g., Deckman  
814 2004; McConkey and Hickman 1997). But, it is important to remember  
815 very few clergy sent clear signals, the leadership was openly reviled,  
816 and support for CR groups was tepid and isolated among potential sup-  
817 porters. Moreover, the social network factors that promoted voting for  
818 Blackwell (partisan and candidate disagreement) had the opposite  
819 effect when assessing ties to the movement (recall Table 1), a point to  
820 which we will return in the conclusion.

821

822

## 823 **DISCUSSION – PRO-BLACKWELL GROUP CONTACTS**

824

825 One additional analysis, of the pro-Blackwell balance of group contacts,  
826 may help us understand the limits of movement formation. Those who  
827 have acceptable sources of information available inside their social net-  
828 works or through their existing organizational ties are less likely to  
829 search out new sources of information upon which to base their political  
830 decisions. On the other hand, those whose primary channels of infor-  
831 mation acquisition are rife with conflicting viewpoints are encouraged  
832 to engage in an informational search that may direct individuals to a  
833 number of information sources, including the local church and interest  
834 groups (reference omitted).

835 In Table 3, we assess with bivariate correlations how the social  
836 network and church structure who is most likely to receive pro-  
837 Blackwell interest group contacts. We also examine the set of correlations  
838 for several subgroups in the population – seculars and those in political  
839 and non-political churches. While measures of disagreement in the  
840 network have no effect when using the total sample, for those who

Table 3. Network and church correlates of the balance of pro-blackwell contacts from interest groups for the total sample and select sub-groups (pearson's correlations)

	<i>Total Sample</i>	<i>Seculars</i>	<i>Political Church</i>	<i>Non Political Church</i>
Political Disagreement				
Discussant discussion disagreement	.024	.050	.072**	-.001
Discussant party disagreement	-.014	.089*	.021	-.035*
Discussant candidate disagreement	.014	-.072†	.001	.024
Network total disagreement	.022	-.109**	.014	.027
Information Flow and Access				
Network insularity	-.032*	-.073†	.009	-.058***
Total candidate discussion	.141***	.242***	.118***	.142***
Issue discussion concentration	-.086***	-.096*	-.089***	-.080***
Discussant discussion concentration	-.062***	-.140***	-.147***	-.017
CR issue discussion amount	.135***	.079†	.103***	.139***
Church Context				
Congregational similarity	.023		.045†	.012
Religious commitment	.120***		.059*	.125***
Political church	.080***			
Clergy support Blackwell	.136***		.171***	.086***

Source: 2006 Ohio Republican Primary Voter Survey. \*\*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\* $p < .05$ ; \* $p < .10$  (two-tailed tests) † $p < .10$  (one-tailed test).

attend a political church, network discussion disagreement is positively correlated with pro-Blackwell contacts. In a political church, there are likely a number of conduits that can connect congregants to interest groups. With the exception of seculars exposed to network discussions that are politically cross-cutting, though, all other forms of network disagreement are negatively correlated with pro-Blackwell contacts, suggesting the existence of social connections that promote moderation and a balance of group contacts.

Perhaps equally important as the presence of disagreement for engendering contact with interest groups is the insularity of the network. More network insularity is near universally and negatively correlated with pro-Blackwell interest group contacts. That is, networks in which the named discussants do not know each other are less accessible to interest groups (or to a balance of contacts). The same consequence emanates from networks in which discussion was more concentrated on a few issues and

881 in networks with a greater concentration of discussion with particular dis-  
882 cussants – behavioral measures of insularity. These relationships hold  
883 across all subgroups as well as in the total sample. Conversely, more dis-  
884 cussion about the candidates with the discussant is positively correlated  
885 with pro-Blackwell contacts from interest groups. The same is true for  
886 the amount of discussion about abortion and gay rights, surely as the  
887 result of a reciprocal, reinforcing relationship.

888 The lesson that emerges here is simple, and comports well with a  
889 process of a socially-dictated informational search. Those who are  
890 exposed to conflicting views are those most likely to seek out information  
891 to either reinforce their pre-deliberative views or engage in debates with  
892 their political or ideological opposites. And those insulated by strong ties  
893 are either unable or unwilling to seek out additional information.

894 As the last four rows in Table 3 show, network effects are not the end  
895 of the story, as feeling similar to the congregation is positively correlated  
896 with pro-Blackwell interest group contacts, but only among those who  
897 attend political churches. Religious commitment is also positively corre-  
898 lated with interest group contacts, but the relationship is twice as strong  
899 among those in a non-political church. In a political church, the free flow  
900 of political information largely overcomes the effect provided by individ-  
901 ual-level measures of religious engagement, of which religious commit-  
902 ment is one. Knowing that their clergy supported Blackwell is positively  
903 correlated with pro-Blackwell contacts, but is dramatically stronger when  
904 the respondent attends a political church, where clergy cues are  
905 reinforced by political discussion. Essentially, interaction patterns in  
906 networks and churches may act as the key point of exchange between  
907 individuals and public interest groups.

908  
909

## 910 CONCLUSION

911

912 Although the competing theories of CR mobilization have often been pre-  
913 sented as clear alternatives, our findings suggest that no one theory is  
914 capable of providing a coherent mechanism for CR mobilization at the  
915 grassroots. While we ratify common explanations of affect toward CR  
916 groups, we also find that affect is spawned, in part, by the social structure.  
917 Up until this time, it has often been assumed that homogeneous networks  
918 were the key to identity formation. The results here suggest a different  
919 story supporting new contextual theories arguing that the social environ-  
920 ment gives rise to group identities. Individuals have no need to develop

921 group identities until they are exposed to dissonant voices within a  
922 network of weak ties. That is, cross-cutting network discussions in  
923 loose knit networks stimulate an informational search that leads to affective  
924 ties with groups. This search often leads to any number of interest  
925 groups that offer a host of ready-made arguments that can be used in political  
926 exchanges and which makes citizens more accessible and susceptible  
927 to group-supplied political cues or calls to action.

928 Interestingly, this theory references work on the role of groups in  
929 citizen political calculi. This body of work often trumpets the role that  
930 salient out-groups play in the formation of group-based heuristics (e.g.,  
931 Brady and Sniderman 1985) — citizens develop affective ties that help  
932 approximate their own place in politics and rationalize their choices  
933 (Lupia 1994). Because dissonant voices within an individual's social  
934 environment are the catalyst for the development of affective ties with  
935 groups, the social ties that motivate the development of group identities  
936 also supply information that affects the political choices people make.  
937 The outcome of this process has consequences that may not be obvious  
938 at first blush.

939 That is, the theory forwarded here also provides a plausible explanation  
940 for a seeming paradox of CR support at the mass level. Significant  
941 numbers of social conservatives fail to register positive affect toward  
942 movement groups and elites and those with positive affect are not all  
943 lock-step social conservatives. Essentially, motivated by dissonant information,  
944 citizens that forge affective ties with a politically consonant group may at the same time  
945 succumb to the influence of dissonant information in the network. On the flip side,  
946 those who support the movement's policy agenda in insular networks may pick up on the cues  
947 necessary to connect their values with the "right" stances on candidates,  
948 but they do not need to seek out group-based cues to do so. Therefore,  
949 a portion of the movement's *de facto* supporters are in actuality  
950 moving in parallel with the CR more or less oblivious to the movement  
951 and inaccessible to its entreaties, while some of the actual supporters may  
952 be pulled away from the group by their dissonant social relations.

954 Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that the presence of the CR  
955 in a political contest can help certain select segments of the voting public  
956 to connect their beliefs with a particular candidate. For those whose  
957 social environments do not give rise to an unambiguous decision,  
958 affect toward CR groups and elites may act as a useful heuristic that  
959 can inform voters' choices at the polls or in other political arenas. But,  
960 in spite of calculated attempts to broaden the movement's appeal by

961 reaching out beyond evangelicals, the CR's efforts are still tainted by the  
 962 lingering shadow of religious particularism. Likewise, the movement  
 963 failed to attract the attention of significant proportions of its potential sup-  
 964 porters. Only those who find themselves in a social environment littered  
 965 with mixed political messages and loose ties, it seems, come to rely upon  
 966 the movement for guidance. What emerges from our findings is a vision  
 967 of the CR that is a great deal more fragmented than media accounts lead  
 968 one to believe — the bedrock of the movement is actually composed of  
 969 schist.

## 971 REFERENCES

- 973 Berkowitz, Laura, and John C. Green. 1997. "Charting the coalition: The local chapters of  
 974 the Ohio Christian Coalition." In *Sojourners in the Wilderness: The Christian Right in  
 975 Comparative Perspective*, ed. Corwin E. Smidt and James M. Penning. Lanham:  
 976 Rowman and Littlefield.
- 977 Brady, Henry E., and Paul M. Sniderman. 1985. "Attitude Attribution: A Group Basis for  
 978 Political Reasoning." *American Political Science Review* 79:1061–1078.
- 979 Deckman, Melissa M. 2004. *School Board Battles: The Christian Right in Local Politics*.  
 980 Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
- 981 Djupe, Paul A., and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2003. *The Prophetic Pulpit: Clergy, Churches,  
 982 and Communities in American Politics*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.
- 983 Djupe, Paul A., and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2004. "The Local Roots of Aggregate Opinion  
 984 Structures." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the APSA, Chicago.
- 985 Djupe, Paul A., and Christopher P. Gilbert. 2006. "The Resourceful Believer: Generating  
 986 Civic Skills in Church." *Journal of Politics* 68:116–127.
- 987 Djupe, Paul A., Jacob R. Neihsel, and Anand E. Sokhey. 2007. "Clergy  
 988 and Controversy: A Study of Clergy and Gay Rights in Columbus, Ohio." *Beyond  
 989 the Culture Wars: Religious Interests in Community Conflict*, ed. Paul A. Djupe and  
 990 Laura R. Olson. Waco: Baylor University Press.
- 991 Gilbert, Christopher P. 1993. *The Impact of Churches on Political Behavior*. Westport:  
 992 Greenwood.
- 993 Granovetter, Mark. 1973. "The Strength of Weak Ties." *American Journal of Sociology*  
 994 78:1360–1380.
- 995 Green, Donald P., and Alan S. Gerber. 2004. *Get Out the Vote! How to Increase Voter  
 996 Turnout*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution.
- 997 Green, John C. 1999a. "Getting to the Root of the Problem: The Christian Right and  
 998 primary elections." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the MPSA, Chicago.
- 999 Green, John C. 1999b. "The Spirit Willing: Collective Identity and the Development of  
 1000 the Christian Right." In *Waves of Protest: Social Movements Since the Sixties*,  
 ed. Jo Freeman and Victoria Johnson. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Green, John C. 2006. "Ohio: The Bible and the Buckeye State." In *The Values Campaign?  
 The Christian Right and the 2004 Elections*, ed. John C. Green, Mark J. Rozell, and  
 Clyde Wilcox. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.
- Green, John C., and James L. Guth. 1988. "The Christian Right in the Republican Party:  
 The case of Pat Robertson's supporters." *Journal of Politics* 50:150–165.
- Green, John C., James L. Guth, and Kevin Hill. 1993. "Faith and Election: The Christian  
 Right in Congressional Campaigns 1978–1988." *Journal of Politics* 55:80–91.

- 1001 Green, John C., James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, and Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. *Religion*  
 1002 *and the Culture Wars: Dispatches from the Front*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- 1003 Green, John C., Mark J. Rozell, and Clyde Wilcox. 2001. "Social Movements and Party  
 1004 Politics: The Case of the Christian Right." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*  
 40:413–426.
- 1005 Hallett, Joe. 2005. "Churches Flexing Political Muscle; Ohio's Christian Conservatives  
 1006 Try to Build on '04 Election Gains." *Columbus Dispatch* April 11:01A.
- 1007 Hart, Stephen. 1996. *What Does the Lord Require? How American Christians Think about*  
 1008 *Economic Justice*. New Brunswick: Rutgers.
- 1009 Hawkings, David, and Brian Nutting, eds. 2003. *CQ's Politics in America 2004: The*  
 1010 *108<sup>th</sup> Congress (Politics in America)*. Washington DC: Congressional Quarterly Press.
- 1011 Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1995. *Citizens, Politics, and Social*  
 1012 *Communication*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- 1013 Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1987. "Networks in Context: The Social Flow of  
 1014 Political Information." *American Political Science Review* 81:1197–1216.
- 1015 Huckfeldt, Robert, and John Sprague. 1988. "Choice, Social Structure, and Political  
 1016 Information: The Informational Coercion of Minorities." *American Journal of*  
 1017 *Political Science* 32:467–482.
- 1018 Huckfeldt, Robert, Paul E. Johnson, and John Sprague. 2004. *Political Disagreement: The*  
 1019 *Survival of Diverse Opinions within Communication Networks*. New York: Cambridge  
 1020 University Press.
- 1021 Hunter, James Davison. 1991. *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. New York:  
 1022 Basic Books.
- 1023 Jelen, Ted G. 1992. "Political Christianity: A Contextual Analysis." *American Journal of*  
 1024 *Political Science* 36:692–714.
- 1025 Jelen, Ted G. 1993. "The Political Consequences of Religious Group Attitudes." *Journal*  
 1026 *of Politics* 55:178–190.
- 1027 Kellstedt, Lyman A. 1993. "Religion, the Neglected Variable: An Agenda for Future  
 1028 Research on Religion and Political Behavior." In *Rediscovering the Religious*  
 1029 *Factor in American Politics*, ed. David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt, Armonk:  
 1030 M. E. Sharpe.
- 1031 Layman, Geoffrey C. 2001. *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in*  
 1032 *American Party Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- 1033 Liebman, Robert C. 1983. "Mobilizing the Moral Majority." In *The New Christian Right:*  
 1034 *Mobilization and Legitimation*, ed. Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow.  
 1035 Hawthorne: Aldine.
- 1036 Lupia, Arthur. 1994. "Shortcuts versus Encyclopedias: Information and Voting Behavior in  
 1037 California Insurance Reform Elections." *American Political Science Review* 88:63–76.
- 1038 McConkey, Dale, and John C. Hickman. 1997. "Deus-ex Voter Guide: The Effect of the  
 1039 Christian Coalition on State Primaries." *Comparative State Politics* 18:13–21.
- 1040 Moen, Matthew C. 1992. *The Transformation of the Christian Right*. Tuscaloosa:  
 University of Alabama.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2002. "Cross-Cutting Social Networks: Testing Democratic Theory in  
 Practice." *American Political Science Review* 96:111–126.
- Mutz, Diana C. 2006. *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative Versus Participatory*  
*Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oldfield, Duane M. 1996. *The Right and the Righteous: The Christian Right Confronts the*  
*Republican Party*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Regnerus, Mark D., David Sikkink, and Christian Smith. 1999. "Voting with the Christian  
 Right: Contextual and Individual Patterns of Electoral Influence." *Social Forces*  
 77:1375–1401.

- 1041 Rozell, Mark J., and Clive Wilcox. 1996. *Second Coming: The New Christian Right in*  
 1042 *Virginia Politics*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- 1043 Scheufele, Dietram A., Matthew C. Nisbet, Dominique Brossard, and Erik C. Nisbet.  
 1044 2004. "Social Structure and Citizenship: Examining the Impact of Social Setting,  
 1045 Network Heterogeneity, and Informational Variables on Political Participation."  
 1046 *Political Communication* 21:315–338.
- 1047 Shupe, Anson, and William Stacey. 1983. "The Moral Majority Constituency." In *The*  
 1048 *New Christian Right*, ed. Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow. Hawthorne:  
 1049 Aldine.
- 1048 Simpson, John H. 1983. "Moral Issues and Status Politics." In *The New Christian Right:*  
 1049 *Mobilization and Legitimation*, ed. Robert C. Liebman and Robert Wuthnow,  
 1050 Hawthorne: Aldine.
- 1050 Smidt, Corwin E. 1989. "'Praise the Lord' Politics: A Comparative Analysis of the Social  
 1051 Characteristics and Political Views of American Evangelical and Charismatic  
 1052 Christians." *Sociological Analysis* 50:53–72.
- 1052 Sunstein, Cass R. 2000. "Deliberative Trouble? Why Groups Go to Extremes." *Yale Law*  
 1053 *Journal* 110:71–119.
- 1054 Wald, Kenneth D. 2003. *Religion and Politics in the United States*. Lanham: Rowman &  
 1055 Littlefield.
- 1055 Wald, Kenneth D., Dennis Owen, and Samuel Hill. 1988. "Churches as Political  
 1056 Communities." *American Political Science Review* 82:531–548.
- 1057 Wilcox, Clyde. 1992. *God's Warriors: The Christian Right in Twentieth-Century*  
 1058 *America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- 1058 Wilcox, Clyde, Ted Jelen, and David C. Leege. 1993. "Religious Group Identifications:  
 1059 Toward a Cognitive Theory of Religious Mobilization." In *Rediscovering the*  
 1060 *Religious Factor*, ed. David C. Leege and Lyman A. Kellstedt, Armonk: M.E. Sharpe.
- 1061 Wilcox, Clyde, and Carin Larson. 2006. *Onward Christian Soldiers? The Religious Right*  
 1062 *in American Politics*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- 1062 Wilcox, Clyde, Lee Sigelman, and Elizabeth Cook. 1989. "Some Like it Hot: Individual  
 1063 Responses to Group Feeling Thermometers." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 53:246–257.
- 1064 Wuthnow, Robert. 1988. *The Restructuring of American Religion*. Princeton: Princeton  
 1065 University Press.

## 1066 **APPENDIX: VARIABLE CODING**

1069 **Clergy supported Blackwell** "Do you think your minister personally favored a particular  
 1070 candidate for governor in the May primary?" 1 = Ken Blackwell; 0 = Another  
 1071 candidate or don't know.

1072 **CR group affect** "For the following groups, please tell us how close you feel to them."  
 1073 Each item is coded 1 = very far; 2 = far; 3 = close; 4 = very close. Using the same  
 1074 procedure used to create the *CR leadership favorability* index above, this index  
 1075 averages adjusted feeling scores for The Ohio Christian Coalition, Ohio Right to  
 1076 Life, Citizens for Community Values, and Ohio Restoration Project. Other groups  
 1077 rated and used in the index adjustment included: We Believe Ohio, The Ohio  
 1078 Republican Party, The Ohio Taxpayers Association, and the Buckeye Firearms  
 1079 Association.

1078 **CR issue discussion in network** Respondents were asked, "Did you discuss the  
 1079 candidates for the Republican nomination for governor?" and then if they discussed  
 1080 five specific issues: "If yes, the candidates' abortion stances?"; "The candidates'

1081 gay marriage views?"; "The candidates on taxes and spending?"; "The candidates'  
1082 general election chances?"; and "The candidates' personal integrity?" As with *CR*  
1083 *issue presentation in church* above, this variable reports the proportion of all  
1084 discussion in the network involving the abortion and gay rights stances of the  
1085 candidates.

1085 **CR issue presentation in church** Respondents were asked whether they heard  
1086 conversations in church (from clergy, in small groups, and informally) about  
1087 the Republican candidates' stances on abortion and gay marriage. Specifically, the  
1088 question asked, "We would like to know about conversations *in church* about the  
1089 Republican candidates for governor before the May primary election. Did clergy  
1090 discuss them? Did you discuss them in a church small group/activity? Did you  
1091 discuss them informally with other church members?" The variable is a proportion,  
1092 reporting the portion of all such discussions from any source that involved abortion  
1093 and gay rights. The values thus range from 0 (no CR issue presentation) to 1 (in  
1094 which all issue presentation in church concerned CR issues).

1094 **CR leader favorability** "We would like to get your feelings towards some candidates:  
1095 On a scale of 0 to 10, where 10 is very favorable, and 0 is very unfavorable, how do  
1096 you feel about these public figures?" This averaged index uses adjusted feeling  
1097 scores for both Rev. Russell Johnson and Rev. Rod Parsley. Scores (ranging from  
1098 0 to 10) were adjusted by subtracting each respondent's mean feeling score for all  
1099 public figures from their mean feeling score for these two CR elites (see **Wilcox,**  
1100 **Sigelman, and Cook 1989**). The other public figures used to calculate  
1101 the mean included: Ken Blackwell, Ted Strickland (U.S. senator), Bob  
1102 Taft (Ohio governor), George W. Bush, Jim Petro, and Mike Coleman (Columbus  
1103 mayor).

1102 **CR policy support** An averaged index ranging from 1 to 4 (higher is more conservative),  
1103 created using agreement (combining strongly agree and agree) with the following  
1104 statements about public affairs: "We need an amendment prohibiting all abortions,"  
1105 and "Homosexuals deserve all the same rights as others."

1105 **Discussant candidate agreement** "How often did you disagree in these conversations  
1106 about the primary campaign and the candidates (Petro and Blackwell)?" 1 = Very  
1107 often; 2 = Often; 3 = Rarely.

1108 **Discussant concentration** A Herfindahl-like index, summing the squared proportion of  
1109 discussion with a particular discussant. That is, the amount of discussion of the  
1110 candidates with a discussant is divided by the *total candidate discussion* (see  
1111 the description for the *total* measure to see the components of this measure). That  
1112 proportion is squared and added to the parallel measures for each discussant.  
1113 A higher value signals greater concentration for a particular discussant.

1113 **Discussant partisan disagreement** "In general, does the person identify with the same  
1114 political party as you do?" 1 = discussant has the same party identification and 2 =  
1115 does not.

1115 **Discussant voted for Blackwell** "Did the person support the same Republican candidate  
1116 for governor as you?" 1 = either the discussant supported the same candidate when the  
1117 respondent voted for Blackwell or the discussant did not support the same candidate  
1118 when the respondent voted for Petro; 0 = either the discussant did not support the  
1119 same candidate when the respondent voted for Blackwell or did support the same  
1120 candidate when the respondent supported Petro.

- 1121 **Education** “What is the highest level of education you have received?” 1 = Less than  
 1122 high school; 2 = High school/GED; 3 = Some college; 4 = College degree; 5 =  
 1123 Graduate school/degree.
- 1124 **Ideology** “Now, thinking of your general political views, which of these labels best  
 1125 describes you?” 1 = Strongly liberal; 2 = Liberal; 3 = Moderate; 4 = Conservative;  
 1126 5 = Strongly conservative.
- 1127 **Income** “In what category does your total family income fall before taxes?” 1 =  
 1128 <\$25,000; 2 = \$25–40,000; 3 = \$40–60,000; 4 = \$60–80,000; 5 = \$80–100,000;  
 1129 and 6 = >\$100,000.
- 1130 **Issue discussion concentration** A Herfindahl-like index, summing the squared  
 1131 proportions of discussion of each issue. That is, the total amount of discussion of a  
 1132 particular issue across all discussants is divided by the *total candidate discussion*  
 1133 (see the description for the *total* measure to see the components of this measure).  
 1134 That proportion is squared and added to the parallel measures for each issue.  
 1135 A higher value signals greater concentration on a particular issue.
- 1136 **Network insularity** “Does this person know others you listed?” 1 = yes; 0 = no.
- 1137 **Network partisan agreement** “How often do you think this person would disagree about  
 1138 politics and public affairs with other people you know?” 1 = Very often; 2 = Often;  
 1139 3 = Rarely.
- 1140 **Political church** Equals 1 if respondents noted any of the following happened in their  
 1141 church (and 0 otherwise): Someone in the church asked the respondent to go vote  
 1142 in the primary, vote for a specific candidate, or attend a political rally (question  
 1143 text: “Had someone in your church asked you do these items before the May  
 1144 primary? (circle any that apply)”); the church held events to discuss or promote gay  
 1145 marriage, education, electoral choices, church and state issues, abortion, Iraq War,  
 1146 campaign rallies, or government spending and taxes (question text: “Has your  
 1147 church held events to discuss or promote these items this year? (circle all that apply)”).
- 1148 **Pro-Blackwell group contacts** Respondents were asked, “During campaigns, many  
 1149 citizens are contacted by groups providing information designed to influence their  
 1150 vote. During the May, 2006 primary campaign, did you receive information backing  
 1151 Blackwell and/or Petro from any of the following sources? (circle as many as  
 1152 apply) (A) A political party or candidate committee, (B) A religious or moral  
 1153 concerns organization, (C) An anti-tax and spending, organization, (D) A gun rights  
 1154 organization.” The measure sums the “Blackwell” responses and ranges from 0–4.
- 1155 **Religious Commitment** Composed of church attendance and religious importance items.  
 1156 Attendance was measured by: “Aside from weddings and funerals, how often have you  
 1157 attended a church in the past year? 1 = More than once a week; 2 = Once a week; 3 =  
 1158 Once or twice a month; 4 = A few times a year; 5 = Seldom; 6 = Never.” Importance  
 1159 was assessed with: “How important is religion in your life? 1 = Not at all important;  
 1160 2 = Not very important; 3 = Somewhat important; 4 = Very important.” Both were  
 standardized to a 0–1 scale, added, and then averaged so the composite variable  
 ranges from 0 to 1.
- Similarity to church members** Respondents who attended church more often than never  
 were asked, “Are your fellow church members mostly the same as or different from  
 you in these ways?” Respondents noting congregation members are the “same as  
 me” in terms of their “theological beliefs,” “political party affiliation,” “ethnicity/  
 race,” “stance on gay marriage,” “support for the Religious Right,” and “members’

1161 political activism” gained a point for each mention. The index values are averaged and  
1162 the final measure ranges from 0 (wholly dissimilar) to 1 (wholly similar).

1163 **TEL opposition** “Please tell us whether you agree or disagree with the following  
1164 statements about public affairs: The Tax Expenditure Limitation (TEL) proposal  
1165 is needed to limit government spending in Ohio.” 1 = Strongly agree; 2 = Agree;  
3 = Disagree; 4 = Strongly disagree.

1166 **Total candidate discussion** An index ranging from 0 to 24 created by summing each  
1167 mention of a discussion item for each discussant. The items (all coded 1 = yes,  
1168 0 =no) included, “Did you discuss the candidates for the Republican nomination  
1169 for governor?”; “If yes, the candidates’ abortion stances?”; “The candidates’ gay  
1170 marriage views?”; “The candidates on taxes and spending?”; “The candidates’  
1171 general election chances?”; and “The candidates’ personal integrity?”

1172

1173

1174

1175

1176

1177

1178

1179

1180

1181

1182

1183

1184

1185

1186

1187

1188

1189

1190

1191

1192

1193

1194

1195

1196

1197

1198

1199

1200