

- I. Introduction
 - A. Media assessments of Christian Right's influence have gyrated wildly
 - 1. Hi: <20s – prohibition
 - 2. Lo: <30s – Scopes trial, repeal, New Deal > Coughlin
 - 3. Hi: <late-40s-50s – red-scare
 - 4. Lo: <60s – sexual revolution, civil rights revolution
 - 5. Hi: mid-70s to mid-80s – Carter, Reagan, Falwell's Moral Majority
 - 6. Lo: 1988-92 – failed Robertson bid, Bakker, Swaggert, Roberts scandals, extreme convention rhetoric
 - 7. Hi: 1994- – quiet grassroots mobilization under Reed
 - B. Public support for Christian Right has not changed a great deal since 1970s (10–15% of whites)
 - C. Christian Right organizations now more effective in mobilizing these supporters
 - 1. Highly visible national efforts not successful – prompt countermobilization
 - 2. Quiet, grassroots mobilization much more successful

- II. What is the Christian Right?
 - A. Definition: a social movement that attempts to mobilize evangelical Protestants and other orthodox Christians (and Jews) into conservative political action
 - B. Components
 - 1. Organizations (ch. 3): diverse
 - a. Interest groups
 - (1) Moral Majority – Rev. Jerry Falwell
 - (2) Christian Coalition – Randy Tate, Don Hodel
 - (3) Focus on the Family – Rev. James Dodson
 - (4) Concerned Women for America – Beverly LaHaye
 - (5) Family Research Council – Gary Bauer
 - b. Party factions
 - (1) Democratic – Wm. Jennings Bryan
 - (2) Republican – Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson
 - (a) Consolidation: SC, TX
 - (b) Mixed: GA, NC, VA, FL, MI, CA, OR, WA
 - (c) Confrontation: MN, KS
 - 2. Leaders, activists, & members
 - 3. Supporters & potential constituents -- orthodox theological groups
 - a. Evangelical Protestants
 - (1) Neoevangelicals – Billy Graham
 - (2) Fundamentalists – Jerry Falwell
 - (3) Pentecostal/charismatics – Pat Robertson
 - b. Nontraditional Protestants – Mormons
 - c. Conservative – Catholics
 - d. Orthodox Jews
 - C. Controversial (and overlapping) agendas
 - 1. Narrow single-issue
 - a. Sex – abortion, homosexuality, pornography
 - b. Education – state-sponsored rel.exercises in public schools, home schooling, vouchers
 - 2. Broader social/moral focus -- ?family issues” – marriage tax, divorce, library censorship
 - 3. Even broader domestic/foreign affairs focus – crime, min. wage, welfare, health care, immigration, defense
 - D. Resources
 - 1. Voters
 - 2. Volunteer workers
 - 3. Financial contributors

- III. The context
- A. Debate over role of religion in politics
 - 1. No role -- too divisive
 - 2. No role for clergy
 - 3. No role for scriptures
 - B. Positive view: the Christian Right
 - 1. Is a *defensive movement* seeking to protect the religious liberties of conservative Christians
 - 2. Is a *needed force* because of the aggressive bias of radical liberals against religious faith operating in a secular government and society deep in moral decline
 - 3. Pursues *legitimate goals*:
 - a. To have a seat at the bargaining table just like all other interest groups
 - b. To defend legitimate, Judeo-Christian values from attack by secular humanists
 - 4. Respects Constitutional *norms*
 - a. Bargaining & compromise
 - b. Moderate rhetoric
 - c. Openness
 - d. Tolerance
 - C. Negative view: the Christian Right
 - 1. Is an *offensive movement* seeking to abridge or deny or Constitutional freedoms of other Americans
 - 2. Is a *dangerous force* that might eventually undermine constitutional freedoms in an effort to impose its interpretation of biblical law
 - 3. Pursues *illegitimate goals*:
 - a. To replace pluralist democracy with a conservative Christian theocracy
 - b. To impose a narrow, sectarian morality that would deny the fundamental constitutional rights of others and impose a prescientific worldview on public education
 - 4. Violates pluralist political *norms*
 - a. Inflexible & rigid demands
 - b. Extreme rhetoric: distorts, demonizes, marginalizes, & represses opponents
 - c. Secrecy (stealth candidates)
 - d. Intolerance: prejudice & bigotry

- IV. The first amendment and church and state
- A. No-establishment clause
 - 1. *Christian nationalists*: the U.S. is a Christian nation specially blessed by God and chosen to fulfill His will
 - 2. *Accommodationists*: government may provide nondiscriminatory aid and endorsement to religion
 - 3. *Separationists*: the U.S. is a secular nation with a high wall of separation between church and state that is good for both
 - B. Free-exercise clause
 - 1. *Libertarian*: government should allow all kinds of religious activity — including non-Christian — so long as no one is harmed
 - 2. *Communitarian*: religious freedom for minority religious groups should be limited by community (Christian) norms
- V. Religion and politics in America
- A. U.S. distinctiveness among Western democracies
 - 1. Intensity of moral politics
 - 2. Extent of religious diversity
 - 3. Strength of religious faith and institutions
 - B. Civil religion: government has a moral as well as secular role
 - 1. Liberal clergy & congregants
 - 2. Conservative clergy & congregants
- VI. A *culture war*? (James David Hunter)
- A. Orthodox v. progressive world views
 - B. *Not* the same as religious v. secular worldviews