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# Religion and Party Realignment: Are Catholics Realigning into the Republican Party?

Patrick Lee Burns

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RELIGION AND PARTY REALIGNMENT: ARE CATHOLICS REALIGNING INTO  
THE REPUBLICAN PARTY?

by

PATRICK L. BURNS

Under the Direction of Dr. Allison Calhoun-Brown

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the influence of religion on party realignment in the United States focusing on Catholic voting behavior. A statistical analysis utilizing bivariate analysis and logistical regressions examines if religion and party realignment is an ecumenical trend expanding beyond Evangelicals to Catholics. It measures scientifically the party trends of the Catholic voter. With data pooled from the National Election Studies from 1960 to 2004, it tests the hypothesis that church attending Catholics are realigning over time into the Republican Party both in vote choice and party identification, because of their pro-life position on abortion. The analysis shows that church attending Catholics have dealigned from the Democratic Party over time because of their pro-life position on abortion. The thesis is a model for examining the religion and party realignment question for other traditional Democratic religious denominations such as African-American Evangelicals and Jews.

INDEX WORDS: Catholics, Party Realignment, Republican Party, Religion, Party Politics, Voting Behavior, Abortion

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Georgia State University

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Mary and son Patrick Jr. whose love, support, and shared faith enabled my completion of this thesis possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and thank my thesis committee chair Allison Calhoun-Brown and committee members Michael Binford and Richard Engstrom for their advice and guidance.

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## ***Introduction***

The importance of the Catholic vote in the United States is of little debate among scholars and campaigners, as Catholics make up one-fourth of the U.S. population and account for 30 percent of the electorate. The heavy concentration of Catholic voters in the ten largest Electoral College States, including California, New York, Texas, and Florida as well in battleground states such as Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Illinois, only adds to the importance of the Catholic vote. The importance of the Catholic vote in the key States of Florida and Ohio, States that played a key role in deciding the Presidential Elections of 2000 and 2004 respectively, alone should stress the importance of the Catholic vote to scholars. Among scholars, the importance of the United States Catholic vote is a matter of public record (Appleby, 1997).

However, although the importance of the Catholic vote is agreed upon by most scholars, there is great debate among them as to which party the Catholic vote belongs, and whether it is abandoning its traditional Democratic home and trending toward independent or making a new home in the Republican Party. This great debate among scholars has gone on since 1960 with the propelling of Catholics into the political and social mainstream of America with the election of Catholic John F. Kennedy into the White House, and the later suburbanization and increase in income and education among ethnic Catholics.

Since the work of Scott Greer (1961) and his analysis of the St. Louis metropolitan area, it was generally assumed that as Catholic ethnics made money and moved to the suburbs, they would weaken their allegiance with the Democratic Party.

However, many scholars in their studies of the suburbanization and rise in income and education of Catholics over two decades from 1960 had found little weakening of allegiances with the Democratic Party by suburban Catholics (Fee, 1976; Greeley, 1977). Despite predictions of a new Republican majority in the 1970's consisting of economic conservatives and social conservatives, the majority of whom were Catholic ethnics chased out of the Democratic Party by Fred Dutton and the McGovern Commission (Phillips, 1969; Gavin, 1975; Rusher, 1975), many scholars continued to assert throughout the 1980's that Catholics remained at home in the Democratic Party despite some slight estrangement and variations (Dionne, 1981; Penning, 1986; Leege and Welch, 1989). Many scholars have also stated in recent years that Catholics' estrangement of allegiance to the Democratic Party is the result of party dealignment from the Democratic Party because of issue attitudes that are at odds with the party of their parents (Carmines, McIver, and Stimson 1987; Leege and Welch, 1989). Even today, some scholars continue to assert twenty years later, that Catholics continue to remain at home in the Democratic Party, because their unique religious worldview is more in aligning with the principles of the Democratic Party (Brewer, 2003).

Despite the resurgence of the study of religion and party realignment in the area of Evangelicals realigning into the Republican Party in the 1980's and 1990's, and the growing study of the breaking down of barriers and the shared values between Evangelicals and Catholics (Leege and Welch, 1991; Shea, 2004; Noll and Nystrom, 2005), little focus has been placed on studying the Catholic voter in the area of religion and party realignment and the Republican Party. Very little focus has been put by

Catholic scholars on the study of the emergence of Evangelical voters into the Republican Party, and if Catholics are following suit and forming a political coalition as important to the Republican Party as Jews and African-Americans are to the Democratic Party.

In my thesis, I will explore the key question of whether Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party, in much the same way that Evangelicals realigned into the Republican Party. Is religion and party realignment unique only to Evangelicals or is the Republican Party also experiencing a realignment of Catholics? After reviewing the literature on religion and party realignment in the United States, hypotheses and data will be offered to help determine if Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party. This is an important question, as it will help to determine if religion and party realignment is unique only to Evangelicals or it is going to be a part of an ecumenical trend, encompassing not only Catholics, but Jews and African-American Evangelicals as well. As Catholics have many shared issue positions with Evangelicals on key social issues such as abortion, gay rights, and women's rights, it reasons that some realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party would exist.

### ***Literature Review***

The theory of realignment was invented by V.O. Key over fifty years ago when his article "A Theory of Critical Elections" appeared in *The Journal of Politics* (1955). Key further developed his theory in his article "Secular Realignment and the Party System" (1959). Key's theory of realignment proposed that some presidential elections should be classified as 'critical elections' because they had a stronger impact than others

on the existing respective party coalitions, causing a change in the opposing party coalitions to the advantage of one party gaining power at the expense of the other (1955). For Key, these critical elections involved the transfer of governmental power and transformation of party coalitions, and had some common characteristics (1955). These common characteristics of a realigning or 'critical election' were an unusually high degree of political conflict over party nominations and platforms that mobilized inactive groups and increased turnout; the emergence of new issues that transformed the accepted political agenda; and lastly an unexpected change in the attitude of voters toward the parties that they are accustomed to supporting (Key, 1955). However, Key (1959) also indicated that 'critical elections', were not the only sources of party realignment, but that party realignment could come about gradually in phases, as a result of demographic changes described as a 'secular realignment'. In addition, Key (1959) indicated that key issues and agendas may precede a critical election and that they might emerge later on and contribute to the building of a Party's majority coalition.

In the years following Key's invention of realignment theory, scholars worked to further develop a classification system or typology for realignment theory. Angus Campbell in *Elections and the Political Order* (1966) worked to classify elections as maintaining (majority party won), deviating (majority party lost), and reinstating elections (majority party won after losing). Gerald M. Pomper (1967) added to Campbell's classification the term converting elections to describe elections which reinforced the stronger party. Campbell (1966) and Pomper (1967) sought in the classification typology to determine what the critical and realigning elections were.

Walter Burnham (1970) in *Critical Elections and the Mainsprings of American Politics* also sought to determine the key critical elections that resulted in the present Party System. Everett Ladd and Charles Hadley (1975) in their examination of party realignments and coalitions developed the classification of the two-tiered election, where one party dominated presidential elections and the other Congressional elections.

During the years following Key's invention of realignment theory, scholars also began to examine not only when the critical elections were in the past, but began to try and forecast when the next realignment would occur based on the notion of periodicity, survey data and election statistics. One of the most notable predictions of realignment during this period was Kevin Phillips' *The Emerging Republican Majority* (1969) in which he predicted a new Republican Party majority. As predictions of new party realignments faltered, scholars began to focus more on historic gradualism and its effects on party realignment and party coalitions. Past political patterns, especially in the area of political mobilization and voter turnout were examined with strong emphasis on the New Deal. James Sundquist (1973) examined the New Deal and its effects on a succeeding generation and their party affiliation.

Historical gradualism in realignment theory was soon followed by examination of contemporary and current electoral developments of party coalitions and alignments among social and ethnic groups (Williams, 1985). Less focus began to be placed on Presidential elections and the transfer of power by the parties and more focus was placed on Key's realignment criteria of the changing composition of party coalitions. The growing number of independents and the decline in party identification was examined

extensively for demographic trends by Norman Nie, Sidney Verba, and John Petrocik in their *The Changing of the American Voter* (1976). Nie, Verba, and Petrocik (1976) determined that even voters who maintained strong party ties showed an increased tendency to vote contrary to their party identification. Numerous scholars also concluded that the growth of independents and non-partisanship was disproportionately among voters who entered the electorate since the 1964 election (Glenn, 1972; Abramson, 1976; Nie, Verba, and Petrocik, 1976; Beck 1984). These scholars asserted that older partisan voters were being replaced by younger less partisan voters. This strong increase in the number of independents in the electorate along with the decline of strong party identifiers resulted in the evolution of the theory of dealignment among scholars. The dealignment of the electorate results in more volatile electoral decisions and aggregated electoral outcomes that are less predictable (Carmines, McIver, and Stimson; 1987).

The concept of dealignment is often defined by scholars as the weakening of partisan attachment to one or both major parties with evidence of dealignment from one party being a decline in the strength of party identification, and evidence of dealignment from both parties being the growth of vote switching between elections and split-ticket voting (Crewe, 1980).

Northpoth and Rusk (1982) in their study of the post-1964 dealignment, attributed dealignment to the changing age composition of the electorate, the suppression of age gains in partisanship, party “desertion” among voters already in the electorate, and the entry of new voters with lower partisanship levels into the electorate. Northpoth and

Rusk (1982) stressed that dealignment could occur across the entire electorate, but that younger voters were most susceptible to the forces of dealignment.

Paul Beck (1974) attributed dealignment to the aging of an alignment, when generations are physically and psychologically far removed from the issues and agendas which originally formed a realignment to occur. Beck (1974) attributes dealignment to these “children of normal politics”.

Edward Carmines, John McIver, and James Stimson (1987) developed a theory of dealignment that specified three factors: the vividness of the existing alignment, the stability of the issue agenda, and the ambiguity of party issue positions. According to Carmines, McIver, and Stimson (1987) these three factors conditioned the extent to which new voters were socialized into the existing party alignment. As these factors or conditions became less favorable, voters failed to realize their partisanship. Carmines, McIver, and Stimson (1987) attributed unrealized partisanship as most predominant among voters with issue attitudes that were sharply at odds with the partisanship that was inherited from their parents. According to Carmines, McIver, and Stimson (1987) dealignment is largely an issues driven phenomenon, and leaves open the possibility that unrealized partisans or independents may one day realign, adopting a partisanship that is more in line with their policy preferences.

As the study of party realignment and party dealignment has undergone dramatic changes over the last several decades, so has the study of religion and party realignment. The vast majority of the religion and party realignment literature focuses on the realignment of Evangelicals into the Republican Party.

In my review of the religion and party realignment literature, many of the authors point to the fact that the realignment of Evangelicals into the Republican Party has played an important factor in the realignment of Southern Democrats into the Republican Party, as a very large majority of Evangelicals live in the South (Layman, 2001; Oldfield, 1996; Guth and Green, 1991; Rozell and Wilcox, 1995; 1996). Many of the authors examine the history and reengagement of the Evangelical movement into politics (Oldfield, 1996; Rozell and Wilcox, 1996) from the 1950's to the present day, with special emphasis placed on the emergence of the Moral Majority and the New Christian Right in 1970's and 1980's and the Christian Coalition in the 1990's. The focus of the reemergence of the Evangelical movement into politics via the Moral Majority and the New Christian Right and later the Christian Coalition started in the political battlegrounds of the South (Oldfield, 1996; Rozell and Wilcox, 1995; 1996). The emergence of the candidacy of Ronald Reagan in 1980 was an important outlet for social conservatives and Evangelicals to utilize the strength they had gained through the Moral Majority (Miller and Jennings, 1986). Several of the authors point to the importance of the candidacy of Ronald Reagan in 1980 in drawing Evangelicals into the Republican Party (Kellstedt, 1989; Miller and Jennings, 1986; and Layman, 2001). Layman (2001) and Oldfield (1996) believe that Evangelical Protestants exhibited very low levels of political participation until the cultural conservatism of the Christian Right and Ronald Reagan drew them into Republican politics in the early 1980's.

Another critical election in religion's role in the party realignment of the United States was the 1988 presidential election and the candidacy of Pat Robertson (Guth and Green, 1991; Oldfield, 1996; Rozell and Wilcox, 1995; 1996). Though this was a losing election for Robertson, it brought a political sophistication and organization to the New Christian Right, and was the impetus for the founding of the Christian Coalition in 1989. The compilation *The Bible and the Ballot Box: Religion and Politics in the 1988 Election* (Guth and Green, 1991) and Oldfield's *The Right and the Righteous* (1996) provide keen insight into Robertson's campaign and how it brought thousands of Evangelical activists into the Republican Party in the South. Many scholars in these readings believe that the formation of the Christian Coalition in 1989 and its continuous involvement in the State Republican Party conventions, caucuses, and grassroots campaigning turned Evangelicals into a potent weapon for the Republican Party (Rozell and Wilcox, 1996). In the works of Layman (2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986), the authors make a strong case for how party activists such as campaign workers and delegates can bring about not only elite change in the party, but also changes in the parties' mass coalitions, and eventually voter perceptions of the party. Both Layman (2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) make the case that activists in the party can bring about changes not only in the attitudes of traditional party members and delegates, but that they can bring about change in candidates' positions on critical social issues. Layman (2001) believes that the emergence of the Evangelicals and social conservatives of the Christian Coalition in the Republican

Party is beneficial to the party in the short term. Many scholars believe that the realignment of Evangelicals was a critical factor in the Republicans winning a Republican majority in the United States House of Representatives for the first time in 40 years and winning a majority in the US Senate (Rozell and Wilcox, 1995; and Green, Guth, Smidt, and Kellstedt, 1996). Many scholars believe that the 1994 Elections were the finalization of the realignment of Evangelicals into the Republican Party (Rozell and Wilcox, 1995; and Green, Guth, Smidt, and Kellstedt, 1996).

However many of the scholars in these readings are not content with limiting the role of religion in a realignment of the parties to just Evangelicals or the Southern region of the United States. Many scholars such as Geoffrey Layman (1997; 1999; 2001) believe that something much broader and deeper is at work in the American electorate. Layman (1997; 1999; 2001) believes the electorate is splitting into two camps – the religious and the non-religious, with the Republican Party growing to be more religious and the Democratic Party growing more secular. Many of the scholars on religion and politics agree with his assessment. However, these scholars disagree as to how fast and how deep this is occurring among other historically Democratic groups besides Evangelicals, such as Catholics and Jews. Ted Jelen (1997) disagrees with Lyman Kellstedt's assessment in *Religion and the Cultural Wars: Dispatches from the Front* (1996) that regular church attending Catholics are beginning to play a role in Republican victories such as the election of 1994.

In their studies of party activists in both parties through data on party delegates, Layman (1999; 2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) reveal how the parties are changing

over time and are polarizing over social and cultural issues. The Republican Party is becoming more religious and socially conservative and the Democratic Party is becoming more socially liberal and secular (Layman, 1999; 2001 and Miller and Jennings, 1986). Layman (1999; 2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) see this polarization of the parties as a result of the initial polarization of party elites and activists on social issues such as abortion and gay rights. Layman (1999; 2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) also believe that candidates and strategic politicians were able to move their party elites to the left or right by bringing into their respective parties issues that are more extreme. Layman (1999; 2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) point to the Democratic convention of 1972 and the Republican convention of 1980 as critical years in the polarization of the parties. In 1972 secular activists were able to seize control of the Democratic convention emphasizing abortion rights, gay rights, and women's rights. In 1980, Evangelicals and social conservatives were able to exert strong influence in the Republican Party emphasizing pro-life, prayer in school, and other socially conservative issues. Layman (2001) and Miller and Jennings (1986) believe that these changes in the party activists, where more moderate members of the party are disengaging, is having an effect on the parties mass coalitions and even the candidates. Candidates are adopting more of the extreme social positions of their parties in order to win their parties nomination and this is having an effect on the political process. Candidates and their mass coalitions in their party are following the lead of the party activists and it is resulting in more and more polarization of the parties (Layman 1999; 2001).

Layman (2001) believes that this polarization on social issues will continue, but not at the pace of the 1990's. He sees the GOP as having an initial advantage in the struggle, but sees neither party being able to greatly expand their coalition further (Layman, 2001). Layman (2001) believes that this traditionalist-modernist cleavage between the Republicans and the Democrats will continue well into the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Layman (2001) believes that the party activists, party members' votes in Congress and party platforms will continue to polarize for the respective parties on social and cultural issues. This polarization will translate to public perceptions about the parties, and the mass electorate will further polarize. Neither party will be able to expand their base or coalition, as they will be unwilling to compromise on issues (Layman, 2001). Party positions on issues will hamper GOP efforts to appeal to Catholics, Jews and African-American Evangelicals, and Democrat efforts to enlist high income, economically conservative voters concerned about social welfare issues (Layman, 2001).

Another key issue covered by the literature regarding the role of religion in realignment of the parties in the United States is how strong is the religious right foothold in the Republican Party? This is best answered by looking at what concessions have the GOP really made to Evangelicals and the Christian Right. Oldfield (1996) and Rozell and Wilcox (1995; 1996) conclude that the Christian Right began to have success in state-level politics after Pat Robertson's failed 1988 bid for President. Layman (2001) states that the Christian Right has been so successful that it has resulted in a significant counter mobilization effort by groups such as the Call for Renewal and the Interfaith Alliance.

Layman (2001) and Oldfield (1996) and Rozell and Wilcox (1995;1996) in their respective works conclude that the Christian Right, religious and traditionalist conservatives have become the backbone of the GOP Coalition and represent a disproportionate share of GOP Primary voters and caucus participants. Oldfield (1996) and Rozell and Wilcox (1995; 1996) argue that GOP candidates simply cannot win a nomination from their party without the support of the Christian right and religious and traditionalist conservatives. Layman (2001) in his work concludes that committed Evangelicals are the Republican Party's most loyal campaign workers and electoral backers; so Republican nominees cannot hope to win a general election without their support. Oldfield (1996) states that the Christian right has accumulated too much power to leave the GOP through its strong influence on party nominations, party platforms, and control of party machinery in States and localities. Oldfield (1996) concludes that the national GOP has made serious concessions to the Christian Right and social conservatives. Republican Presidents are expected to appoint conservative judges who will restrict abortion rights, and Republican members of Congress are strongly encouraged to vote in favor of the restriction of federal funds for abortion, in favor of school prayer, the restricting of rights of homosexuals, and the maintaining of traditional family structures (Oldfield, 1996). Oldfield (1996) concludes that the religious right is here to stay in the Republican Party. Rozell and Wilcox (1996) in their case study analysis of the Christian Right in the State Republican Party of Virginia reveal a party that is controlled by the Christian Right. In their case study the authors' find the Christian Right and social conservatives have developed a complex and sophisticated structure in

the Virginia GOP that will ensure that it will be a player for years to come (Rozell and Wilcox, 1996). The Rozell and Wilcox (1996) Virginia case study reveals a Christian Right that has matured and willing to support candidates for the sake of being a part of a winning coalition that is awarded key appointments and policy victories in exchange for its support. It is clear from the literature that scholars agree that the Christian Right is a dynamic part of the Republican Party and is not going anywhere anytime soon.

The religion and party realignment literature focuses heavily on the realignment of Evangelicals into the Republican Party, and the strength of their organization and policy hold on the Republican Party and its elected officials, candidates, and delegates. As Evangelicals realigned from the Democratic Party over social issues such as abortion rights, gay rights, and women's rights, it would reason that Catholics, who share similar traditional values on these key issues may be beginning to realign as well, forming an alliance with Evangelicals in the Republican Party. The importance of the abortion issue in the realignment of Evangelicals, and the fact that Catholics hold an identical pro-life position warrants the study of the realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party.

Evangelicals and Catholics shared pro-life issue position on abortion is significant, as several scholars have concluded that the abortion issue is a strong predictor of party identification (Adams, 1997; Jelen and Wilcox, 2003) and vote choice (Cook, Jelen and Wilcox, 1992; 1994a; 1994b; Howell and Sims, 1993; Smith, 1994; Abramowitz, 1995; Jelen and Wilcox, 2003). Some scholars assert that given the consistency of abortion attitudes over time, the evolution of party issue positions on abortion indicates that individuals have changed their partisanship over time because of

the abortion issue (Adams, 1997). The importance, consistency, and saliency of abortion attitudes and the dynamic changes of party positions on abortion over time with the evolution of a “pro-choice” Democratic Party and a “pro-life” Republican Party (Adams, 1997; Layman 2001) warrants the study of the party realignment into the Republican Party of constituency groups such as Catholics who may hold a pro-life position similar to Evangelicals.

The literature on the realigning of Catholics into the Republican Party with Evangelicals is limited with considerable focus on efforts by the Christian Coalition to form alliances with Catholics, such as the creation of the Catholic Alliance in 1995 (Appleby, 1997; Bendyna, Green, Rozell, and Wilcox, 2000; 2001). In their examination of Catholic Republican delegates to State Republican conventions in Florida, Texas, Minnesota, Washington, and Virginia; Bendyna, Green, Rozell, and Wilcox (2000; 2001) show that Catholics are willing to form coalitions with activists of the Christian Right, but remain reluctant to join Christian Right organizations. Bendyna, Green, Rozell, and Wilcox (2000; 2001) show that despite some variation between the different States, Catholic Republican delegates hold issue positions in line with the Christian Right and have positive feelings toward Christian Right leaders and organizations, but have some reluctance to join such groups. This reluctance to officially join groups such as the Christian Coalition is attributed to Catholics’ distinctive and unique issue positions that vary from Evangelicals such as the death penalty, creationism, and the social welfare net (Leege and Welch, 1991; Appleby, 1997; Bendyna, Green, Rozell, and Wilcox, 2000; 2001). In addition, to theological and ecclesiastical differences, some scholars assert that

Catholic reluctance to join Christian Right organizations may be because of feelings by Catholics of anti-Catholic bias among Evangelical groups (Perl and Bendyna, 2002). These feelings of anti-Catholic bias among Evangelical groups may be strongest in areas such as the South where Catholics are greatly outnumbered by Evangelicals, and ironically, where the Christian Coalition is the strongest (Perl and Bendyna, 2002). The literature focusing on the realigning of Catholics with Evangelicals into the Republican Party, also focuses on the challenge of the plurality and diversity of Catholic religious and political culture since the Vatican II Council of 1962 to 1965 (Appleby, 1997). According to some scholars, the plurality and diversity of the Catholic Church since the Vatican II Council is the result of the creation of a mixture of cultures in the Church not only based on age cohorts, but also on various opinions on the locus of religious authority in the Catholic Church (Pogorelc and Davidson, 2000). This plurality and diversity in the Church has resulted in a majority of Catholics who view their Church as a blend of two cultures; a pre-Vatican II culture of religious authority based on the hierarchy and institutions of the Church, and a post-Vatican II culture of religious authority that is internal and embedded in one's own experience (Pogorelc and Davidson, 2000). The plurality, diversity and debate over Church culture, especially among American Catholics, has resulted in a diversity of opinion on the Church's teachings, including abortion, birth control, death penalty, and gay marriage. This diversity and plurality among Catholics is important in examining the realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party, and if they are realigning based on identification of shared issues with Evangelicals. Among the youngest cohort, the post-Vatican II generation, 21% of

Catholics believe in the religious authority of the Church's teachings over their own experience, and this may be important in understanding the realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party (Pogorelc and Davidson, 2000).

The religion and party realignment literature focuses on the strong role that Evangelicals have played in a political realignment, where their movement from the Democratic Party to the Republicans has resulted in the Republican Party being the majority party in the near foreseeable future. The religion and party realignment literature is also helpful in understanding that there is a national party realignment in motion in which the parties are splitting the country between the religious and the secular and the socially conservative and the socially liberal. These trends will continue for a long time to come as Evangelicals have a strong hold in the Republican Party and have become a mature and sophisticated player. Will the Evangelical's strong hold in the Republican Party bring along Catholics as well as Jews and African-American Evangelicals? The literature here is limited on Catholics and inconclusive. More research should be done in this area to look for growing trends. For more research evidence of Catholic's voting behavior, especially among younger voters, could help to better understand if religion and party realignment will transcend beyond Evangelicals.

## **Theory and Hypotheses**

### ***Theory***

After a review of the literature, it is clear that more scientific testing of theory and hypotheses need to be undertaken in the area of religion and party realignment in United States and Catholics. For this study, I would like to test the following theory: Catholics

are realigning over time into the Republican Party, further solidifying the majority realignment in the country. Church Attending Catholics have realigned into the Republican Party, indicating that the Catholic electorate has split into religious and non-religious groupings. The more a Catholic attends church the more likely he will vote Republican over time. The realignment of church attending Catholics is a result of their identification with socially conservative issue positions important to Evangelicals such as abortion.

Within the framework of any theory on party realignment, in today's destructuring of western society an alternative theory or hypothesis of partisan dealignment is worthy of consideration (Dalton et. al, 1985; Carmines, McIver, and Stimson 1987; Legee and Welch, 1989). The alternative theory to the realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party because of their religiosity and issue positions is the dealignment of church attending Catholics from the Democratic Party because of their pro-life position on the important issue of abortion.

### *Hypotheses*

In order to proceed with the scientific testing of the above theory, I have developed the following hypotheses for the study of religion and party realignment and Catholics.

**Hypothesis 1:** Over time Catholics are increasingly becoming more Republican in vote choice and Party Identification.

**Hypothesis 2:** Over time Catholics who attend church frequently are increasingly more likely to vote Republican.

**Hypothesis 3:** Over time Catholics who hold a socially conservative position on abortion are increasingly more likely to vote Republican.

**Hypothesis 4:** Over time Catholics who attend church frequently are increasingly more likely to identify as Republican.

**Hypothesis 5:** Over time Catholics who hold a socially conservative position on abortion are increasingly more likely to identify as Republican.

## **Data and Methods**

### ***Data***

For my quantitative analysis of the above theory and hypotheses for my study, I will be utilizing data from the National Election Studies.

I will be utilizing the National Election Studies Cumulative Data File, 1948 to 2004 from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research at the University of Michigan (ICPSR Study #8475). This is a pre and post survey of voters from across the country in every Presidential election and a post election survey of every mid-term election from 1948 to 2004 except the election of 1950. This data set has 46,226 cases (un-weighted  $n=46,226$ ). Over the years the most common NES Study design has been a cross section equal probability sample. The Cumulative Data File is a file of cross-sectional cases from time series election studies that have been pooled together. A variable in the data represents a question that has been asked in at least three time-series studies. The variables are coded in a comparable fashion over the years. The research design for this study of Religion and Party Realignment is a time series design that pools together cross-sectional cases from the Presidential and mid-term election years from 1960 to 2004 and 1980 to 2004. This pooled data from Presidential and mid

term elections from 1960 to 2004 and 1980 to 2004 has a combined un-weighted number of cases of 40,526 and 23,290 respectively. The NES surveyed individuals from across the country before and after the Presidential elections, and after mid-term elections from 1960 to 2004. The variables have been recoded to be consistent over time, and questions are not necessarily coded the same way in this dataset as they are in the election study datasets from which they came. This data was selected because it is particularly useful in analysis that focuses on over time change in citizens, in their individual characteristics, in the opinions they hold, and in their political behavior, and in analysis that is concerned with replicating results over several elections. These surveys consist of raw data from Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research.

### ***Variables***

For my analysis of religion and party realignment and Catholics in the United States, I will employ two dependent variables, two lagged dependent variables and eleven independent variables that will be utilized in analysis of the National Election Studies Cumulative Data File.

**Dependent Variable:** Republican Party Vote for President. For Republican vote choice in Presidential elections, I will utilize Party of the President vote (Republican or Democrat- 2 Major Parties). Republican Party Vote for President has the variable values of 0= Democrat and 1 = Republican. This variable has a level of measurement that is nominal. Presidential Elections have been selected because these elections have higher voter turnout. Vote choice is one of the best indicators of a respondent's partisanship.

**Dependent Variable:** Republican Party Identification. I will utilize a two category Party ID of respondent, Republican or Democrat/Independent. This variable is the collapsed three category Party ID variable. Republican Party Identification has the coded variable values of 0= Democrat/Independent, and 1= Republican. This variable has a level of measurement that is nominal. Party Identification is a strong indicator of a respondent's partisanship and one of most accurate ways to measure true partisanship.

**Lagged Dependent Variable:** Republican Party Vote for President (T-1). This is the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President minus 1 lag for time. The lagged dependent variable is included in order to control for autocorrelation.

**Lagged Dependent Variable:** Republican Party Identification (T-1). This is the dependent variable Party Identification minus 1 lag for time. The lagged dependent variable is included in order to control for autocorrelation.

**Independent Variable:** Catholic. Conceptual definition for religion is belonging to a denomination of believers. The level of measurement is nominal. This two category variable contains respondents who will identify themselves as of the Roman Catholic denomination. It also contains respondents who identify themselves as non-Roman Catholic. It is the collapse of the four category religion variable. Catholic has the collapsed recoded variable values of 0= No (Non-Catholic) and 1= Yes (Catholic).

**Independent Variable:** Church Attendance. Church attendance is strong indicator and measure of religiosity. Religiosity is the concept of how strong is an individual's religious commitment, religious involvement, and religiousness. Church Attendance is a

collapsed two category variable, and has a level of measurement that is nominal. Church Attendance has the collapsed recoded variable values of 0= Non-Frequent Church Attendee and 1= Frequent Church Attendee. The strength of the variable is that it is one of the simplest indicators of religiosity and involvement. The weakness of the variable is that it may not account for differences in religiosity within denominations.

**Independent Variable:** Opinion on Abortion. This collapsed two-category variable identifies the respondent's answers to the question, "By Law, When Should Abortion Be Allowed?" as either a Pro-Choice or Pro-Life position. The level of measurement for this variable is nominal. Opinion on Abortion has the collapsed recoded variable values of 0= Pro-Choice and 1= Pro-Life. A respondent's position on abortion is a strong indicator of a respondent's position on other key social issues such as gay rights, women's rights, and school prayer.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Age. This variable will be the age of the respondent in years. The level of measurement is ratio. As age is a very strong predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. Age is a strong predictor of partisanship, because the age cohort in which an individual belongs influences their vote choice and party identification. Age is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as the older a respondent, the more likely the respondent will vote or identify as a Republican and the younger a respondent, the more likely the respondent will vote or identify as a Democrat. The exception to this general rule is Senior Citizens, aged 65 and above, who tend to trend Democrat in Party Identification and Vote Choice.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Income. This five category variable is measured in percentile categories of household annual income of the respondent's family. The level of measurement is ordinal. As income is a very strong predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. Income is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as the higher a respondent's income, the more likely the respondent will vote or identify as a Republican.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Education. This four category variable is measured by the respondent's highest level of education reached: grade school, high school, some college, and college or advanced degree. The level of measurement is ordinal. As education is a very strong predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. Education is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as the higher a respondent's education, the more likely the respondent will vote or identify as a Republican.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Race. This two category variable identifies the race of the respondent: white or black. The level of measurement is nominal. As race is a very strong predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. This recoded variable has the variable values of 0= Black and 1= White.

Race is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as white respondents are more likely to vote or identify as a Republican, and African-American respondents are overwhelmingly more likely to vote or identify as a Democrat.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Gender. This two category variable identifies the gender of the respondent: male or female. This recoded variable has the variable values of 0= Male and 1= Female. The level of measurement is nominal. As gender is a very strong predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. Gender is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as male respondents are more likely to vote or identify as a Republican, and female respondents are more likely to vote or identify as a Democrat.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Region. This two category variable identifies the region of the country that the respondent is from: Non-South or South. This recoded variable has the variable values of 0= Non-South and 1= South. The level of measurement in this two category variable is nominal. As region can be a predictor of vote choice and party identification, it is an important control variable in looking at the relationship of religion and partisanship. Region is a strong predictor of vote choice and party identification as a respondent in the South is more likely to vote or identify as a Republican, than a respondent from another region of the country.

**Independent (Control) Variable:** Ideology. This variable is a three category placement scale collapsed from a seven point scale in which the respondent is identified as a liberal, moderate (middle of the road), or conservative. The level of measurement is ordinal. The

respondent is asked to place himself in response to the question: “ When it comes to politics, do you usually think of yourself as extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road, slightly conservative, extremely conservative, or haven’t you thought much about this?” Ideology is included as a control variable because of the importance of ideology placed by some scholars in the realignment of the parties (Miller and Shanks, 1996; Abramowitz and Sanders, 1998; Bowler, Nicholson, and Segura, 2006). Scholars believe that conservatives are more likely to vote Republican than moderates or liberals, and to align themselves with the Republican Party.

**Independent (Interactive) Variable:** Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion. This is a two category variable that is the multiplication of the variable Church Attendance times the variable Opinion on Abortion. The level of measurement is nominal. I have included an interaction effect between Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion because of the significance of these two variables on Catholic. In a bivariate analysis of Catholic and Opinion on Abortion, the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant at  $p < .001$  level, with 4.9% more Catholics holding a Pro-Life position than Non-Catholics. In a bivariate analysis of Catholic and Church Attendance, the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant at  $p < .001$  level, with 10.1% more Catholics being frequent church attendees than Non-Catholics. The fact that Catholics are more likely to attend church more frequently and hold a Pro-life position than Non-Catholics, justified the inclusion of the independent interactive variable Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion in the regression models.

**Independent (Interactive) Variable:** Catholic x Church Attendance. This is a two category variable that is the multiplication of the variable Catholic times the variable Church Attendance. The level of measurement is nominal. The fact that Catholics are more likely to attend church more frequently than Non-Catholics, justified the inclusion of the independent interactive variable Catholic x Church Attendance in the regression models.

**Independent (Interactive) Variable:** Catholic x Opinion on Abortion. This is a two category variable that is the multiplication of the variable Catholic times the variable Opinion on Abortion. The level of measurement is nominal. The fact that Catholics are more likely to hold a Pro-life position than Non-Catholics, justified the inclusion of the independent interactive variable Catholic x Opinion on Abortion in the regression models.

### ***Methods***

These variables will be analyzed through univariate analysis and bivariate analysis of the dependent variables and the key independent variable Catholic, and multivariate analysis of the dependent and independent variables, including the control and interactive variables, utilizing logistical regression.

My first multivariate analysis model will be a logistical regression with the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party ID. My second multivariate analysis model will be a logistical regression with the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President.

When dichotomous dependent variables are used, it may be useful to employ probit analysis rather than OLS multiple regression (Aldrich and Nelson, 1984). Beck and Katz (1995) show that ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates of the parameters in pooled models are consistent, while Beck and Tucker (1996) show that logit coefficients in pooled models with dichotomous dependent variables are also consistent.

### ***Data Analysis and Findings***

In my data analysis, I examined the variables through univariate analysis of the dependent variables Republican Party Identification and Republican Party Vote for President, and the independent variable Catholic, bivariate analysis of the dependent variables and the key independent variable Catholic (including with the layer Church Attendance and with the layer Opinion on Abortion), and multivariate analysis of the dependent and independent variables, including control and interactive variables, utilizing logistical regression.

For my univariate analysis, I examined the independent variable Catholic and the dependent variables Republican Party ID and Republican Party Vote for President from 1960 to 2004. For my bivariate analysis, I examined the dependent variables Republican Party Identification and Republican Party Vote for President and the key independent variable Catholic across the time frame from 1960 to 2004. I also performed additional bivariate analyses of the dependent variables and the independent variable Catholic, one with the layer Church Attendance, and another with the layer Opinion on Abortion. This method of layering enables for a deeper bivariate analysis of the Catholic independent variable and the dependent variables across the time period from 1960 to 2004. For

bivariate analyses with the dependent variable Republican Party ID and the independent variable Catholic, I will analyze the Presidential and mid-term elections from 1960 to 2004. In my bivariate analysis of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President and the independent variable Catholic, I will analyze the Presidential elections from 1960 to 2004. For my multivariate analysis, I examined pooled data from 1980 to 2004.

In my univariate analysis of the independent variable Catholic, I examined the years from 1960 to 2004. In 1960, 20% of respondents identified themselves as Catholics. In 2004, 25% of respondents identified themselves as Catholics. This represents a 5% increase in the number of Catholic respondents across the country from 1960 to 2004. This percentage change represents a steady increase in the number of Catholics from 1960 to 2004. The highest percentage of respondents identifying as Catholics was in the year 1998, with 31% of respondents identifying as Catholic. The lowest percentage of respondents identifying as Catholics was in 1970 with 19% of respondents identifying as Catholics. In examining the number of Catholics respondents, it is important to note that the size of the Catholic population is steadily growing over time, and this stresses the importance of the Catholic vote.

In my univariate analysis of the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Identification, I examined the years from 1960 to 2004. In 1960, 36% of respondents identified themselves as Republicans. In 2004, 41% of respondents identified themselves as Republicans. This represents a 5% increase in the Republican Party Identification across the country from 1960 to 2004. This percentage change represents a

steady increase in Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004. The highest percentage of respondents identifying as Republican was in 2002, with 43% of respondents identifying as Republican. The lowest percentage in Republican Party Identification was in 1964 and 1978, with 30% of respondents identifying as Republican. The second highest percentage of Republican Party Identification was in 1988, 1994, and 2004, with 41% of the respondents identifying as Republican. The second lowest percentage in Republican Party Identification was in 1974, with 31% of the respondents identifying as Republican. In examining Republican Party Identification, the years 1988, 1994, 2002, and 2004 are critical elections years that may indicate a potential realignment of specific groups into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification.

I then performed a bivariate analysis of the dependent variable Republican Party ID and the independent variable Catholic. As the independent variable Catholic is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party ID is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1960 to 2004. It was discovered that the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party ID is statistically significant in the year 1960 with the value of "v" being .175 and the Chi-square statistic being  $<.001$ . From 1960 to 1978, the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party ID remained statistically significant with the average value of "v" being .117 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.001$ . This includes the critical election year of 1972, where Catholic and Republican Party ID was statistically significant with the value of "v" being .121 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.001$ . In 1980, the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party ID becomes weak with the value of "v" being at

.041 and the chi-square statistic being  $>.05$ . However in the years 1982, 1984, 1992, and 1994 the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party ID is statistically significant with the average value of “v” being .075 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.05$ . In 1982 and 1984, the chi-square statistic is  $<.001$ . In 1992, the chi-square statistic is  $<.05$  and in 1994, the chi-square statistic is  $<.01$ . A weak relationship between Catholic and Republican Party ID exists in the years 1986 to 1990, and from 1996 to 2004, where the average value of ‘v’ is .024 and the chi-square statistic is  $>.05$ . In Table 1 is the crosstabulation of the variable Catholic and Republican Party ID for Presidential and Mid-term elections from 1960 to 2004.

Table 1

## Catholic and Republican Party Identification 1960 to 2004

<i>Year</i>	<i>GOP Party ID</i>	<i>Non-Catholic % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic % (n)</i>
1960	Dem/Independent	59.9 (929)	81.3 (292)
	Republican	40.1(623)	18.7 (67)
	Total	100.0(1552)	100.0(359)
		V= .175***	
1962	Dem/Independent	62.6(643)	75.8 (197)
	Republican	37.4(384)	24.2 (63)
	Total	100.0(1027)	100.0(260)
		V= .111***	
1964	Dem/Independent	67.2 (811)	78.5 (270)
	Republican	32.8 (395)	21.5 (74)
	Total	100.0(1206)	100.0(344)
		V= .102***	
1966	Dem/Independent	65.1 (651)	79.1 (220)
	Republican	34.9 (349)	20.9 (58)
	Total	100.0(1000)	100.0(278)
		V= .124***	
1968	Dem/Independent	64.6 (785)	76.6 (258)
	Republican	35.4 (431)	23.4 (79)
	Total	100.0(1216)	100.0 (337)
		V= .105***	
1970	Dem/Independent	65.5 (794)	76.8 (222)
	Republican	34.5 (418)	23.2 (67)
	Total	100.0(1212)	100.0 (289)
		V= .095***	
1972	Dem/Independent	62.9 (1293)	76.3 (487)
	Republican	37.1 (763)	23.7 (151)
	Total	100.0(2056)	100.0(638)
		V=.121***	
1974	Dem/Independent	67.0 (1319)	77.8 (418)
	Republican	33.0 (649)	22.2 (119)
	Total	100.0(1968)	100.0(537)
		V= .096***	
1976	Dem/Independent	64.2 (1377)	75.6 (534)
	Republican	35.8 (768)	24.4 (172)
	Total	100.0(2145)	100.0(706)
		V= .105***	
1978	Dem/Independent	66.9 (1162)	79.5 (434)
	Republican	33.1 (575)	20.5(112)
	Total	100.0(1737)	100.0(546)
		V= .117***	
1980	Dem/Independent	66.3 (823)	70.8 (262)
	Republican	33.7 (419)	29.2 (108)
	Total	100.0(1242)	100.0(370)
		V= .041	
1982	Dem/Independent	65.5(719)	77.6 (243)
	Republican	34.5(379)	22.4 (70)
	Total	100.0(1098)	100.0(313)
		V= .108***	
1984	Dem/Independent	58.3(966)	67.0 (387)
	Republican	41.7(692)	33.0 (191)
	Total	100.0(1658)	100.0(578)
		V= .078***	
1986	Dem/Independent	63.1 (1045)	67.6 (345)
	Republican	36.9 (611)	32.4 (165)
	Total	100.0(1656)	100.0(510)
		V= .040	

<i>1988</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>58.5(906)</b>	<b>61.4 (296)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>41.5(644)</b>	<b>38.6 (186)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1550)</b>	<b>100.0(482)</b>
		V=.026	
<i>1990</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>63.1(932)</b>	<b>65.4 (319)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>36.9(546)</b>	<b>34.6 (169)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1478)</b>	<b>100.0(488)</b>
		V= .021	
<i>1992</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>61.2 (1157)</b>	<b>66.6 (389)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>38.8 (733)</b>	<b>33.4 (195)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1890)</b>	<b>100.0(584)</b>
		V= .047*	
<i>1994</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>56.2 (766)</b>	<b>64.2 (272)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>43.8 (598)</b>	<b>35.8(152)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1364)</b>	<b>100.0(424)</b>
		V= .069**	
<i>1996</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>61.2 (790)</b>	<b>63.8(268)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>38.8 (500)</b>	<b>36.2 (152)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1290)</b>	<b>100.0(420)</b>
		V= .023	
<i>1998</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>63.3 (569)</b>	<b>62.9(236)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>36.7 (330)</b>	<b>37.1(139)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(899)</b>	<b>100.0(375)</b>
		V=.003	
<i>2000</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>62.6(837)</b>	<b>60.2 (275)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>37.4(499)</b>	<b>39.8 (182)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1336)</b>	<b>100.0 (457)</b>
		V= .002	
<i>2002</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>56.0 (615)</b>	<b>51.9 (202)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>44.0 (484)</b>	<b>48.1 (187)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(1099)</b>	<b>100.0 (389)</b>
		V= .036	
<i>2004</i>	<b>Dem/Independent</b>	<b>58.8(535)</b>	<b>61.9(179)</b>
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>41.2(375)</b>	<b>38.1(110)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0(910)</b>	<b>100.0(289)</b>
		V=.027	

\*\*\*chi-square statistic significant at <.001 level

\*\*chi-square statistic significant at <.01 level

\*chi-square statistic significant at <.05 level

In 1960, only 18.7% of Catholic respondents identified themselves as Republicans. Over the course of time the percent of Catholics identifying as Republicans has increased with 23.7% of Catholic respondents identifying as Republicans in 1972, 29.2% of Catholic respondents identifying as Republicans in 1980, and 38.1% of Catholics identifying as Republicans in 2004. This analysis indicates that there has been a 19.4% increase in Republican Party Identification among Catholics. In addition to the

large percentage change in Catholic Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004, there has been a minimal percentage change in Non-Catholic Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004. Among Non-Catholics, Republican Party Identification has essentially remained the same with a very small 1.1% increase. The crosstab percentages would indicate a strong realignment of Catholics in Party Identification and support my hypothesis that Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in several time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the crosstab percentages may indicate that Catholics are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. In addition, Catholics' Republican Party Identification over time from 1960 to 2004 has become more aligned with non-Catholics. This may indicate that Catholics may be dealigning from the Democratic Party not just solely on the basis of being Catholic, but based on other factors such as religiosity and social issue positions. It is worth exploring deeper through layered bivariate analysis and regression analysis what those factors may be that are causing Catholics to become more Republican in their Party Identification over time.

In my univariate analysis of the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President, I examined the years from 1960 to 2004. In 1960, 51% of respondents voted for the Republican Party candidate for President. In 2004, 50% of respondents voted for the Republican Party candidate for President. This represents a minimal one percent decrease in the Republican Party Presidential vote across the country from 1960 to 2004. This percentage change is so small, that it amounts to the

Republican Party Presidential vote remaining essentially the same from 1960 to 2004. The highest percentage vote for the Republican Party Presidential candidate was in 1972, with 64% of respondents voting Republican. The lowest percentage vote for the Republican candidate for President was in 1964 with 32% of respondents voting Republican. The second highest percentage vote for the Republican Party Presidential candidate was in 1984, with 58% of the respondents voting Republican. The second lowest percentage vote for the Republican Party Presidential candidate was in 1992 and 1996, with 42% of the respondents voting Republican. In examining the Republican Party Presidential vote, the years 1972 and 1984 are critical elections years that may indicate a potential realignment of specific groups into the Republican Party in the area of Presidential vote choice.

I then performed a bivariate analysis of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President and the independent variable Catholic. As the independent variable Catholic is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1960 to 2004. It was discovered that the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President is statistically significant in the year 1960 with the value of "v" being .361 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.001$ . In the years 1964 and 1968, the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President remained statistically significant with the values of "v" being .136 and .156 respectively and the chi-square statistics being  $<.001$  for both years. However in 1972, the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President becomes weak with the value

of “v” being at .046 and the chi-square statistic being  $>.05$ . This weak relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President continues to 2004, where the value of ‘v’ is .017 and the chi-square statistic is  $>.05$ . However, there are exceptions for this period from 1972 to 2004 in the years 1976 and 1988. In 1976, the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President is statistically significant with the value of “v” being .081 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.01$ . In 1988 the relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President is statistically significant with the value of “v” being .068 in 1988, and the chi-square statistic being  $<.05$ . In Table 2 is the crosstabulation of the variable Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President for the elections of 1960 to 2004.

Table 2

## Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President 1960 to 2004

<i>Year</i>	<i>GOP Vote Pres</i>	<i>Non-Catholic % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic % (n)</i>
1960	Democrat	39.4(434)	82.7(263)
	Republican	60.6(667)	17.3(55)
	Total	100.0 (1101)	100.0(318)
		V= .361 ***	
1964	Democrat	63.9(536)	78.7(214)
	Republican	36.1(303)	21.3(58)
	Total	100.0(839)	100.0(272)
		V= .136 ***	
1968	Democrat	41.7 (285)	59.8(131)
	Republican	58.3 (399)	40.2(88)
	Total	100.0(684)	100.0(219)
		V= .156 ***	
1972	Democrat	34.4(406)	39.5(159)
	Republican	65.6(775)	60.5(244)
	Total	100.0(1181)	100.0(403)
		V= .046	
1976	Democrat	48.8(592)	58.1(241)
	Republican	51.2(622)	41.9(174)
	Total	100.0(1214)	100.0(415)
		V= .081 **	
1980	Democrat	43.1(290)	45.5(90)
	Republican	56.9(383)	54.5(108)
	Total	100.0(673)	100.0(198)
		V= .020	
1984	Democrat	40.3(400)	46.0(174)
	Republican	59.7 (593)	54.0(204)
	Total	100.0(993)	100.0(378)
		V= .052	
1988	Democrat	45.2(401)	52.9(162)
	Republican	54.8(486)	47.1(144)
	Total	100.0(887)	100.0(306)
		V= .068*	
1992	Democrat	57.3(587)	62.4(204)
	Republican	42.7(437)	37.6(123)
	Total	100.0(1024)	100.0(327)
		V= .044	
1996	Democrat	57.5(429)	59.7(160)
	Republican	42.5(317)	40.3(108)
	Total	100.0(746)	100.0(268)
		V= .020	
2000	Democrat	53.5(423)	50.3(161)
	Republican	46.5(368)	49.7(159)
	Total	100.0(791)	100.0(320)
		V= .029	
2004	Democrat	48.8(295)	50.8(100)
	Republican	51.2(310)	49.2(97)
	Total	100.0(605)	100.0(197)
		V=.017	

\*\*\*chi-square statistic significant at &lt;.001 level

\*\*chi-square statistic significant at &lt;.01 level

\*chi-square statistic significant at &lt;.05 level

In 1960, only 17.3% of Catholic respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President. Over the course of time the percent of Catholics voting Republican for President increased, with 60.5 % of Catholic respondents voting for the Republican Presidential candidate in 1972. In 1980, 54.5% of Catholic respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President and in 2004, 49.2% of Catholic respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President. This analysis indicates that there has been a 31.9% increase in the Republican Party Presidential vote among Catholics since 1960. In addition to the large percentage change in the Catholic vote for the Republican Party candidate for President from 1960 to 2004, there has been a 9.4 % percentage decrease in the Non-Catholic Republican Party vote for President from 1960 to 2004. These changes in the Non-Catholic and Catholic vote for President over time have resulted in the Non-Catholic and Catholic vote being virtually indistinguishable from one another, as only a 2% difference in vote existed between the Catholic and Non-Catholic Presidential vote in 2004. The crosstab percentages would indicate a realignment of Catholics in the area of Presidential vote choice and support my hypothesis that Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in several time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the crosstab percentages may indicate that Catholics are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. The alignment of Catholics' Republican Presidential vote choice over time from 1960 to 2004 with non-Catholics may indicate that Catholics may be dealigning from the Democratic Party in the area of Presidential vote choice not just solely on the basis of being Catholic, but based on other factors such as religiosity and

social issue positions. It is worth exploring deeper through layered bivariate analysis and regression analysis what those factors may be that are causing Catholics to change their vote choice for President over time.

The third bivariate analysis that was performed was of the dependent variable Republican Party ID and the independent variable Catholic with Church Attendance as a layer, examining specifically Catholic Frequent Church Attendees. As the independent variable Catholic Frequent Church Attendees is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party ID is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1960 to 2004. It was discovered that the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID is statistically significant in the year 1960 with the value of "v" being .268 and the chi-square statistic being  $< .001$ . With the exception of 1980, from 1960 to 1996, the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID remained statistically significant with the average value of "v" being .142 and the chi-square statistic being  $< .05$ . However in 1980, the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID is weak with the value of "v" being at .035 and the chi-square statistic being  $> .05$ . This weak relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID then starts again in the 1998 election and continues from 1998 to 2004 during which the average value of 'v' is .017 and the chi-square statistic is  $> .05$ . In Table 3 is the crosstabulation of the variable Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID for the elections of 1960, 1972, 1980, and 2004.

**Table 3**

**Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Identification 1960,  
1972, 1980, 2004**

<i>Year and GOP Party ID</i>	<i>Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic Frequent Church Attendees % (n)</i>
<b>1960</b>		
Dem/Independent	53.8 (259)	82.6 (161)
Republican	46.2 (222)	17.4 (34)
Total	100.0(481)	100.0 (195)
	V= .268***	
<b>1972</b>		
Dem/Independent	57.5 (385)	74.7(245)
Republican	42.5 (285)	25.3(83)
Total	100.0 (670)	100.0(328)
	V= .168***	
<b>1980</b>		
Dem/Independent	59.9 (242)	63.6 (117)
Republican	40.1 (162)	36.4 (67)
Total	100.0(404)	100.0(184)
	V= .035	
<b>2004</b>		
Dem/Independent	54.9(174)	56.0(61)
Republican	45.1(143)	44.0 (48)
Total	100.0(317)	100.0(109)
	V= .009	

\*\*\*chi-square statistic significant at <.001 level

In 1960, only 17.4% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendee respondents identified themselves as Republicans. Over the course of time the percent of Catholic Frequent

Church Attendees identifying as Republicans has increased with 25.3% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendee respondents identifying as Republicans in 1972, 36.4% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendee respondents identifying as Republicans in 1980, and 44% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees identifying as Republicans in 2004. This analysis indicates that there has been a 26.6% increase in Republican Party Identification among Catholic Frequent Church Attendees. In addition to the large percentage change in Catholic Frequent Church Attendee Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004, there has been a small percentage change in Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendee Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004. Among Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees, Republican Party Identification has essentially remained the same with a small 1.1% decrease. The crosstab percentages indicate a strong realignment of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification and support my hypothesis that Church Attending Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in several time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the crosstab percentages may indicate that Catholics Frequent Church Attendees are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. The cross tab percentages indicate that Catholic Frequent Church Attendee's Republican Party Identification over time from 1960 to 2004 has become more aligned with non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees. This may indicate that Catholic Frequent Church Attendees may be dealigning from the Democratic Party not just solely on the basis of being Catholic, but on the basis of their religiosity. It is worth exploring deeper through

regression analysis however, what additional factors may be causing Catholic Frequent Church Attendees to change their Republican Party Identification over time, such as opinion on social issues such as abortion.

The fourth bivariate analysis that was performed was of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President and the independent variable Catholic with Church Attendance as a layer, examining specifically Catholic Frequent Church Attendees. As the independent variable Catholic Frequent Church Attendees is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1960 to 2004. It was discovered that the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President is strong and statistically significant in the year 1960 with the value of "v" being .52 and the chi-square statistic being  $<.001$ . From the years 1964 to 1976, the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President remained statistically significant with the average value of the Cramer's V being .174 and the chi-square statistics being  $<.001$ . However in 1980, the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President becomes weak with the value of "v" being at .012 and the chi-square statistic being  $>.05$ . In the election years of 1984 and 1988, the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President is statistically significant with "v" values of .12 and .13 respectively, and have a chi-square statistic of  $<.01$  for both years. However the weak relationship between Catholic and Republican Party Vote for President continues again from 1992 to 2004,

where the average value of 'v' is .069 and the average chi-square statistic is  $> .05$ . In Table 4 is the crosstabulation of the variable Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President focusing on the elections of 1960, 1972, 1980, and 2004.

**Table 4**

**Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party Vote for President  
1960, 1972, 1980, 2004**

<i>Year and GOP Vote Pres</i>	<i>Non-Catholic % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic % (n)</i>
<b>1960</b>		
Democrat	28.1(177)	84.7 (238)
Republican	71.9(452)	15.3 (43)
Total	100.0 (629)	100.0(281)
	V= .525***	
<b>1972</b>		
Democrat	25.2 (112)	39.6 (95)
Republican	74.8 (332)	60.4 (145)
Total	100.0 (444)	100.0(240)
	V=.149***	
<b>1980</b>		
Democrat	41.6 (112)	40.4(46)
Republican	58.4 (157)	59.6(68)
Total	100.0(269)	100.0(114)
	V= .012	
<b>2004</b>		
Democrat	43.2(99)	46.5 (40)
Republican	56.8(130)	53.5 (46)
Total	100.0(229)	100.0(86)
	V= .029	

\*\*\*chi-square statistic significant at <.001 level

In 1960, only 15.3% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees voted for the Republican candidate for President. Over the course of time the percent of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees voting Republican for President increased, with 60.4% of

Catholic Frequent Church Attendees voting for the Republican Presidential candidate in 1972. In 1980, 59.6% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendee respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President and in 2004, 53.5% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendee respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President. This analysis indicates that there has been a 38.2 % increase in the Republican Party Presidential vote among Catholic Frequent Church Attendees since 1960. In addition to the large percentage change in the Catholic Frequent Church Attendee vote for the Republican Party candidate for President from 1960 to 2004, there has been a 15.1 % percentage decrease in the Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendee Republican Party vote for President from 1960 to 2004. These changes in the Non-Catholic and Catholic Frequent Church Attendee Republican Presidential vote over time have resulted in the Non-Catholic and Catholic Frequent Church Attendee vote being virtually indistinguishable from one another, as only a 3.3% difference in vote existed between the Catholic and Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendee vote in 2004. The crosstab percentages indicate a realignment of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees, and support my hypothesis that Church Attending Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party in the area of Presidential vote choice. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in several time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the crosstab percentages may indicate that Catholic Frequent Church Attendees are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. In addition, Catholic Frequent Church Attendees' Republican Presidential vote choice over time from 1960 to 2004 has become more aligned with Frequent Church Attending Non-Catholics. This

indicates that Catholic Frequent Church Attendees are dealigning from the Democratic Party on the basis of their shared religiosity. However, it is worth exploring deeper through layered analysis and regression analysis what the others factors may be that are causing Catholic Frequent Church Attendees to change their Presidential vote choice over time such as opinion on social issues such as abortion.

The fifth bivariate analysis that was performed was of the dependent variable Republican Party ID and the independent variable Catholic with Opinion on Abortion as a layer, examining specifically Pro-Life Catholics. As the independent variable Catholic Pro-Life is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party ID is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1980 to 2004. The significance and strength of the relationship of the variable Catholic Pro-life and Republican Party ID is statistically significant from 1980 to 1996, with the exception of 1980 and 1986, with the average value of "v" being .077 and the chi-square statistic being  $< .05$ . From the years 1998 to 2004, the relationship is not significant or strong with an average Cramer's V correlation of .026 and the chi-square statistic being  $> .05$ . In Table 5 is the crosstabulation of the variable Catholic Pro-Life and Republican Party ID for the elections of 1980, 1988, and 2004.

**Table 5****Catholic Pro-Life and Republican Party ID 1980, 1988, 2004**

<i>Year and GOP Party ID</i>	<i>Non-Catholic Pro-Life % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic Pro-Life % (n)</i>
<b>1980</b>		
Dem/Independent	67.1(330)	70.7 (135)
Republican	33.9(162)	29.3 (56)
Total	100.0(492)	100.0(191)
	V= .035	
<b>1988</b>		
Dem/Independent	56.0(383)	63.2(144)
Republican	44.0(301)	36.8(84)
Total	100.0(684)	100.0(228)
	V= .063	
<b>2004</b>		
Dem/Independent	48.4(167)	51.7(62)
Republican	51.6(178)	48.3(58)
Total	100.0(345)	100.0(120)
	V= .029	

\*chi-square statistic significant at <.05 level

In 1980, only 29.3% of Catholic Pro-life respondents identified themselves as Republicans. Over the course of time the percent of Catholic Pro-life respondents identifying as Republicans has increased with 36.8% of Catholic Pro-life respondents identifying as Republicans in 1988, and 48.3% of Catholic Pro-life respondents identifying as Republicans in 2004. This analysis indicates that there has been a 19% increase in Republican Party Identification among Catholic Pro-life respondents. In addition to the large percentage change in Catholic Pro-life Republican Party

Identification from 1980 to 2004, there has been a similar large percentage change in Non-Catholic Pro-life Republican Party Identification from 1960 to 2004. Among Non-Catholic Pro-life respondents, Republican Party Identification has increased by 17.7%. The crosstab percentages indicate a strong realignment of Pro-life Catholics into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification and support my hypothesis that Pro-life Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in recent time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the cross tab percentages may indicate that Pro-Life Catholics are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. The cross tab percentages indicate that Pro-life Catholics' Republican Party Identification over time from 1980 to 2004 has become more aligned with Pro-life Non-Catholics. This indicates that Pro-life Catholics are dealigning from Democratic Party in a similar way to Non-Catholics through their shared Pro-life position on abortion. It is worth exploring deeper through regression analysis what additional factors may be causing Pro-life Catholics to change their Republican Party Identification over time.

The sixth bivariate analysis that was performed was of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President and the independent variable Catholic with Opinion on Abortion as a layer, examining specifically Pro-life Catholics. As the independent variable Catholic Pro-life is nominal and the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President is nominal, the correlation coefficient Cramer's V was used to measure the relationship each year from 1980 to 2004. It was discovered that the relationship between Catholic Pro-life and Republican Party Vote for President is strong and statistically

significant in the years 1988 and 1996. In 1988, the value of “v” is .168 and the chi-square statistic is  $< .001$ . In 1996, the value of “v” is .104 and the chi-square statistic is  $< .05$ . In Table 6 is the cross tabulations of the variable Catholic Pro-life and Republican Party Vote for President focusing on the elections of 1980, 1988, and 2004.

**Table 6**

**Catholic Pro-Life and Republican Party Vote for President 1980, 1988, 2004**

<i>Year and GOP Vote Pres</i>	<i>Non-Catholic Pro-Life % (n)</i>	<i>Catholic Pro-Life % (n)</i>
<b>1980</b>		
Democrat	45.5 (124)	46.0 (24)
Republican	54.9 (151)	54.0 (60)
Total	100.0(275)	100.0(113)
	V= .008	
<b>1988</b>		
Democrat	35.4(132)	53.8(77)
Republican	64.6(241)	46.2(66)
Total	100.0(373)	100.0(143)
	V= .168*	
<b>2004</b>		
Democrat	36.6 (93)	35.2 (31)
Republican	63.4 (161)	64.8 (57)
Total	100.0(254)	100.0(88)
	V=.013	

\*chi-square statistic significant at  $< .05$  level

In 1980, 54% of Catholic Pro-life respondents voted for the Republican candidate for President. Over the course of time the percent of Pro-life Catholics voting Republican for President increased, with 64.8% of Catholic Pro-life respondents voting for the

Republican Presidential candidate in 2004. This analysis indicates that there has been a 10.8% increase in the Republican Party Presidential vote among Pro-life Catholics since 1980. In addition to the percentage increase in the Pro-life Catholic vote for the Republican Party candidate for President from 1980 to 2004, there has been an 8.5% percentage increase in the Non-Catholic Pro-life Republican Party vote for President from 1980 to 2004. The Non-Catholic and Catholic Pro-life vote has over time become virtually indistinguishable from one another, as only a 1.4% difference in vote existed between the Catholic and Non-Catholic Pro-life vote in 2004. The analysis indicates a realignment of Pro-life Catholics in progress, and supports my hypothesis that Pro-life Catholics are realigning into the Republican Party in the area of Presidential vote choice. However, the weak relationships between the two variables in several time increments from 1960 to 2004 combined with the cross tab percentages may indicate that Pro-life Catholics are dealigning from the Democrat Party, and have not completely realigned into the Republican Party. In addition, Pro-life Catholics' Republican Presidential vote choice over time from 1980 to 2004 has become more aligned with Pro-life Non-Catholics. This indicates that Pro-life Catholics are dealigning from the Democratic Party in a similar way to Non-Catholics through their shared Pro-life position on abortion. It is worth exploring deeper through regression analysis what additional factors may be causing Pro-life Catholics to change their Presidential vote choice over time.

For additional analysis, I utilized multivariate analysis of the dependent and independent variables, including control variables, utilizing respective logistical regressions for the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party ID and the

dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President. In addition, I established in the respective regression models for Republican Party ID and Republican Party Vote for President, interaction effects between Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion, Catholic and Church Attendance, and Catholic and Opinion on Abortion because of the significance. In my respective regression models, I also include a lagged dependent variable in order to control for autocorrelation. I conducted a multivariate analysis that employs logistical regression utilizing pooled data of the Presidential and mid-term elections from 1980 to 2004.

My first multivariate analysis model is a logistical regression with the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Identification. I analyzed the Presidential and mid-term elections from 1980 to 2004. I conducted a logistical regression of the dependent variable Republican Party Identification on the independent variables Opinion on Abortion, Church Attendance, Catholic and the independent control variables Age, Income, Education, Gender, Race, Region, Ideology, the lagged dependent variable Party Identification (t-1) and the independent interactive variables Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion, Catholic x Church Attendance, and Catholic x Opinion on Abortion. The results from the logistical regression of the dependent variable Republican Party Identification are in Table 7.

**Table 7****Regression Analysis of Republican Party Identification 1980 to 2004**

DV: Republican Party Identification

<u>IVS</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>P-value</u>
Constant	-2.818	.104	.000**
GOP Party ID (T-1)	.050	.033	.130
Catholic	-.078	.056	.166
Church Attendance	.367	.054	.000**
Opinion on Abortion	.431	.050	.000**
Age	.000	.001	.863
Gender	-.230	.033	.000**
Race	1.106	.045	.000**
Education	.226	.021	.000**
Region	-.080	.037	.031*
Income	.233	.016	.000**
Ideology	.005	.006	.380
Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion	.085	.070	.224
Catholic x Church Attendance	-.486	.080	.000**
Catholic x Opinion On Abortion	-.156	.080	.051

\*\*p < .01 \*p < .05 (Two-tailed test for significance)  
 N= 18,169 Model Fit % Predicted correctly = 66.7

The logistical regression analysis indicates that the independent variables Church Attendance, Opinion on Abortion and the control variables Gender, Race, Education, Income and Catholic x Church Attendance were significant predictors of Republican Party Identification at the  $p < .01$  level. In addition, Region is a strong predictor as it is significant at  $p < .05$  level. Of those variables significant at the  $p < .01$  level, the variables Opinion on Abortion, Church Attendance, Race, Income, and Education have a positive association with Republican Party Identification. Of those remaining variables significant at  $p < .01$  level, Catholic x Church Attendance and Gender have a negative association with Republican Party Identification. Region, significant at the  $p < .05$  level, has a negative association with Republican Party Identification. Catholic, Age, Ideology, and the interactive variables Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion and Catholic x Opinion on Abortion are not significant predictors of Republican Party Identification.

When the independent variables, Catholic, Church Attendance, and Opinion on Abortion are controlled for other demographic and ideological factors, it is revealed that Catholic, a category which includes nominal Catholics, who are non-church attendees and secular, does not have a significant association with Republican Party Identification, while Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion are strong predictors of Republican Party Identification. The control variables Race, Education, and Income are strong predictors of Republican Party Identification, while Gender and Region have a strong negative association with Republican Party Identification. In the testing of the interaction effects of Catholic x Church Attendance and Catholic x Opinion on Abortion and

Opinion on Abortion x Church Attendance it is revealed that only Catholic x Church Attendance has a significant association with Republican Party Identification, and it is a negative one. This negative association of Catholic x Church Attendance and Republican Party ID is a strong indicator of the dealignment of Catholics as evidence shows that they were not identifying Democratic in the crosstabs. The strength of Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion in predicting Republican Party Identification combined with the interaction effects of these variables with each other and Catholic in the regression model, does not support my hypothesis that Catholics who are frequent church attendees or Pro-life have realigned into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification, but does indicate a dealignment of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Pro-Life Catholics. The regression model does support findings in the bivariate analysis that religiosity and Opinion on Abortion are stronger predictors of Party Identification than religious denomination and that Catholics are becoming more like non-Catholics in Party Identification. In addition, the regression model does not support my hypothesis that Catholics overall are realigning into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification because of the negative associations of the variable Catholic, the interactive variable Catholic x Church Attendance, and the interactive variable Catholic x Opinion and Abortion with Republican Party Identification. In terms of model fit, the variables in the regression model correctly predict 66.7% of Party Identification choice of respondents.

My second multivariate analysis model is a logistical regression with the dichotomous dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President. I analyzed the

Presidential elections from 1980 to 2004. I conducted a logistical regression of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President on the independent variables Opinion on Abortion, Church Attendance, Catholic and the independent control variables Age, Income, Education, Gender, Race, Region, and Ideology, the lagged dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President (t-1) and the independent interactive variables Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion, Catholic x Church Attendance, and Catholic x Opinion on Abortion. The results from the logistical regression of the dependent variable Republican Party Vote for President are in Table 8.

**Table 8****Regression Analysis of Republican Party Vote for President 1980 to 2004**

DV: Republican Party Vote for President

<u>IVS</u>	<u>Coefficient</u>	<u>SE</u>	<u>P-value</u>
Constant	-4.657	.158	.000**
GOP Vote for Pres (T-1)	.107	.050	.032*
Catholic	.072	.081	.374
Church Attendance	.530	.075	.000**
Opinion on Abortion	.485	.072	.000**
Age	.011	.001	.000**
Gender	-.162	.047	.001**
Race	1.246	.070	.000**
Education	.307	.029	.000**
Region	.017	.053	.754
Income	.356	.024	.000**
Ideology	.002	.008	.812
Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion	.241	.098	.014*
Catholic x Church Attendance	-.421	.112	.000**
Catholic x Opinion on Abortion	-.146	.112	.192

\*\*p &lt; .01 \*p &lt; .05 (Two-tailed test for significance)

N= 10,584

Model Fit % Predicted correctly= 73.0

The logistical regression analysis indicates that the independent variables Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion; the control variables Age, Gender, Race, Income, and Education; and the interactive variable Catholic x Church Attendance were significant predictors of the Republican Party Vote for President as they are significant at  $p < .01$  level. The interactive variable Church Attendance x Abortion is also a strong predictor of Republican Party Vote for President as it is significant at the  $p < .05$  level. The variables Church attendance, Opinion on Abortion, Age, Race, Income, and Education have a positive association with Republican Party Vote for President and are strong predictors. Of the remaining variables significant at  $p < .01$  level, Catholic x Church Attendance and Gender have a negative association with Republican Party Vote for President and are strong predictors of Democratic Party Vote for President. Of the variable significant at the .05 level, the interactive variable Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion has a positive association with Republican Party Identification and is a strong predictor.

When the independent variables, Catholic, Church Attendance, and Opinion on Abortion are controlled for other demographic and ideological factors, it is revealed that Catholic, a category which includes nominal Catholics, who are non-church attendees, does not have a significant relationship with Republican Party Vote for President, while Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion are strong predictors of Republican Party Vote for President. The control variables Age, Race, Education, Income, and Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion are strong predictors of Republican Party Vote for President, while Catholic x Church Attendance and Gender have a strong negative

association with Republican Party Vote for President and are strong predictors of Democratic Party vote. The negative association of Catholic x Church Attendance is a strong indicator of party dealignment as evidence in the crosstabs shows that they are not voting Democratic as often. The strength of Church Attendance and Opinion on Abortion in predicting Republican Party Identification combined with the interaction effects of these variables with each other and Catholic in the regression model, does not support my hypothesis that Catholics who are frequent church attendees or Pro-life have realigned into the Republican Party in the area of vote choice, but does indicate a dealignment of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Pro-Life Catholics. The regression model does support findings in the bivariate analysis that religiosity and Opinion on Abortion are stronger predictors of Presidential Vote Choice than religious denomination. The regression model does not support my hypothesis that Catholics overall are realigning into the Republican Party in the area of Presidential vote choice because of the non-significance of the variable Catholic, and the negative association of the interactive variable Catholic x Church Attendance and the interactive variable Catholic x Opinion and Abortion with Republican Party Identification. In terms of model fit, the variables in the regression model correctly predict 73% of Party of President Vote choices of respondents.

### ***Conclusion***

The analyses presented in this thesis indicate a significant change in Catholic voting behavior and party identification over the course of time from 1960 to 2004. Catholics are no longer a monolithic block of voters loyal to the Democratic Party. The Catholic voter who from the cradle to the grave votes and identifies as a Democrat no longer exists today and is a myth (Stricherz 2005; Bottum, 2006).

Over the course of time since 1960, Catholics have been dealigning from the Democratic Party in the areas of party identification and presidential vote choice. Since 1960, over time the number of Catholics identifying themselves as Republicans has more than doubled while it has remained essentially the same among non-Catholics with a very minimal change. Also since 1960, over time the number of Catholics voting for the Republican candidate for President has almost tripled while, among Non-Catholics, there has actually been a decrease in the number voting Republican for President. However, the weakness of the relationships between Catholics and Republican Party Identification and Republican Party Vote for President indicates a weak party identification and a weak party vote that is usually indicative of vote switching between elections, split-ticket voting and other signs of dealignment. Catholics as a group are not Republicans or Democrats, as they are truly children of the New Deal Coalition dealignment.

Who are these Catholics who are dealigning from the Democratic Party? Many of these Catholics are religious, frequent church attendees who hold a pro-life position on the issue of abortion. This is significant because of the fact that Catholics attend church more frequently and are more likely to hold a pro-life position on the issue of abortion

than non-Catholics. It is also significant because of the importance of religiosity and secularism in the respective Parties' coalitions, and the evolution over time of a stark dichotomy in the parties' positions on the abortion issue.

Catholic Frequent Church Attendees have dealigned from the Democratic Party over time. Among Catholic Frequent Church Attendees, Republican Party Identification has more than doubled since 1960, while it has remained essentially the same among Non-Catholics. In addition, the Republican Party Presidential vote has almost quadrupled over time since 1960 among Catholic Frequent Church Attendees, while among Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees the Republican Party Presidential vote has decreased significantly. The weakness of the relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Republican Party ID and Republican Party Vote for President indicates a weak party identification and weak party vote for President among Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and usually indicates vote switching between elections, split-ticket voting and other signs of dealignment. Catholic Frequent Church Attendees have not realigned but dealigned.

Catholic Frequent Church Attendees have dealigned and were the first segment of Catholics to do so. They vote Republican often, but their relationship with the Republican Party is tenuous and changes from election to election, and they are not hesitating to split their vote between Republicans and Democrats. Catholic Frequent Church Attendees are truly an example of Carmines, McIver, and Stimson's (1987) concept of unrealized partisans as their religiosity creates issue positions that are square at odds with their inherited party. As the salience of their ties to the New Deal Coalition generation wanes,

this group is likely to realign. Issues such as abortion, gay marriage, and social justice issues will largely dictate their realignment or continued dealignment.

As issues are very important in the potential realignment of unrealized partisans, the strong relationship between Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and the abortion issue should not be underestimated. Catholic Frequent Church Attendees are more likely to be Pro-Life than non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and also both Catholics and non-Catholics who do not attend church frequently. In the 2004 election, 63.4% of Catholic Frequent Church Attendees were Pro-life. This was 10.1% more than Non-Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and 34.9% more than Catholic Non-Church Attendees. The evolution of the Pro-life position of the Republican Party and the Pro-choice position of the Democratic Party since 1980 is an important one in understanding the dealignment of a block of Catholics from the Democratic Party, and will play an important part in whether Catholic Frequent Church Attendees will one day align into the Republican Party.

Pro-life Catholics have dealigned from the Democratic Party over time. Among Pro-life Catholics, Republican Party Identification has almost doubled since 1980. In addition, the Republican Party Presidential vote has increased substantially over time since 1980 among Pro-life Catholics. Pro-life Catholics are no longer a part of a monolithic block that votes only for the Democratic Party. However, the weakness of the relationship between Pro-life Catholics and Republican Party ID and Republican Party Vote for President indicates a weak party identification and weak party vote for President among Pro-life Catholics and indicates vote switching between elections, split-ticket

voting and signs of dealignment. Pro-life Catholics often vote Republican, but their relationship with the Republican Party is tenuous and they will not hesitate switch their vote between elections or vote split ticket. Pro-life Catholics are a strong example of Carmines, McIver, and Stimson's (1987) unrealized partisans as their pro-life position puts them at odds with many in the party they inherited from their parents. As the salience of their ties to New Deal generation wanes, this group is likely to realign if the Democratic Party and Republican Party continue to identify themselves as the Pro-choice party and Pro-life Party respectively. How the Democratic Party continues to identify itself on the abortion issue –whether it adopts a more tolerant position on abortion in its party platform and candidates will largely determine if Pro-life Catholics stay dealigned or realign. The emergence of the importance of the abortion issue in partisan alignments is particularly important in talking about Catholics, as Catholics are 10% more Pro-life than non-Catholics.

When did the dealignment of Catholics, especially Catholic Church Attendees and Pro-life Catholics, from the Democratic Party take place? Was there a critical election that resulted in dealignment? Just as 1980 and 1988 were significant in the realignment of Evangelicals into the Republican Party, hypotheses can be offered on critical elections that are important in the dealignment of Catholics, especially Church Attending Catholics and Pro-Life Catholics, from the Democratic Party. In the area of vote choice for President, the analyses shows a significant change in the voting behavior of Catholics in the year 1972, one in which the monolithic Catholic voting block is broken and never again reconstitutes in any significant way. Many scholars attribute this voting change

among Catholics not only to emergence of the abortion issue in this year, but to the results of the McGovern Commission and its architect Fred Dutton, in which new Party rules resulted in the dissolution of a traditional delegate system, and feminists and educated secular elites replaced Catholic state and big city bosses and working class as a key influence in the Democrat Party and pushed an agenda of abortion rights (Stricherz, 2005; Bottom, 2006).

It is important to note that this dealigning of Catholics, including Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Pro-life Catholics, has not resulted in a realignment of these groups into the Republican Party in the area of Party Identification and vote choice. As the regression model indicates, Catholics regardless of religiosity or opinion on abortion have not yet realigned into the Republican Party. However, the continued dealignment of Catholics, including Catholic Frequent Church Attendees and Pro-life Catholics leaves open the possibility of a realigning election or issue evolution over time that results in the realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party.

The Parties are realigning along religious and cultural lines in the United States. It is important to know if this is a trend that is unique only to Evangelicals or is an ecumenical trend that is expanding to other denominations such as Catholics. This thesis has resulted in analysis that can help us to better understand scientifically, what is happening in the area of religion and party realignment and Catholics in the United States and can serve as model for examining the religion and realignment question both within denominations and across denominations. This thesis has shown that at present religion and party realignment is not an ecumenical trend, as the most likely group, Catholics has

not realigned but dealigned. Whether dealignment of Catholics is the beginning of a long evolution of the continuation of the religion and party realignment ecumenical trend will be a source of future research for scholars.

The findings of this thesis point to several areas of future research. The importance of religiosity and the abortion issue among dealigning Catholics and the lessening of the importance of denomination should encourage the study of religiosity and abortion issue positions among the remaining monolithic denominational blocks of Democratic voters and identifiers, African-American Evangelicals and Jews. Close analysis of voting trends and party identification among African-American Evangelicals and Orthodox Jews, who attend religious services frequently and hold a Pro-life position is worthy of study to see if there is any beginning indications of dealignment.

As religion and party realignment is the study of the party dealignment and realignment of groups over time, any additional study of religion and party realignment would benefit from the study of any interdenominational differences among Evangelicals, Mainline Protestants, Catholics, African-American Evangelicals and Jews both demographically and in regards to issue positions on key social issues over time. As powerful issues in addition to abortion emerge and evolve in the cultural wars, it is important to understand how they will affect a religious denomination and party politics. How will issues such as gay marriage, embryonic stem cell research, and euthanasia affect the vote choice and party identification of religious denominations? Will issues such as gay marriage cause African-American Evangelicals to dealign from the Democratic Party? Will embryonic stem cell research persuade segments of mainline

Protestants to realign with the Democratic Party? Will the creation of laws permitting a “right to die” or euthanasia persuade Orthodox Jews to realign into the Republican Party? This thesis presents a model for studying the importance of single issue evolution in the party dealignment and realignment of segments of a specific religious denomination. As the issues of the culture war dominate and occupy center stage, analysts would do well to follow the slavery controversy in American History and ask whether we are closer to 1850 than 1820 (Leege, 1992). Interdenominational and denominational differences over important social fabric issues, could be a sign of further party dealignments and realignments in the American electorate, a peaceful alternative to cultural war.

In addition, further study in the area of religion and party realignment should be done of demographical interdenominational differences among Catholics, the most important being age and race. Although the findings above do involve controls for age by individual year, more research into age cohorts among Catholics would be worthwhile. Attitudinal and ecclesiastical differences among Catholics by age cohorts have been proven to be significant because of the effect and after-effects of the Vatican II Council (Pogorelc and Davidson, 2003). The theological strength and longevity of Pope John Paul II, and his effect on an entire generation of young Catholics is worth studying any differences in their Party Identification and vote choice from other Catholics over time. Young Catholics are more likely to say that their religious values influence their political choices, are more receptive to the religious right’s moral agenda, and will be in the electorate for a long time (Leege, 1992). Young Catholics could a key force in moving the dealignment of Catholics into a realignment of Catholics into the Republican Party.

In addition, although the findings above do involve controls for race by the categories of black and white, more research into the Hispanic Catholic community should be done to identify if their vote choice and party identification is different from other Catholics over time. As the considerable growth of the Catholic voting population is attributed to the exponential growth of Hispanic Catholics in the United States, it is important to understand into which party this group will align into in the areas of party identification and vote choice over time. A realignment of Hispanic Catholics into the Republican Party would also be a strong force in solidify dealigning Catholics into realignment with the Republican Party. An alignment of Hispanic Catholics into the Democratic Party would result in an indefinite dealignment of Catholics, with white Catholics and Hispanic Catholics voting and identifying differently.

The scientific analysis and models presented here should serve as a guide not only for the study of religion and party realignment and dealignment across different religious denominations, but also within religious denominations themselves, as our country becomes increasing spilt along partisan lines between the religious and secular, and between different issue positions on important social and cultural issues that address who we are as a civilization and as a society.

Catholics are positioned squarely in the middle of the culture wars and the growing religious and secular realignments of the Parties, torn between loyalty to the Party of their parents but growing increasingly disenchanted with its issues positions that are contrary to their social and cultural policy preferences. Where this disaffected group of voters goes in response to the Parties' positions on social and cultural issues important to them will determine the future of religion and party realignment, party dealignment, and the two Parties.

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*Appendix***Variable Coding for Regression Analysis**

Catholic (Religion of Major Groups)

0 = No

1 = Yes

Church Attendance

0 = Non Frequent Church Attendee

1 = Frequent Church Attendee

Opinion on Abortion

0= Pro-Choice

1= Pro-Life

Age (in years)

Gender

0= Male

1= Female

Race

0= Black

1= White

Education

1= Grade School or less

2= High School

3= Some college

4= College or Advance Degree

Region (South/Non-South)

0= Non-South

1= South

Income

1= 0-16<sup>th</sup> percentile

2= 17-33<sup>d</sup> percentile

3= 34-67<sup>th</sup> percentile

4= 68-95<sup>th</sup> percentile

5= 96-100<sup>th</sup> percentile

Ideology

1= Liberal

2= Middle of the Road

3= Conservative

Church Attendance x Opinion on Abortion

0= No

1= Yes

Catholic x Church Attendance

0= No

1= Yes

Catholic x Opinion on Abortion

0= No

1= Yes

Republican Party Identification

0= Democrats and Independents

1= Republicans

Republican Party Vote for President

0= Democrat

1= Republican