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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC DEBATE

OVER

U.S. GOVERNMENT FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE OF 2001

By

VINCENTE SCOTT

Under the direction of Dr. David M. Cheshier

ABSTRACT

This thesis uses the discourse analysis methods developed by T. Van Dijk and J. P. Gee to examine public debate over the Faith-Based and Community Initiatives in 2001 as it arose in testimony before the U. S. House of Representatives and related news articles published in the *New York Times* and *Washington Post.* In analyzing the language used in the congressional hearings and news articles printed between January 2001 and December 2004, Van Dijk's categories and related questions were methodologically combined with Gee's approach to provide a framework and method for analyzing the underlying discourse. While debate participants expressed strong beliefs in complex social ideals, many see America's social problems as intractable in nature, where key decisions about distributions of funds are based on political considerations, as opposed to merit or need.

INDEX WORDS: Discourse Analysis, Charity, Congressional Testimony, Faith-based and Community Initiatives.

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By

Vincente Scott

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

Master of Arts

In the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2010

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by

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December 2010

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DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY ON U. S. GOVERNMENT FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE

Introduction

Americans donated more than $$303.75 billion in 2009 billion to charity in 2009, (Bond, 2010). The amount of charitable giving by Americans exceeds the annual gross national products of 140 nations (Rooney 2009). This money was provided by the citizens of a country during a financial crisis, with bank closings, credit freezes, and capital markets in the worse value downslide since 1982 or 1958 or by some accounts 1932 (depending on whom one asks and how one measures). Most of the money donated by Americans went to non-profit organizations in the hope that social ills such as poverty, domestic violence, drug abuse and chronic unemployment could be eliminated or abated.

An increasing share of the money received by non-profit groups to address social needs in recent years was donated by the U.S. federal government. In January 2001, President George W. Bush created the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives by executive order and on March 29, 2001, Representatives J.C. Watts (R-OK) and Tony Hall (D-OH), along with Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL), introduced H.R. 7, the "Community Solutions Act of 2001." Hearings in Congress and news articles about the initiative were the first steps in a long public debate over the key features of the program.

This study is an analysis of the public discourse concerning the provisions and structure of the government programs established by the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives of 2001 as that discourse was generated in testimony before the U. S. House of Representatives

and in related news articles published around the times these hearing occurred. This examination looks at persuasive language used to describe the initiative using the discourse analysis tools of T. Van Dijk and J. P. Gee with the goal of discerning rhetorical structures, tactics and strategies used during public debate.

The 2001 Faith Based Initiative

The public discourse concerning proposals to expand federal funding for faith-based charities is worthy of sustained scholarly attention for several reasons. First, a significant amount of money is at stake. According to the final report on the initiative released by the Bush Administration, and published by the Roundtable on Religion and Social Welfare Policy (a project of the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government and The Pew Charitable Trust), about $300 million in government money was set aside between 2001 and 2008 "to help small faith-based and community organizations apply for grants and build their organizational capacity" (Wright, 2009).

The faith-based initiative is also the site of significant political struggle. Although the bill originally known as H.R. 7 was introduced in March 2001 and passed by the House of Representatives on July 19, 2001, the final piece of legislation was not actually passed by both houses of Congress and signed by President Bush until May 2003. Mass media reports noted that President Bush had to water down the legislation to get it through the House of Representatives. "But G.O.P. moderates, led by Rep. Mark Foley, concerned it would allow discrimination against homosexuals, held it up. After intense lobbying, all but four of the moderates voted for the bill" (Dikerson, 2001). The lively public debate which delayed the law covered a broad range

of issues that matter to the American public: these are encapsulated within the text of the congressional record.

A third reason debate about the faith based initiative warrants academic study is that the programs' implementation designs overtly touch upon national controversies regarding religion, freedom of speech, gender and the nature of the American public response to poverty and social need. The various federal offices for faith based initiatives were brought into being by executive order. From the beginning they were the subject of controversy, reviled by critics as dangerous and disingenuous, even while hailed by supporters as pragmatic panaceas.

An important aspect of the controversy is related to church and state relations, and the main arena for this dispute is the courts. Critics say that giving federal funds to religious groups violates the U.S. constitutional clause prohibiting the government establishment of religion. Phillip Aka said in an article published in *The Law in Society* that President Bush's

> …religion-based initiatives are constitutionally suspect…The U.S. Constitution mandates the president to "take Care that the Laws be *faithfully* executed ..." The president violates this constitutional mandate when he introduces and actively pursues a program he knows or should know is of questionable constitutionality – particularly a program involving a deeply polarizing issue like religion (Aka, 2008).

The public interest in and debate about initiative included a wide spectrum of participants from many segments of the America populace even before formal hearings got underway. In March 2001 the American Muslim Council held a forum at Georgetown University to discuss the pros and cons of President Bush's Faith Based Initiative. Supporters of the initiative included Rev. Mark Scott (White House Office of Faith-based and Community Initiatives), Dr. James Skillen (Center for Public Justice), and Forest Montgomery (National Association of

Evangelicals). Presenting opposing points of view were Melissa Rogers from the Religious Liberty Council of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, Rev. Dr. C. Welton Gaddy from the Interfaith Alliance, and Elliot Mincberg from People for the American Way. The American Muslim Council conducted a survey of 912 men and women showing that three-quarters of the community supported the initiative, agreeing with it in principle even while expressing concern about whether government might restrict religious activities in the program's implementation. More than 80% of those surveyed stated that they would support using public funding for faith-based organizations to perform social service work if the government refrained from interfering in the character and mission of those religious organizations (Salem 2001). The *New York Times* reported in June 2001 that

> A poll this spring by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press found that while three-quarters of those polled supported those programs, 78 percent said that religious organizations getting government dollars should not "be allowed to only hire people who share their religious beliefs." The pollsters were surprised enough by this result to try tweaking the wording of the question. One revised version removed the emphasis on "only," asking instead whether these organizations should be allowed to hire people "on the basis of their religious beliefs." Another version simply asked about shared "moral values" rather than religious beliefs. The responses to these altered questions were still overwhelmingly no – 69 percent opposed to the first version and 62 percent opposed to the second. This level of opposition was even higher than the 60 percent of the public concerned about using tax dollars for religious proselytizing (Steinfel, 2001).

Even before the faith-based initiative was announced, a fight over the role of religious groups as recipients of government funds was being waged in the courts. In 1989 a district federal court in Mississippi ruled in Dodge v. Salvation Army that religious employment discretion is forfeited with the acceptance of government funds. In that case, the plaintiff

claimed that her job in a Salvation Army Domestic Violence Center had been unconstitutionally ended because her employer, the Domestic Violence Center, received substantial federal and state funds. She also argued that her job did not involve "religious" activities, so Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not apply to her position. The court agreed, raising important constitutional considerations. The court said that it “was impressed by Dodge's claim that her job as Victims' Assistance Counselor was funded by federal, state and local governments” (Orr, 2005). Similarly, in Lownes v. Salvation Army, a group of employees of the religious group challenged the government’s practices of contracting an organization that allegedly discriminated on the basis of religion with respect to employees working in child welfare services. In 2000 Alicia Pedreira and other taxpayers sued the Kentucky Baptist Home for Children because of the Home’s decision to dismiss Pedreira from her position as a Family Specialist after the employer learned that Pedreira was living in an openly homosexual relationship. Pedreira and another plaintiff, Karen Vance, brought suit against the Home alleging unlawful religious discrimination under state and federal law (Lupu and Tuttle 2008).

The decisions and opinions in some controversial court cases influence debate about policy. In Bowen v. Kendrick (1988), for example, the U.S. Supreme Court allowed federal funds to be given to religious organizations offering counseling consistent with the purposes advocated in the Adolescent Family Life Act. This marked a shift toward openness to change in the relations among governments and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs). In Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District (1993) the Supreme Court found that government cannot withhold the use of its facilities to suppress one viewpoint to the disadvantage of another. In Rosenberg v. Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia (1995) government was further restricted from exercising viewpoint discrimination.

Decisions in these cases served to encourage expansion of the public funding for FBOs, and the language that emerges from these rulings impacts public debate in several ways. Historically, terms emerging from the courts such as “separate but equal” or “with all deliberate speed” or “arbitrarily deprived of membership," or “arbitrary and capricious” have entered the public dialogue as convenient shorthand and have won the attention of laypersons in a way that complex legal terms have not. Such terms frame complex issues of public contention around constitutional norms, while the language used by the courts also brings into view a certain sense of legitimated authority suggesting to laypeople a context of careful deliberative consideration and rigorous thought.

Much of the debate and legal activity surrounding the initiatives might be misunderstood as mere wrangling about the definition of what constitutes “religious activity,” but consensus about such terms can also have wide reaching policy and programmatic implications. A study of 3,800 adults by health care professionals from Duke University Medical Center and the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development at Duke defined private religious activities as prayer, meditation or Bible study, church attendance and use of religious media (Helm etc.al. 2005). This definition contrasts sharply with the understanding put forward by Harold Koenig (1998) whose assessment included the percentage of people claiming “belief in a personal God, life after death, Hell, Heaven, and the Devil, the percentage who pray or meditate and who believe that their church is providing adequate answers to man’s spiritual needs, reappraisal of God as benevolent, collaboration with God, seeking a connection with God, seeking support from clergy/church members, and giving religious help to others “ (Koenig, Paragament, and Nielsen, 1998), and it also stands in contrast to the definition of religious activity in education by Sengol which not only included personnel prayer, but also activities such as “discussion of

religion with students, wearing religious apparel or religious symbols, and job leave for religious reasons" (Sengol 1988). Favoring one definition over another could have broad implications for how public policy is implemented, how public funds are distributed and how institutions both public and private decide to design, to describe, and to provide goods and services.

These definitional efforts reflect the fact that interpretation of terms matters. On examining the religious activity question and statutory limits on government involvement in religious enterprises, the U. S. court case in Mitchell v. Helms (June 2000) asked whether a statute (1) has a secular purpose, (2) has a primary effect of advancing or inhibiting religion, or (3) creates an excessive entanglement between government and religion. The court presented three criteria for determining a statute's effect, stipulating that government aid has the effect of advancing religion if it (1) results in governmental indoctrination, (2) defines its recipients by reference to religion, or (3) creates an excessive entanglement.

Such variegated understandings and descriptions of the terms "religious activity" and "church and state relations" provides fertile ground for advocates to use language as a means to muddle, hide and obfuscate their motives and strategies in public testimony. A statement by a court with the decision, a summary of the facts, the applicable law and, the rationale supporting the decision can provide powerfully authoritative instruments. Language used in legal decisions and opinions often become popular phrases that frame the general public's understanding of issues. Sometimes they are tools used to mark common ground among allies, and they also can become the ammunition used in public battles to shape national policy.

Court cases thus often play an important role in the construction of the national dialogue. For these reasons, this study takes as a textual point of departure several of the key court cases where faith-based issues were in play, and where the issues as they unfolded parallel with the

national conversation. These include Bowen v. Kendrick (1988), Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District (1993), and Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia (1995). These cases specified concepts for clarifying public understanding about the use of public facilities for religious purposes and they expanded the vocabulary used by participants in public debate.

The testimony given in public hearings and court cases provide a rich range of data for gaining insight into the public consciousness and values as they have evolved in the first decade of the 21st century. With elected officials setting the stage by using value loaded phrases (such as “enhancing the ability of low-income Americans" and “the role of the faith community in providing publicly funded social services”), with state and federal courts providing compelling scripts by introducing new phrases and unique concepts, and with daily newspapers demanding public attention, the curtain is raised on a public showpiece of political and cultural drama.

Close scholarly examination of statements made in formal public debate can also help explicate the coded narratives that surround public policy formation. Communication studies can provide tools to help decode and clarify statements relating to motive and explicate underlying high meanings of sounding philosophical platitudes and ideological speechifying. At a time when terms such as “national debt” and “deficit government spending” are being repeated and emphasized in the mass media, public debate about government involvement in charitable giving becomes a forum for the restatement of national priorities and values. By interrogating texts with communication tools, one might see more clearly the connections among arguments made by stakeholders and defenders of the status quo and discern how the public debate on charity relates to other issues. A discourse analysis of public discussion of charitable policy could, by

focusing on the language being used and the rhetorical work being done, also illuminate economic and cultural competition.

By interrogating texts with communication tools one might see clearly the connection between policy and politics. As economist Robert Reich has shown, the political maneuvers by small groups seeking "special interest" can be understood as simply another form of free market capitalism; and, by extension, a central aspect of western democracy (Reich 2007). This is not to say that a discourse analysis, however, simply follows the money. Using communication tools in the examination of the public debate about government involvement in charitable giving can provide insight into our national narratives and the competing images of national identity that underlie America's public discourse.

Academic communication study can also help reveal much about a culture's sense of itself. The regard in which fellow members of our society are held can be revealed in the way debate participants in public discourse discuss the recipients of public funds. In his work concerning the history of Social Security, Robert Asen showed that whether recipients of government funds were seen as deserving "worker citizens" or imagined as perennial "beggars," the public debate reflected deeper feelings about race and class and highlighted various understandings of gender roles as those discourses were subject to academic study (Asen, 2009). Similarly, analysis of how the recipients of government funds are characterized in public hearings and congressional testimony on the initiative may reveal competing understandings of national purpose and how those connect to contrasting understandings of civic participation. When members of our political community join in public policy debate, they formalize our collective understandings of "rights, responsibilities and obligations." These events and processes are opportunities for new understandings to emerge (Asen, 2002). As stakeholders

deliver and respond to testimony, policy deliberators are helped to "identify their own preferences, demonstrate their appreciation of competing preferences, advance unfamiliar views, and reach areas of unanticipated agreement" (Polletta & Lee, 2006).

Research Questions and Methods

In what follows, I undertake a discourse analysis of the *Congressional Record* and related media articles from the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, using as methodological guides the work of Van Dijk (1995) and Gee (1995). I selected for review the records of twelve hearings of the 107th and the 108th Congresses conducted between February 2001 and April 2004. The names and dates of these are listed in an appendix. The names and dates of hearings selected for close analysis appear in References as primary sources. The *New York Times* and *Washington Post* were selected for several reasons. Both are large metropolitan dailies with, according to Audit Bureau Circulation, a combined average daily circulation of 2.5 million. Because each has been published continuously for more than one hundred years and because each has won many dozens of major awards for outstanding journalism, the *Times* and *Post* can be reasonably regarded as generating plausible representations of the viewpoint of American public decision makers and community leaders, and as national newspapers of record.

The communications suppositions here are that there are discernable relationships between the language used in certain court briefs and opinions and news articles which emerges into the public discourses that frame debate; and that those relations can be seen more clearly by applying discourse analysis tools. I also selected for examination the opinions from Bowen v. Kendrick (1988), Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District (1993), and from Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia (1995). These cases were selected because of the ways in which the language used in arguments and opinions became part

of the public debate among, and shaped the way participants constructed their arguments. The discourse analysis tools of Gee and Van Dijk provide a common approach and a consistent vocabulary to evaluate and discuss the rhetorical transactions that appear in the texts.

Van Dijk recommends that analysis of texts unfold in three moves: “the description of argumentative structures, the explication of presupposed (tacit) assumptions, examination norms and values.” Gee’s approach is to focus on the six building tasks of language, including the semiotic, world activity, socio-culturally-situated, identity and relational, political, and the connection building — which, taken together, can help one explicate what is being attempted and achieved in the public discourse.

The questions guiding the discourse analysis are:

- What are the argumentative structures displayed in the descriptions of the intentions, strengths, vulnerabilities and effects of the program as portrayed by witnesses and judges?
- What rhetorical work is being done by witnesses and court reports? That is, what strategic and persuasive frames are offered to move the debate in particular ways?

The aim of the project is thus to disclose how public debate over faith initiatives reflects and connects to larger public struggles regarding national identity and purpose.

The term “discourse analysis" mainly refers to the investigation of spoken interaction, written textual structure, and grammatical form, including the interpretation of words and also intonation, psychological processes of interpretation, and ideologies (McCarthy, 2008). Another way to think of the terms is as MacMillan (2009) does in the following:

> Discourse Analysis is a… 'set of methods and theories for investigating language in use and language in social contexts' … It focuses on the categorizing, performative, and rhetorical features of texts and talk… From this perspective, talk is not 'merely *about* actions, events and situations, it is also a potent and *constitutive part of* those actions, events and situation,

As a way of exploring social reality, discourse analysis challenges earlier epistemological understandings and aims to make pragmatic assessments of stipulated truth claims. In this perspective, discourses can be understood as "conduits" that point to a reality beyond itself, whether or not this "pointing" can be understood as strictly representational (Edwards and Potter, 1992). Language acts are both linguistic and social in nature (Sperber and Wilson, 1989) and, thus, discourses are understood as dependent on the conditions in which they emerge and as existing within a field of discourse.

The history of discourse analysis is rich and varied. This study, which relies on methods developed by Gee and Van Dijik, attempts to build upon the work of the last fifty years by foregrounding a contemporary DA method to explicate a contemporary public debate. Yet, that is not to imply that the relations revealed here are brand new. It is important to see this attempt in historical context. As early as the 1950s, Zelling Harris and James A Laurieult wrote about methods for identifying formal relations among sentences and creating (or discovering) sets of language rules for coherent discourses that go beyond simple grammar by using sentence transformation (Zelling, 1952). The French philosopher Michael Foucault wrote about “speech acts” in his 1969 book *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, reiterating there how a grammatically correct sentence may still lack meaning and inversely, while an incorrect sentence may still be meaningful. In this way he laid the basis for the examination of what he termed *discursive formations*.

Other approaches in linguistics included the discourse analysis elaborated by Coulthard in work published in 1981, and the ‘psychological discourse analysis’ advanced by Potter and Wetherell in 1987. Since those early days there have been many other contributions. Questions

about the nature of language (universalism and relativism), and whether language portrays an approximately accurate picture of an objective universe, have spawned controversies about the definitions of discourse, the relationship between discourse and reality and the basis of linguistic theory more broadly (Shi-xu, 2005).

The socio-linguistic tradition of 'discourse analysis' presented in this study accepts as axiomatic that:

> ...we continually and actively build and rebuild our world not just through language but through language used in tandem with actions…. But language-in-action is always and everywhere an active building process (Gee, 2005).

Recent work has shown that discourse can be understood in at least two different respects. In Gee's work the term "discourse" when spelled with lower case letter "d" can be thought of as language used in social or expressed form. But discourse can also be understood as identity building; in this context, the term discourse is capital "D" and acts to identify a group of people. In this function, Discourse can become a tool for including or excluding (Rogers, et. al 2005). Each time a person enters a new situation they are socialized into the language of that situation, a *big D* discourse, which integrates not only the cultural values and norms of that situation, but also specific language needs for the situation. Thus, the function of language changes as different situations require different language uses (Gee, 2001). The term "identity kits" has been used to describe Discourses, meaning that people using a particular Discourse properly are accepted as appropriately present herself/himself to the groups they address. Such a unified group of verbal signs provide a view of the interworking of groups, and an examination of the set of verbal signs shows the significance, priorities and/ or roles of speakers. Thus, Discourse reveals relationships, politics and values. Through an analysis of a group's patterned statements to each other and to

outsiders it is possible to develop not only a picture of a Discourse, but to reveal the underlying themes in a particular set of statements, thus exposing the participants' identities (Gee, 2005).

Widdowson catalogs these investigations in two categories: (1) how people create meaning and (2) how people discern meaning in texts (i.e. how meanings are socially constructed and thus part of our social practice). To analyze discourse, then, is to do more than understand the claims of truth and meanings of propositions declared by the speakers/writers. It is to examine and make explicit a speaker's or writer's intentions and the outcomes of the speech acts.

I analyze the text using a combination of questions/perspectives from the work of Van Dijk (1995) and the work of Gee (1995) because they present an opportunity to move quickly and plainly to the heart of the words spoken by the witnesses and other participants in the hearings, and enable close scrutiny of the tactics and strategies and connections among hearing participants.

Gee's work centers on apprehending the "work being done" by speakers/writers, and is an examination of sign systems relevant to a given situation, the world understood from this perspective as built by speakers and the relationships and identities they create in words. Eighteen specific questions are used to reveal "the work being done." In this case of congressional testimony, Gee's approach allows one to look beyond the individual words emitted by the speakers and focus on what he terms "the world-building tasks of language." In this context the human mind is understood as a pattern recognition tool that stores experiences, finds patterns in those experiences, and gives a name/label to the found patterns. To "world build" is to use words as creating reality and meaning based on the described practices and experiences. This approach allows the scrutiny of text for semiotic world-building activity, the construction of socio-culturally-situated identity and relationships, as well as the political and connection-

building capacities of language to explicate what is being attempted and achieved in the public discourse. By combing the ideas of Van Dijk and of Gee, the study brings communications methods to bear on the text to reveal the argumentative structures used by speakers and writers in their descriptions of the effects, the dangers and vulnerabilities of the program.

In the discourse analysis of this study the term "argumentative structure" points to patterns of induction and deduction, particularly attending to those comments that contain a rhetorical device to make a generalization or claims of truth, and which then provide support for those claims. Specifically, this study looks at the patterns of argumentation and narration used by speakers.

Noted here are examples of rhetorical devices that involve emphasis, association, and clarification of meaning. Extended metaphors, similes and synecdoche are terms that describe the varying ways in which language enables the comparison of two different objects, where the particular trope permits one to speak in terms of the other. Rhetorical questions (*erotesis*) and *hypophora*, used for effect, emphasis, or provocation, or for drawing a conclusion statement from the facts, also enable one to explore the more subtle operations of argument and persuasion. Hyperbole deliberately exaggerates conditions for emphasis or effect.

The procedure for analyzing this data includes a close reading of the texts, connected with the process of identifying rhetorical devises used by speakers and writer. Particular attention is paid to repetitive phrases involving an emphasis on individual themes, the formation and utilization of associational logics, and comparable methods of clarifications of meanings such as using analogous illustrations. Rhetorical devices such as extended metaphors and similes, rhetorical questions, and deliberately exaggerated descriptions of objective conditions for emphasis or effect were identified and noted. The second phase of the discourse analysis

involved identifying the relationships among similar rhetorical devices and determining the argumentative structures that they comprise. Then an effort is made to discern the presuppositions, norms and values of speakers.

Analysis of the text is followed by discussion focused on language behaviors: what rhetorical work is being done by the witnesses? What does the discourse reveal about the developing identities of the speakers? What social realities are being created by the context and the hearings?

Chapter Two provides a brief history of governmental activity in charitable giving and a literature review, surveying the scholarly work that has shaped this history. The literature review is followed in Chapter Three by a description of the details of the study: the data sources, and analysis and discussion of the text. Chapter Four is a discussion of the conclusions and implications of the study.

Chapter Two

Government and Religious Charity

Historical Context

Government funding for religious organizations serving public social needs is not new. Both state and federal governments have a long history of giving cash and tax benefits to groups that help the poor by providing them meals, the homeless with shelter, and the needy with counseling and job-training. Large religiously affiliated social service agencies, such as the Jewish Federations, the Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services, and Catholic Charities receive substantial direct government subsidies for providing a variety of these and other services. And yet controversy in the United States about giving public funds to religious groups goes back to at least the 1700's when stakeholders at Harvard, Yale and other colleges struggled with state legislators over the use and control of grants from public funds. Religiously affiliated funded groups were required to operate under certain structural restrictions, which included setting up separately incorporated entities. The corporations called 501(c)(3)'s are named for their place of authorization in the United States tax code, which defines them as:

> Corporations, and any community chest, fund, or foundation, organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition (but only if no part of its activities involve the provision of athletic facilities or equipment), or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual, no substantial part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided in subsection (h)), and which does not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office. (U. S. tax code)

Faced with the widespread suffering caused by structural failures in America's economic systems in the 1930's, the U.S. federal government began, for the first time, providing large amounts of material support directly to individuals and households. Such initiatives as the Federal Relief Administration, Social Security, Aid to Families With Dependent Children, and the Agricultural Adjustment Act all put the federal government squarely into the charitable direct cash assistance business. Federal cash assistance programs continued to grow for the next forty years. In 1940, about 12,500 charitable tax-exempt organization were registered by the United States Internal Revenue Service (Wiesbrod 1988), and by 1960 there were roughly 25,000 authorized 501(c)(3)'s.

By the 1970's the government was expanding support to families through funding and operating social service programs such as child care, job training, and personal counseling. Most of the federal spending for social services went to state and local governments in the form of grants and to nonprofit organizations in the form of service provider contracts. Because of constitutional concerns and a general public suspicion about the activities and role of the church in society, most faith based groups were denied access to the public charity purse. (Some notable exceptions to these denials were Catholic Charities, Lutheran Social Services, and Jewish Federations, all of which received significant federal funding so long as they agreed not to proselytize, nor to discriminate on the basis of religion in their employment practices, and agreed not to conduct their social services programs in a manner that was pervasively sectarian.)

By the 1980s nonprofit groups and religious organizations were perceived by government and local community leaders as well equipped and well-positioned to strengthen families and communities to the social challenges such as substance abuse and joblessness. In part this was

because religious groups were seen as possessing a credible and effective presence in poor neighborhoods.

With the enactment of the Adolescent Family Life Act in 1981, which gave money to religious and other charitable groups to provide education about sexual health and reproduction, controversy about funding religious groups heated up. Under the act, the federal government was prohibited from giving money to groups advocating, promoting or encouraging abortion. In 1983, the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit challenging grants to groups involved in religious activities, alleging that such grants violated constitutional protections intended to separate church and state. The parties subsequently reached a settlement that imposed a set of restrictions on religious groups receiving grants under the act.

During the last two decades, government and public attitudes about church/state relations have shifted dramatically. A noticeable shift has been toward government directly provided funding for services to smaller community-based organizations and away from centralized federal control in programs like welfare. The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-508) was intended to help local communities expand options for child care, and required states receiving federal money to give parents a choice of service providers. This was achieved by giving parents service purchase certificates which they could use to select providers regardless of religious activities.

In 1996, the U.S. Congress passed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, which overhauled federal welfare programs and included provisions to allow states to contract more directly with charitable, religious or private organizations. The states could enter into purchase of service agreements or voucher arrangements with non-governmental organizations under section 104, called Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

These sections of the federal law, which came to be known as Charitable Choice, also allowed religious groups to participate in Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and in the food stamp and Medicaid programs to the extent that the state uses contracts or vouchers with non-governmental providers. The Charitable Choice program included statements that said the federal government would not "permit governmental funding of religious organizations that fail to separate their religious activities from [federally-funded program] activities" (Gossett, C. & Pynes, J. (2003). No federal funds were to underwrite activities that were primarily religious, and no money went to any organization with the Title VII exemption, i.e., no group receiving funds could discriminate based on race, religious affiliation, disability or sexual orientation.

According to a Government Accountability Office estimate, federal money to nonprofit organizations increased more than 230 percent from 1980 to 2004. During that same period, the number of public charities grew from about 646,000 to 851,000 (Czerwinski 2007). Federal, state and local governments increasingly contract with nonprofit organizations for social services, and a complex pattern of social service provider networks has developed. By the end of 2005 more than one million groups were registered as nonprofit and tax exempt. They were categorized as Religious, Educational, Charitable, Scientific, Literary, Testing for Public Safety, to Foster National or International Amateur Sports Competition, or as Prevention of Cruelty to Children or Animals Organizations.

This twenty-odd year march from strictly enforced separation of church and state policies toward expanded participation in federal funding of faith-based organizations set the stage for the later advocacy for Faith Based Initiatives. Given this long history of support, then, it is surprising that implementation of the Faith Based Initiatives by President George W. Bush set off such a conflagration of passion, criticism, discord, and suspicion. The Charitable Choice

provision of the 1996 Welfare Reform Act (HR 3734; Public Law 104-193) was introduced by a conservative Republican Congressman and Senator, signed into law by a centrist Democratic President, and strongly endorsed by both major presidential candidates in the 2000 election. One might expect that Charitable Choice's political success would have augured well for the Bush initiatives. By 2001, when Present George W. Bush took office, the program rules applied to activities disseminating nearly $22 billion in federal funds annually. One would have reasonably imagined that the new Administration had read the winds of change correctly and submitted a proposal that would align perfectly with America's new understanding of the proper alignment of church/state relations.

On April 26, 2001, the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice and Drugs Policy and Human Resources and the Committee on Government Reform of the U. S. House of Representatives conducted hearings entitled "The Role of Community and Faith Based organization in Providing Effective Social Services." In his opening statement, Chairman Mark Souder (R- IN) stated that the goal of the hearing was:

> To examine the Administrations' efforts to assess regulatory barriers that hinder faith and community based organizations from participating in social service programs.
>
> To explore State and local initiatives to include these grassroots groups in the delivery of social services; and
>
> To learn from social service providers and intermediaries about their experiences in employing public funds to assist people in need.
>
> The role of the faith community in providing publicly funded social services on an equal basis as secular providers has been the topic of considerable public policy debate in recent years. Although faith groups have been assisting scores of people in need for decades, recent charitable choice provisions encourage an even larger role (U.S. Congress, H.R. 7, 2001).

Nevertheless, by the time legislative proposals reached the U. S. Senate, they were met with heated debate. Legal Scholar Sean T. McLaughlin said, “President Bush's plan challenges conventional understandings of religion's role in public life,” and he reported that faith based funding was being challenged in court cases in Texas by the American Jewish Congress (American Jewish Congress v. Bost 2000), in California (Bowen v. Kendrick 1988), in Wisconsin by the Freedom from Religion Foundation (Hein v. Freedom From Religion Foundation 2001), and in Kentucky by the American Civil Liberties Union. He said that even if the initiatives passed constitutional muster, they should be rejected as divisive (McLaughlin, 2003). Martha A. Boden said that implementing a new church-state partnership by way of initiatives “threatens the protective wall between church and state that most Americans believe does and should exist” (Boden, 2006). National religious denominations and both large political parties rallied constituent organizations to make public statements about the initiative. For example, K. den Dulk showed how “Organized groups have engaged both mass opinion and political elites ….by taking part in the political nitty-gritty by meeting with executive officials, testifying before Congress, litigating, helping to draft administrative rules….” (den Dulk 2002).

Religious groups weighed in on both sides of the issues. The *Washington Post* headlined on 26 June 2001, “For N.Y. Minister, a Faith-based ‘No’ to U.S. Aid," in reporting on Episcopalian priest Martha Overall (who runs programs for the poor) and her opposition to the plan. Some leaders of faith communities say the most critical issue concerns their right to hire, and claim their ability to limit hiring to coreligionists is essential to sustaining their identity and mission. Other say the controversy is about the discriminatory hiring practices of religious groups. Religious conservative columnist Marvin Olasky said “Most of the attacks on the bill came from liberals upset that the bill would not require the recipient religious groups to hire

homosexuals or people who reject the group's religious beliefs… or those who wanted to allow local and state governments to attach such mandates to the federal money provided by the bill" (Olasky, 2001). But other conservatives saw no constitutional issue at stake. Carl H. Esbeck, affiliated with the Center for Public Justice, a conservative think tank, wrote it was mistaken to claim:

> ...that religious staffing by a faith-based charity violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. It is elementary that the Bill of Rights, including the Establishment Clause, was adopted to restrain only government, not the independent sector. If a particular social-service provider has an employment policy rooted in its religious mission, the policy is solely that of the provider. Receipt of a government grant or contract does not change the independent nature of that decision. Because a provider's employment decisions are wholly independent of the government, the Establishment Clause is not even implicated (Esbeck et. al., 2004)

Opponents argue that federal funds should not be used to discriminate (Smeltzer, 2004). A district federal court in Mississippi ruled that religious employment discretion is forfeited with the acceptance of government funds (Dodge v. Salvation Army, 1989). The plaintiff in that case claimed that her job in a Salvation Army Domestic Violence Center had been unconstitutionally ended because her employer, the Domestic Violence Center, received substantial federal and state funds. She also argued that her job did not involve "religious" activities, so Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 did not apply to her position. The court agreed, raising important constitutional considerations. The court "was impressed by Dodge's claim that her job as Victims' Assistance Counselor was funded by federal, state and local governments" (Orr, 2005). In Lowns vs. Salvation Army, a group of Salvation Army employees challenged the government-funded, faith-based practices of the Salvation Army and its attempt to engage in the religious indoctrination of its social services employees. The suit, filed February 2004 in the U.S. District

Court for the Southern District of New York, alleged that the Salvation Army had unlawfully discriminated on the basis of religion with respect to its professional employees working in child welfare services funded by New York State and New York City.

> This lawsuit challenged the government-funded, faith-based practices of The Salvation Army: the organization's religious indoctrination of its social services employees; its provision of social services tailored to its religious principles; and its trimming of its workforce to convey its religious message (Daily, 2009).

No one in the Administration seemed to have anticipated that such strident argument would emerge out of the very religious communities who were the potential recipients of funds. Some opponents of the programs feared that not only would there be lingering constitutional questions but also that funding faith based organization could create financial dependency and lessen the autonomy of funded groups (Horwitz, 1999). In a contrasting view, Solomon and Vlissides asserted that tax incentives could solve many of the questions about funding and dependency. They wrote:

> Tax-oriented funding is more likely to withstand constitutional scrutiny than direct aid. And unlike direct funding, tax incentives do not impose administrative burdens on their beneficiaries or cause FBOs to run the risk of government "capture." Tax incentives do, however, have two serious drawbacks: (1) they may serve only to subsidize existing charitable contributions without encouraging additional giving, and (2) they may fail to target contributions to the communities and charities most in need. (Solomon and Vlissides 2002).

Proponents said that by funding faith based organizations the federal government strengthens groups that "already play an important role in delivering a wide array of social services to needy communities while attending to the spiritual and psychological needs of those they help" (Solomon, 2002). Opponents noted that whether religiously-based programs are empirically effective in solving social problems is "still an open question and deserving of

further evaluation" (Solomon, 2002), pointing to a lack of research showing that the existence of a "faith factor" plays a part in helping to reduce societal ills (Horwitz 1999). Jonathan Jacobson published a study of participation by faith-based groups and noted that "National studies of the clients of faith-based providers funded under Charitable Choice, and of the effectiveness of faith-based programs for these clients, have yet to be conducted" (Jacobson 2005). Yet, a *New York Times* poll found that 68 percent of Americans believed that "voluntary groups like charities and churches" were better able to fight poverty in the cities than government (Solomon 2001). Sosin and Smith conducted a qualitative, longitudinal, interview-based investigation of faith based program changes and their relation to policy changes in a two-city sample of what are called "faith-related" agencies, investigating the implications of relying on religious agencies for service delivery. They found that faith-related agencies mildly contribute to increased variety of service delivery styles in the examined cities, but that they rarely expand services significantly to meet increased need or otherwise provide dramatically unique service content in response to recent public policy changes (Sosin & Smith, 2006).

The Urban Institute Center on Nonprofits and Philanthropy and the Harvard University Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations conducted a parallel series of seminars in May 2001 entitled *Faith-Based Initiatives: Sacred Deeds and Secular Dollars*, that brought together religious leaders, government officials, social service providers, and researchers to examine the political and social questions sparked by the initiatives. Carol J. De Vita and Sarah Wilson, paraphrasing a *New York Times* article by Laurie Goodstein, stated "there is little evidence that faith-based groups do a better job than secular organizations in social service provision" (De Vita 2001; Goodstein 2001).

The Bush initiative was predicated on the belief that government and religious institutions can work together in achieving common public purposes without unduly compromising each other's goals. Although the initiatives became the center of intense arguments among Christian leaders, it also put the plight of poor people closer to the center of national political debate. Bush's goals of leveling the playing field for faith-based providers was made explicit in the bill passed by the House of Representatives in July 2001, but because the President could get neither full support from his party in the Senate nor full support in public debate from evangelical groups to expand Faith Based Initiatives, the Administration proceeded to act administratively (i.e. by executive order) to implement the programs.

Literature Review

Scholarly research pertaining directly to faith based initiatives has been limited, and mainly centers on the controversies surrounding the program, including the Supreme Court's responsibility in resolving constitutional questions about the relationship between church and state (Banks 2009 and Smeltzer 2004), the financial performance of faith-based non-profits (Lampkin & Raghavan 2008), the organizational characteristics of grant recipients, and tallies of government giving to religious organizations (Kirschten, 2001).

Gossett and Pynes (2003) analyzed the expansion of Charitable Choice legislation and the impact of faith-based initiatives on human resource management issues in nonprofit organizations. They concluded that once an organization agrees to accept government funding for some activities, it can anticipate greater judicial and media scrutiny of its personnel practices. In addition, those organizations able to define themselves as integral parts of the religious mission of a church, synagogue, temple, or mosque will have greater flexibility in setting religious qualifications or behavioral standards in the personnel selection and promotion

processes than will organizations more fully separated from sectarian efforts. While proselytizing may have been an essential duty for employees of sectarian nonprofit organizations in the past, once groups start receiving government money, the training of employees will likely need to change (Gossett 2003).

Tanya Ballard (2002) reported on the debate among experts, some of whom questioned the need or usefulness of the program started by President Bush, while others were optimistic about future success. She quoted Kathryn Dunn Tempas of the Brookings Institution who said that the faith-based initiative's biggest success in 2001 was establishing offices at five departments (Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Labor), and in identifying barriers that keep faith-based and community groups from winning government contracts. Panelists at a Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life questioned the need for the faith-based initiative, arguing that it was duplicative. Some panelists cited the Salvation Army and Catholic charities as examples of faith-based organizations already receiving federal funds. Ballard concluded that the Office of Faith-Based Initiatives, even with its new leadership, faced many challenges in its first year of operation.

Clerkin (2003) looked at the organizational capacity of congregations to deliver complex human services and manage government contracts, and at the role of faith-based organizations in providing human services. Drawing on a survey of 2,067 nonprofit community service groups in the state of Indiana, Clerkin examined the organizational characteristics and management capacities of congregations and other nonprofits. The study identified and explored several key variables, including revenues and staff size, management structures (such as use of information technology, staff/board policies, and financial controls) reliance on volunteers and on donations, and participation in collaborations with other service groups. The study found that

> In general, it appears that these congregations may have as many key management structures in place as other human service nonprofits and therefore in principle be reasonably well equipped to deliver such services. However, their organizational capacities seem primarily geared toward running churches not social services. These capacities may not be easily transferable. (Clerkin (2003,7)

Carney (2003) interviewed Jim Towey, former Director of the Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives, who expressed surprise at the complexities of allocating federal money to faith based groups. The Office had grappled with such issues as how to prevent providers of religious services from discriminating against recipients with different religious beliefs; how to allow beneficiaries to opt out of religious portions of programs; and how faith-based organizations receiving federal funds could avoid factoring religion into hiring decisions.

Among published academic studies, Mealy's (2004) is the most closely connected with the study presented here. Mealy examined faith based initiatives from the perspective of the frames used by those involved in policy debate. She employed an experimental survey methodology to determine if "particular frames lead to greater levels of support for faith-based initiatives" and to establish "the comparative impact of political and religious predispositions in determining support for faith-based initiatives." Mealy's asked whether "framing effects exist with regard to the opinion towards Bush's Faith-based Initiative?" (p. 6-7). Her hypothesis was that the "presence in a framed condition versus a non-framed condition will not lead to significantly distinct evaluations of federally funding faith-based initiatives." Attempting to uncover which predispositions might moderate effects of framing, her goals were to determine whether "one issue frame in particular leads to greater levels of support" for faith-based initiatives and to establish the comparative impact of political versus religious predispositions. She surveyed 170 undergraduates at Indiana University and found that the resulting data told an

"interesting story about the nature of individual attitudes towards federally funding faith-based initiatives." In general,

> …religious commitment is an important factor in the determination of attitudes towards funding faith-based initiatives. However, even though this issue is arguably religious in nature, it should also be understood as a political issue that is impacted by political predispositions, as well as religious factors. Secondly, the findings based upon the survey experiment support the framing effects hypothesis and confirm the presence of framing effects with regard to evaluations toward using federal funding for fund faith-based initiatives. These findings further confirm the complexity of the nature of public opinion surrounding faith-based initiatives. There is support, especially among Republicans, for this initiative despite the threat of negative consequence. Furthermore, higher levels of religious commitment increase this support. (Mealy 2004)

Mealy's survey work also showed that in all cases, respondents in the framed conditions were more likely to support funding faith-based initiatives than respondents in the control condition. With regard to the oppositional frames, this finding is particularly interesting when one considers that respondents were told why others had opposed the initiative.

This study differs from Mealy's work in several important ways. Mealy's work polled a particular student population, did not address questions of the specific rhetorical devices used to create the frames, and did not choose to apply a specific set of discourse analysis tools to text. This study's methods and approach complement Mealy's work and provide boarder perspective by dealing with public debate, text and court opinions.

Chapter Three: Analysis of the Texts

The key testimony relating to faith-based initiatives was taken during the 107th and 108th Congress. Witnesses in the hearings include members of the U.S. Congress, social service program administrators, representatives of faith-based organizations, academics, and other "experts in charitable giving and in government efforts to spur greater individual and community involvement in aiding the needy" (U.S. House June 14, 2001). The court case texts examined are Bowen v. Kendrick 487 U.S 589 (1988), Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches Union Free School District 508 U.S. 384 (1993), and from Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of the University of Virginia 515 U.S. 819 (1995).

The tactics discerned from analysis of the text of the hearings closely align with the methodological categories elaborated in Gee's work: identity building, world building, activity building and connection building.

Identity Building: In introductory remarks made by hearing participants certain phrases were used repeatedly to establish an identity within minds of the audience and readers. This tactic is what Gee describes as "socioculturally-situated identity and relationship building, that is using cues and clues to assemble situated meaning about what identities and relationships are relevant to interaction. . ." (Gee 1999). The identity being created in the hearings was not of a single person or of a single group but of broadly groups of people who care about the issues under consideration and whose views are being represented. For example, phrases "I represent more than… they represent more than…. We represent more than" were used repeatedly. A

succinct example is provided in the testimony given by Mable Hemphill from the World Outreach Medical Center in Gastonia, NC, before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources:

> Thank you so much. I would like to thank Congresswoman Myrick and this panel for having us here. The reason I am saying us is because you are only seeing Mable Hemphill, you are not looking at the hundreds of volunteers that spend so much of their time.

A broader example of identity building is exemplified in this statement by Brent Walker, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs (BJC):

> I am an ordained Baptist minister. I also serve as an adjunct professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center, where I teach an advanced seminar in church-state law. I speak today, however, only on behalf of the BJC... The BJC serves the Alliance of Baptists, American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A., Baptist General Association of Virginia, Baptist General Conference, Baptist General Convention of Texas, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, National Baptist Convention of America, National Baptist Convention U.S.A. Inc., National Missionary Baptist Convention, North American Baptist Conference, Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., Religious Liberty Council, and Seventh Day Baptist General Conference focusing exclusively on public policy issues concerning religious liberty and its constitutional corollary, the separation of church and state. For sixty-five years, the BJC has adopted a well-balanced, sensibly centrist approach to church-state issues. We take seriously both religion clauses in the First Amendment – No Establishment and Free Exercise – as essential guarantors of God-given religious liberty.

Walker's opening statement reveals that he wants his audience to regard him clearly as a member of the religious and legal communities. He also inserts the political language of "sensible centrist approach to church-state issue" to describe the group he represents. This is an

attempt to stake out a position within the current political dialogue. By the year 2000 in the public's mind Republican spin doctors had succeed in equating the word "liberal" with morally decadence and Democratic propaganda pushers had made the word "conservative" synonymous with mental retardation. Walkers "centrist approach" is code for giving his group a "conservative-but-not-crazy" label.

The use of terms "we represent" followed in the testimony by a list of organizations and followed by the pronoun "we" and such verbs as "believe," "affirm," "are convinced," "have experienced," etc., indicated a continuing attempt by the witness to point the audience's imagination to a larger constituency than was otherwise visible at the hearings, and to persuade the audience to assign more importance to speakers than the audience might otherwise accept. Often it was the congressional member convening the hearing who used terms such as those used by Congressman Souder: "Our witnesses today represent just a small fraction of the countless faith-based organizations that are reaching out to…" (U. S. House, Jan. 23, 2004). In other cases, the identity building tactic was seen as witnesses used terms such as "I represent a coalition of a little over 100 churches in Colorado Springs who serve more than…" which consciously attempted to shape the audience's understanding of how many people or groups (who were not present at the hearings) the speaker's organizations represent. Or consider Sara Melendez, who provided another example:

> I am Sara Melendez, president and CEO of Independent Sector, a coalition of more than 700 national nonprofit organizations that collectively represent tens of thousands of community-based nonprofit service providers, as well as foundations and companies that share a strong commitment to community involvement, volunteering, and philanthropy (U.S. House, June 14, 2001).

The creation of group identity (and hence constituent identity) is instrumental in the creation of political reality. Thus the tactic serves as a basis for the assertion and negotiation of power throughout the hearings. This tactic was repeatedly used by witnesses, most notably by Dina Aviv, Vice President for Public Policy, United Jewish Communities; Sara Melendez President and CEO of Independent Sector; Frank T. Griswold, Presiding Bishop and Prelate of the Episcopal Church; Danita Ferguson Oliver; Wade Henderson of the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights' and more than a dozen other witnesses. Using such phrases at the beginning of testimony builds an identity emphasizing the significance of organizational work and gives authoritative weight to later assertions.

Another set of phrases used repeated as part of an identity building tactic centered on the terms "faith based groups" and "people of faith." While both of these phrases worked to construct a particular identity, it is important to note that within the identities being created by hearing participants the terms "faith based groups" and "people of faith" are not the same thing. The term "faith based groups" was used to point to organizations that understood themselves as extensions of defined religious communities. In his statement at the beginning of the hearings J.C. Watts, Jr. Representative in Congress from the Oklahoma said, "in many of the communities, your faith-based organizations are the only organizations that will go into these communities." Early in the hearing entitled *Faith-based Perspectives on the Provision of Community Services* held in Charlotte North Carolina, Mark Souder (R-Indiana) asked several witnesses what they meant by the term "faith based":

> Could I ask each of you to briefly state why you consider yourself a faith-based organization? In other words, how does that make you different than a traditional service organization? What would you say are the components? Is it your staff hiring, is it a process people have to go through, is there anything that

> is peculiarly faith-based or are you a secular organization staffed by people of faith, which is a slightly different type of thing because Christians work for the welfare department, too. It's not to say only faith-based organizations have Christians working there. What makes your organization uniquely a faith-based organization as opposed to a social service organization that Christians are working in? (U.S. House, Dec 10, 2003).

Reverend Tony Marciano Executive Director of Charlotte Rescue Mission responded by saying "I think if you look at the first seven words of the purpose statement of the Charlotte Rescue Mission – the first seven words say to minister the good news of Christianity." Marciano went on to explain that his was not a social service agency. His group delivered social services, but understand itself "first and foremost" as a ministry, with the task of "reconnecting people back to God. The target population that God has called us to serve is the chemically addicted homeless… We are people that are Christians. We are a Christian organization staffed by Christians whose goal is to minister…" Reverend Mable Hemphill, World Outreach Medical Center, Gastonia, N.C. responded in the same hearing,

> I am a licensed, ordained minister… our ministry is in the basement of the church. We are a mission. It was a Baptist church. It went from Baptist to the Church of God. Now it is a mission with all faiths in there.
>
> We took a look at the area. The area where the church is, we have Hispanics on one side, a crack house over there, we are in the hood. We look like we are not, but we are in the hood so to speak. And then we have the so-called rednecks behind us. We have kind of a – it is a mixed neighborhood. So one thing that makes us unique is I am a licensed ordained minister. It is in the basement of the church. We do not think about whether you are a Baptist or whether you are Episcopalian, if you are a Muslim, we never think about that. We only see how we can best serve. And being a licensed, ordained minister, trust me, you are a servant. You are not out there for the money. You are a servant, not only a servant of God, but you are a servant of the people.

Shirley Stowe, director of Nursing and Home Management for the House of Mercy in Belmont, N.C., identified herself as an employee of the Sisters of Mercy. She said, "I am an RN …and there are Sisters on the board of directors, and then the board of directors, actually if they want to make any major changes in the mission or anything like that – which has never been changed, by the way – they report to the Board of the Sisters."

Chairman Souder gave special attention to the particulars of religious identity by setting out a series of pointed (and politically charged) identity questions at the beginning of hearings:

> Let me ask you three different questions….. Could each of you answer this question? Would you hire someone who does not share your faith? If it is a Muslim organization, would you hire a Christian? If you are a Jewish organization, would you hire a Christian? If you are a Christian organization, would you hire a Muslim on your staff?

Souder's first question in this series moves beyond the simple identity of groups related to faith directly to the political debate surrounding the funding of organizations with ties to religion. In asking about hiring practices Souder establishes the demarcation line which forces witness to identify their political ideology about hiring. The questions denote an inquiry into *where you stand on the separation of church and state debate*.

As Souder continues his questioning he moves more deeply into the specific practices of the witness's group:

> Second, do you pray with your clients, and would that change your mission if you were not allowed to pray?

This second question brings to audience attention the political nature of the inquiry. The question is about prayer which in part of the church and state political debate; nothing in the question focuses on the characteristics of merits or effectiveness of the services.

> And then third – and this is one that is not talked about as much. Many organizations have a standard you do not have to be convicted in court to fire somebody. For example, if you heard that somebody in your congregation or group was abusing a child or was running around with somebody when they were married, or there was an allegation from somebody on your staff that they bought drugs or were selling drugs but they were not convicted. If you are a government agency you cannot fire – or if you get government funds, you cannot fire unless it has been convicted in court. But most religious organizations because they view themselves as, in a Christian sense, reflecting the glory of Christ believe that even if there is substantial evidence you cannot run the risk.

In this third question the Chairman is returning to the political hiring/ firing issue he introduced in his first question of this series. Clearly these line of questions is not an attempt to get information as much as bit of theater. It is a way of showing on the record the Convener's identification for political issues of the constituent.

Similar identity building was attempted in statements by Girton-Mitchell, the Associate General Secretary of Public Policy for the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., by Valora Washington, the Executive Director of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, Cambridge, Mass., and in the written statements provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of American and John Green, a deacon with the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago.

By contrast, the term "people of faith" is used in a more political advocacy sense, to point to an insider versus outsider understanding of debate participants. The "people of faith" term is a code for the identity of groups that hold a particular set of extra doctrinal beliefs about faith, about country, and about absolute truth in a historical record of American society. Notably, in pushing the political aspect of the term Deacon Green said,

> If you take away the option for faith-based organizations to preferentially hire, you will take away that faith that you saw. You will take away that vibrancy in Christ. I am interested in

> getting men out of prostitution and walking in the saving knowledge and relationship with Jesus Christ. If I can get one out of two of those, I am happy. If I get both of them, I am ecstatic. *But I need to preferentially hire people of faith, people who have my same values or an organization that has the same values to do that* [emphasis added].

In this context the term "preferentially hire people of faith" and "people who have the same values" work as code for the attempts by fundamentalist and/or evangelical religious groups to exclude gays, lesbians and Muslims as job candidates.

Outside the hearing rooms, language used in court battles and news articles were more explicitly highlighting controversies in the social environment surrounding the debates. The *Washington Post* reported on July 11, 2001 that the Bush Administration had "abruptly ended its consideration of a regulation that would have let religious charities discriminate against gays in hiring, after Democratic leaders in the Senate warned that such a move would imperil Bush's core faith-based initiative" (Milbank, July 2001) . On that same day, the *New York Times* reported that "The Bush administration declined a request today from Salvation Army, the nation's largest charity, to exempt religious charities that receive federal money from local laws that bar discrimination against homosexuals" (page A1). Both publications chronicled the behind-the-scenes wheeling and dealing among administration higher-ups and various activist groups and specified discrimination against gays as a central issue. In Lownes v. Salvation Army, a group of employees of the religious group challenged the government's practices of contracting an organization that allegedly discriminated on the basis of religion with respect to employees working in child welfare services. Alicia Pedreira sued the Kentucky Baptist Home for Children in 2000 alleging unlawful religious discrimination under state and federal law. She

was dismissed from her job after the employer learned that Pedreira was living in an openly homosexual relationship (Lupu and Tuttle 2008).

Other witnesses drew a link between a “we the people of faith” identity-building tactic and an expressed need for total discretion in making religious hiring decisions. The political nature of the use of terms can be seen in this excerpt of a statement given April 26, 2004 to the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, Drug and Policy and Human Resources by Cal Uomoto, affiliate Director of World Relief (Seattle):

> World Relief has been a faith-based organization that contracts with the Federal Government for about 25 years. And World Relief is a Protestant Christian organization, and in the Seattle area we serve the needs of about 1,300 refugee immigrants yearly. Nationally we have about 25, 26 offices in different cities where we do the same thing. Here we partner with a dozen local churches, many refugee mutual assistance associations, and employers, two dozen employers over a three-county area, to carry out our services. World Relief employs individuals who feel a sense of God's calling to work with refugees and immigrants. We try to teach staff the knowledge of biblical principles on treatment of foreigners and aliens, the church's history in reaching out for immigrants, and the experience of Christians as refugees.

In the first part of his statement Uomoto gives specific examples of World Relief’s activities and ideas that establish the group’s identity as firmly protestant and evangelical, the avowed base of the national Republican Party from 1994 through 2008 and beyond. Given the discourse analysis methods described by Gee, the term “evangelical protestant” in the testimony can be understood as a cue to assemble situated meaning about relationships relevant to the interaction. It is a code for a certain set of values and ways of knowing and believing. This introduction sets up a rhetorical movement toward a wider political statement that follows:

> I should point out that the largest bulk of refugees in the greater Seattle area are people of faith coming from the Soviet Union. We teach our staff to use spiritual tools. We confront many

> inhumanities and horrors perpetrated on our clients by governments and other persons. We feel that faith gives us the philosophic tools to understand the larger questions of evil and suffering in the world. And this approach and the common values shared by the staff forms the framework for the practices of our organization and its service to refugees. We also are organizationally connected in the larger sense to a body called the National Association of Evangelicals, and so we feel a kinship with various Protestant denominations here, the churches, colleges, etc. And we feel that our role here in the Seattle area is to become the bridge between the world of refugees and the world of the church.

This second part of the statement links World Relief with the larger political questions of immigration. At the time of the hearing the Soviet Union no longer existed; but by using this term and the terms such as "confront many inhumanities and horrors perpetrated on our clients by governments," the witness invokes Cold War imagery which was a stalwart of Republican politics from 1980 through 1992. So by virtue of short opening statements Uomoto establishes his organization as both bonafide religious conservative and a genuine foot soldier of the Cold War. Having established the political credentials, the witness goes on to make the case on the political issues at hand.

> I just wanted to bring a couple of concerns that we have had …I think the major concern with a faith-based organization is the need to have control over its hiring policy in order to safeguard its mission viability. We're afraid that government funding will encroach on the particular values that we hold, and the fact that hiring values held by us and our constituency, which are churches, denominations, etc., may not be honored or that they may be sued for a particular stand, and that is one of the big fears of faith-based organizations.

In the third part of the World Relief statement Uomoto makes the case for allowing religious groups to discriminate in hiring practices because not to do so would be to violate the values held by churches. The discursive transaction that is taking place here is the movement of

first establishing political identity (conservative Republican); then connecting that identity to world wide and history long causes (Communism/ oppressive government acts versus compassionate treatment of oppressed immigrants), to finally justifying the exceptional treatment of faith based organization. In Gee's parlance this is bring "coherence" to the connection among the political and cultural identities.

In the hearing called to discuss *H.R. 7, The "Community Solutions of Act of 2001"* Chet Edwards (D-TX) takes a different tact. Presumably because he is a U. S. Congressman, Edwards does not need to establish his identity or credentials. He argues the separation of church and state against the funding of faith based groups.

> ... separation of church and state, Mr. Chairman, does not mean keeping people of faith out of government. It means, according to our Founding Fathers, keeping government out of religion. I think there is a right way and wrong way to help charities do good work in America. The right way is to provide tax incentives to those who, out of their own charity, give to these organizations. I think the wrong way is to go down the path as proposed in some legislation, including H.R. 7 by Mr. Watts and Mr. Hall, that would really for the first time in our country's history, along with two or three other bills we have recently passed, would have the Federal Government tax dollars going directly, not to faith-based groups or charities, but directly into our houses of worship, into our synagogues, into our mosques (U.S. House June 14, 2001).

The work being done by language here relates to connection building. Here Edwards connects his understand of historical precedent with the specter of government dominance over religious groups to the present moment as a tactic to undermine the validity of the funding to faith based groups. As Edwards proceeds he varies the rhetorical strategy.

> Charitable Choice will generate serious problems that have not been seen on a large scale in this country in over 200 years — outright religious infighting, intolerance and discrimination.

> This is a perfect program if you want your tax dollars going to any and every self-proclaimed religious group, you'd like the government auditing your church and you have no problem with ignoring the Bill of Rights and its protections of religious freedom.

In this comment the Texas representative invokes the identities of his constituents. In contrast to the people of faith, the identity here is “self-proclaimed religious group” (used as an epithet) vs. American taxpayer, those who pay attention to the Bill of Rights (the good guys).

Then Edwards makes a third rhetorical move.

> The American public recognizes the danger Charitable Choice poses to religious freedom. In fact, 68 percent of Americans contacted in a Pew Forum poll worry that Charitable Choice type programs could lead to government involvement in religion. If we allow government to fund and become involved in religion, it will harm religion, not help it. It is people of faith who must point out that church-state separation does not mean keeping people of faith from being involved in government but rather it means keeping government from being involved in religion. I believe Madison got it right in the Bill of Rights, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." For over two centuries, those 16 words have worked to protect our religious freedom, and in my opinion, make religious liberty the crown jewel of America's experiment in democracy. As students of human behavior, and human history, Madison and Jefferson understood that, in general, politicians, if allowed, could not withstand the temptation to use religion as a means to their own political ends.

Using both the connections to his version of history and an emphasis on fear (government auditors vs. your church), Edwards constructs an ambiguity about the reliability and trustworthiness of those who testify in favor of the funding for faith based groups.

The use of people-who-got-it-right vs. people-who-got-it-wrong exclusive language was meant to establish identities of an elevated in-group as divinely ordained. The connotation is that there are people of faith and others who lack faith, oppose the work of the faithful, or simply do

not share the faith commitments asserted by witnesses. When religious imagery appears, then, the referential move is to join Protestant evangelical, fundamentalist, charismatic and Pentecostal groups with conservative Roman Catholics and conservative Anglican congregations who also support the initiative and whose political alliances have electoral, financial, and bureaucratic consequence.

Another identity tactic revealed in the text relates to social class and race. This is shown clearly in the statement by Watts, who at the time of the hearing was the only African American Republican member of Congress:

> …in many of the communities, your faith-based organizations are the only organizations that will go into these communities. This legislation also provides important tax incentives to increase charitable giving by allowing nonitemizers to deduct charitable contributions, a bipartisan proposal that originated with Congressman Phil Crane. A charitable deduction for taxpayers who do not itemize seems not only good public policy but also a matter of simple fairness for more moderate-income Americans who use the standard deduction but contribute to charities and receive no tax relief for doing so.
>
> We talk a lot about discrimination, well, the bottom-line is, today we allow discrimination against people because they are people of faith. We say to them: You cannot compete for certain dollars when it comes to delivering community services because you wear a collar or because you are a person of faith. And I got to tell you, I think that is ridiculous. If we are concerned about discrimination, we ought to go through the whole gamut and say let's not discriminate against people just because of faith. (U.S. House, March 29, 2001).

The fact that this statement includes an appeal on behalf of “nonitemizers” (which might be read as code for people who have low incomes and who do not own property), the phrases “low income families, working poor, equal opportunity” and “discriminations against people” are introduced by the only black Republican congressman in a manner that introduces a subtext

of racial and class advocacy into the debate. Also seen here is the attempt to paint people of faith who seek to do good as victims of discrimination. Such language, juxtaposed with "low income" imagery, creates an implicit equation between historical discrimination against the poor and more current claims of discrimination against people of faith. The attempt to create identification with the interests of poor black people in testimony sets a sharp contrast with an unacknowledged irony: that during the previous fifty years the Republican party did not consider the needy as constituents and exhibited striking indifference to the material concerns of the poor and persons of color.

The statement regarding tax breaks for non-itemizers also has a partisan political dimension to it. Using tax policy to address social problems (as contrasted with creating government run social programs to address problems) has long been the approach preferred by the national Republican party. By emphasizing this aspect of the initiative, Watts sets his testimony squarely within the mainstream of conservative Republican political thought.

Similarly, Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) pushed the tax angle in the June 16, 2003 hearing when she detailed her view of the best way to support groups helping those in need:

> In communities all across Tennessee, there are groups... that help the homeless, counsel at-risk youth, assist the elderly and help drug addicts recover... Congress can play a role in assisting these organizations by providing more incentives for individuals to financially support them. Mr. Chairman, it will not be a surprise to anybody here in this audience today that the type of incentives I am talking about come in the form of tax reform... H.R. 7 will also provide incentives for individuals to make tax-free contributions to charities from their IRAs, their Individual Retirement Accounts, and raise the cap on corporate charitable contributions from 10 to 20 percent. I am proud to be a cosponsor of the legislation and it is my hope that Congress consider it soon.

Emphasizing the tax advantages aspect of the initiative served two purposes: it advances the notion of the initiative providing benefits while also serving to identify the Congresswoman as part of the true blue conservative wing of her political party.

The use of identity building discourse was used to sustain an overall strategy of creating the public impression of a strongly supportive national constituency (an impression revealed as false when the time for voting on the initiative arrived). The reality constructed by identifying "people of faith" or "national prophet" (whether as individuals or groups) is not permanent; it is socially situated in that such a worldview is employed in specific local situations, and arises at different times in the life of the communicators.

World Building. A central tactic used by advocates and opponents of the initiative was testimony to create a particular picture of the world. This is what Gee calls "world building," the use of "cues or clues to assemble situated meaning about what is taken as reality and what is taken as present and absent and what is probable, possible, and impossible" (Gee 1997).

Two metaphors, "level the playing field" and "lower the barriers," (or alternatively, "remove the barriers") are repeatedly inserted into testimony to advance "world building." The use of these terms projects a vision of a world in which some groups are victims of unfairness and harmfully excluded from what is rightfully theirs. The quasi-athletic term "level the playing field" implies an accidental disadvantage, whereas the more political term "lower the barriers" implies that a humanly placed structure is being used to prevent rightful access. Both metaphors serve the world building function of assembling situated meanings about a reality fraught with injustice, and both imply a need for corrective action. Testimony in the hearing entitled *Faith-Based Perspectives on the Provision of Community Services* (Colorado Springs, Jan 23, 2004) and given by Reverend Dean Cowles, President of YouthPartnersNet and Director of Shepherd

community Urban Ministry in Indianapolis, provides an example of both the identity building and world building uses of the terms.

> Over the years that I have been involved in urban faith-based ministry, and starting a homeless center, and a litany of other projects, it's my firm belief that the present administration is on the right track with leveling the playing field as the faith-based White House paper came out calling it. It's time for faith-based organizations to be able to have a chance to share what works. We're not talking about, you know, debating here who's better, who's right, who's wrong. We're just talking about what works. And if it works, great. And we have found thousands of organizations that I represent around the country through YouthPartnersNet and other compassionate ministries, that these programs work, and they work with far more impact for less money than the war on poverty welfare programs that have been pushed by government over the past 30 to 40 years.

Rev. Cowles presented himself as person more concerned with results than with politics; perhaps more precisely, he presented himself as a pragmatist more that a partisan. Yet, close examination of his discursive choices reveals a particular posture unrelated to solutions. The use of the phrase "involved in urban faith based ministry" identifies him as one who works with black poor people and one who supports the label of "faith-based" for funding ministry (after all, aren't all ministries faith based?). Revealing an openly hostile attitude about government involvement in social programs, he labels social initiatives from the 1960s and 1970s aimed at helping the poor as "poverty welfare programs that have been pushed by government." The term "pushed" in this context means force, and in an urban context, could also mean *pushed* in the same sense that illegal drugs are pushed those whose motives are profit and poisoning unsuspecting victims.

By way of contrast, Cowles sees his own work as compassion:

> ...we have spun off that division of Compassion into YouthPartnersNet. We are trying to build capacity with

> hundreds of faith-based local grass roots organizations that don't have the sophistication to apply for government funds or private funds for that matter. They pretty much do it as volunteers, with tithes and offerings from their local church, and do a tremendous work in their local communities. Thousands and thousands of these grass roots organizations have continued this kind of work long before this debate ever began…before government entered this, it was the church that was doing it. But in the 1920's and 1930's the church got out of that and government got into it. And we have seen some problems since then…. I am advocating that we level the playing field, and get more resources back into these local neighborhood and community faith-based organizations.

The world building being done here relates to the creation of both historical and current reality. By this witness's account of U.S. history, there once was a time when churches were the benevolent purveyors of charity service to the poor. But that effective work was ended when government began giving direct aid. According to this narrative, now the former effectiveness is being restored as government funds level the playing field for local religious groups. This argument is somewhat undermined by statements revealing the absence of research supporting the "effectiveness" claim, such as those made by Congresswoman Blackburn in the June 16, 2003 hearing (there she notes that "there is little research that has been done into why these groups are so effective at their mission," U.S. House, June 16, 2003).

Blackburn's remarks at that hearing are followed by a litany of anecdotes from program operators about the miracles achieved by providing programs based on what Onnie Kirk, Director of the Family Foundation in Nashville, called "spiritual principals," and what Paige Pitts, founder of New Hope Academy, in Franklin, Tennessee called

> Christ-centered education that educated the whole child, that it was not just a program that focused on academics but we could look into the hearts and minds of these children and begin to love and serve them spiritually, emotionally, physically as well as intellectually (U.S. House of Rep June 16, 2003).

This litany was repeated by service providers and leaders of faith based groups throughout the April 26, June 26, and July 2, hearings – all entitled, “The Role of Community and Faith-based Organizations in Providing Effective Social Services.

In the Jan 23 hearing, Cowles used the term “building capacity,” one of the current buzz phrases used among the nonprofit and by fundraising enterprises meant to suggest training and educational services. In this lexicon, for example, to feed the hungry is *direct service*; but to teach someone how to write a grant proposal seeking funds for the same goal becomes *capacity building*. By naming his work capacity building, Cowles makes a claim about being more sophisticated that other community groups and ministries, and to operating in a world requiring more sophistication than in the past. His allusion to the 1920s and 1930 when the church "got out of that and government got into it,” conveniently omits the criminal indictments scandals among church groups who were accused of abusing poor people and children, actions that forced churches to “get out of it.”

In a similar manner to the use of “level paying field,” the repeated uses of the terms “expand participation of religious providers” and “equal access for religious providers” also situated meanings around an asserted reality of unfairness. This world building approach is used by Souder, Reverend Wendell Anthony of Fellowship Chapel, Detroit; Reverend Kirbyjon Caldwell of Windsor Village United Methodist Church; John Weicher, Assistant Secretary for Housing at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; Robert Ney, congressman from Ohio; Mary Diggs-Hobson, Executive Director of the African Americans Reach and Teach Ministry in Seattle; Rep. Paul Ryan of Wisconsin; Amy Sherman, Senior Fellow, Welfare

Policy Center at the Hudson Institute; Congresswomen Sue Myrick from North Carolina and Patsy Mink from Hawaii.

The image invoked is of a world filled with the religious persecution of innocent and humble servants. This language moves beyond simple unfairness, however, and into the realm of assembling socio-culturally-situated identity and relationship building. It implies an unfair world where specific victims survive longstanding historical trauma, conjuring images of historically abusive treatment aimed against Catholics, Jews and other religious out groups. Terms implying unfairness were used by advocates of the initiatives as justification of government involvement beyond the status quo.

The tactic and several common rhetorical techniques were used thorough the hearing to build a compelling case by supporters and opponents. Rev. Edwards boldly used anaphora, repeating the terms "charitable choice is the wrong way to do the right thing," in each of his six successive phrases of opposition. Edwards is opposed to the initiative, and he uses anaphora in a very complex , skillful way. He contrasts the terms "wrong way" and "right thing" in a rhetorical rhythm. The term 'wrong way" is emphasized to re-enforce his position of opposition. In setting up this contrast Edwards is able to sound sympathetic to the overall goals of the initiative (i.e. "the right thing" and hence not attack the President and his political party), but at same time he is able to attack the results he claims the initiative would bring by posing various dangers and causing various harms. Thus, the persuasive power of anaphora works here two ways. When Edwards in his testimony talked about "the danger Charitable Choice poses to religious freedom," and uses terms such as "harm to religion" and "work to protect our religious freedom," and when he attempted to bolster his claim by inserting statistics showing that many Americans "worry" about government involvement in religion, he was engaged the same world-

build rhetorical maneuvering as proponents of the initiate do when the talk about "removing the barriers." Edwards adds to his creation of a perilous world the sinister danger that "politicians, if allowed, could not withstand the temptation to use religion as a means to their own political ends."

Activity Building. An additional tactic used by hearing participants was to describe their own efforts as logical responses to the world they encountered. In this type of discourse meaning is situated in the described activity and one's participation in it. In Gee's lexicon this task of language would constitutes activity building. In some ways the world the communicator claims to act in response to is the same one that has been created rhetorically. In these cases , identity, world and activity building discourses are used in combination. This activity building can be seen in the systematic interpretation of activity by use of phrases such as "protecting religious freedom" or preventing policies that "breach the wall of separation between church and state."

Repeated occurrences of the term "separation of church and state" provides one of the most interesting and complex formulations of discourse. The term is used in testimony by both opponents and supporters of the initiatives, by both professional clergy and laity, by community activists and also by elected officials. As a rhetorical tool "separation of church and state" is a powerful metaphor evoking strong images. It would be easy for someone to visualize a wall being erected between a sanctuary building or cathedral and a legislative hall or a palace. It would be even easy to visualize the picture of two anthologized, struggling contestants -- perhaps boxers or wrestlers -- being physically pulled apart by a referee or a judge. For some witnesses, the term "separation of church and state" points to a sacred barrier placed in U.S. law by the framers of the U.S. Constitution to protect either the fledging government from sectarian power or to protect the new pluralistic religious communities from government domination. Other

witnesses saw the term as a poorly chosen metaphor that misrepresented the intention of the founding fathers.

In hearings entitled “Strengthen America’s Communities: Examining the Impact of Faith-Based Housing Partnerships” conducted by the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity, Chairman Robert Ney (R-Ohio) characterized the thrust of the administration’s efforts as administrative measures to enhance its faith-based initiative and as removing the “roadblock” that faith groups face “hindering their ability to help those in need." By contrast, Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-California) saw the President's initiative as doing "nothing to allow faith-based organizations to provide services to the community other than allow them to discriminate” (U.S. House, March 25 and April 28, 2004).

This discourse straddles three categories in Gee’s system. It could be understood as “connections building” because connections across time are discursively sutured; i.e. the term “separation of church and state” presumes certain facts about history and links together those advocates who see U.S. history in such a manner. This discourse could also be heard as forming political and socio-cultural alliances, while creating thicker relational connections. There is also an ethical/ moral component to the injection of “church and state” which Gee calls “political building,” because the term also constructs the nature and relevance of various social goods and power (religion, peace, love, tolerance, etc.).

Waters makes her point about the social good and power relations in the following way

> ...the President's executive order absolutely violates Title VII and it flies in the face of President Johnson's executive order, which further supported Title VII in saying that if you receive Federal money, if you receive government money, you may not discriminate. This initiative by the President suggests that somehow religious organizations should be able to pick and

> choose who they hire. If they do not like somebody's skin color, if they do not like their gender, if they do not like the other organizations they are associated with, if they do not like the communities they live in — whatever — they would be allowed to undermine all of the civil rights work that many of our people have died for, to make sure that we do not have discrimination (U.S. House, March 25).

Simply a confusing metaphor for outsiders, the term “separation of church and state” binds together those who understand their work as protecting society from sinking into godless secularism. Supporters of faith based initiatives often view ”separation of church and state” as a term used to encompass evil attempts to separate public policy from morality. By contrast, when understood as proscriptive subtext by those who believe America must be protected from restrictive religiosity, the term works as code for rational public policy development and common sense resistance. Opponents of faith based initiative put forth the term as a practical measure to prevent factional strife among religious denominations fighting for federal funding.

By playing the “separation of church and state” card, contestants also align themselves with the authority of the courts. Identifying the initiative with its association as an extension of Charitable Choice, J. Brent Walker (Baptist Joint Committee) demonstrates the use of the term in the opening part of his six point argument:

> So we oppose ``charitable choice" – not because we are against faith-based social ministries – but because of our desire to protect religious freedom…. First, "charitable choice" is unconstitutional. “Charitable choice" promotes religion in ways that breach the wall of separation between church and state. The United States Supreme Court has long said that governmental financial aid to pervasively religious organizations, even for ostensibly secular purposes, violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. Pervasively religious entities (like houses of worship and parochial schools) – ones that are so fundamentally religious that they cannot or will not separate secular and religious functions – should be disqualified from receiving government grants because to fund them is to fund

> religion. See Bowen v. Kendrick, 487 U.S. 589 (1988)… In short, “charitable choice" unconstitutionally funds government services that are delivered in a thoroughly religious environment.

Walker, who is both an attorney and a minister, used the language of the courts not as factual evidence for consideration, but as rhetorical ammunition to support his opposition and to shape the nature of the debate.

The fact that Walker chose to use Bowen v. Kendrick (1988) is of particular interest here, for it could be argued that the Bowen decision said the opposite of what the witness claims it said. In that case Kendrick, as a federal taxpayer, clergymen, and the American Jewish Congress, challenged AFLA's constitutionality. On appeal the Supreme Court granted Bowen a hearing. The question before the court was: do AFLA's provisions (which require its participants to involve both religious groups and government in response to problems of teenage sexual relations) violate the First Amendment's Establishment Clause?

In deciding Bowen, the high court reversed a lower court decision and instead upheld the constitutionality of the Adolescent Family Life Act of 1981, (“Charitable Choice Act,”) which allowed religious groups to receive federal funds, provide social and educational services such as alternatives to abortion. Bowen represented a victory for religious groups because the written majority opinion maintains that allowing public funds to support religious groups providing sexual abstinence counseling does not violate the constitution.

The language used by the court in describing its reasoning relied on the already famous test for judging religious infringement, which rests on whether the law or regulation “has a valid secular purpose, does not have the primary effect of advancing religion, and does not create an excessive entanglement of church and state.” This language thereafter became the argument

used by proponents of Charitable Choice to justify advocating for government funding of religious groups.

So, far from the claim made by Walker, Bowen does not imply that Charitable Choice is unconstitutional, but instead allows the use of federal funds in limited religious contexts. In Bowen, the court concluded in a 5-4 decision that the "advancement of religion" was not AFLA's primary effect. Although it funded religious and other institutions without expressly prohibiting the use of such funds for religious purposes, AFLA required potential recipients to reveal what services they intended to provide and how they would provide them. Thus, the government could protect against the misuse of its funds. At the same time, however, such oversight did not create an "excessive entanglement" between church and state because AFLA merely authorized funding of religiously affiliated, rather than pervasively sectarian, organizations.

Walker’s statement about the court case could be seen as either merely mistaken or mean spirited mendacity; but either way, from a rhetorical standpoint his invocation of court language serves to bolster his aspirations to activity building. That is, he attempts to create for his audience the notion that he protecting a wall separating church and state. The fact that the court did take up a case and rendered an opinion related to the questions in the hearing brings the legal system into the discourse. In this way it is not the specific statement of the court, but the fact that the court engaged the issue that has a direct bearing on the public debate.

Introducing of the names of court cases, quoting court opinions and making reference to the Supreme Court are all effective rhetorical testimony tactics. These words become synecdoche for final authority, for absolute correctness, for perfect justice, because the Courts generally and the U.S. Supreme Court in particular are known to have wrestled with and given definitive answers for the nations most in tractable problems. using the language common in

legal circles was perfect for public debate and perfect drama. In some cases, however, it was the actual language of the court that became part of the public debate even if the direction of the court ruling is not used. In Lambs Chapel, for example, the language of the court clearly impacted the public debate. There the Supreme Court ruled that a public school that made its facilities available to outside groups to show films could not bar a religious group from showing films with a "religious perspective" and the school could not exercise "content discrimination." The court held that denying the church access to school premises for exhibiting the film violates the freedom of speech clause. The language used in the opinion included the phrases "view point neutral" and "discriminates on the basis of view point" (*Journal of Church & State* 224-233).

As seen in earlier testimony, the notion of "discrimination" against or in favor of religious groups was used by several witnesses. An example are the words used by Walker in attacking the initiative:

> "Charitable Choice" authorizes religious discrimination in employment. Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, churches and some other religious organizations are granted an exemption to discriminate on the basis of religion in their hiring and firing practices. This exemption, when it applies to privately-funded enterprises, appropriately protects the church's autonomy and its ability to discharge its mission. For example, the Catholic Church must be free to exercise its religion by hiring only Catholics as priests. Courts have interpreted this exemption to apply not only to clergy, but also to all the religious organization's employees, including support staff, and not only to religious affiliation, but also to religious beliefs and practices. "Charitable choice" explicitly allows religious organizations to retain their Title VII exemption, even in a program substantially funded by government money. Allowing religious organizations to discriminate in the private sector is a welcomed accommodation of religion; but to subsidize religious discrimination with tax dollars is an unconscionable advancement of religion that simultaneously turns back the clock on civil rights in this country.

In this rhetorical formulation, the terms “discrimination,” in “Under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.” and “the courts interpreted: all work together as synecdoche for Authority bothe legal and moral, From the standpoint of rhetorical maneuvering it apparently did not matter whether there was hard evidence of any discrimination taking place. The explosive term “discrimination” assists the activity building effort of the speaker.

In addition to Lamb’s Chapel, both proponents and opponents of the imitative tapped heavily into the Rosenberger's language when constructing their arguments. The case involved access to public school funds. When the University of Virginia denied reimbursement of $6,000.00 from its Student Activity Fund (SAF) to a student publication (which included Christian symbols on each page and professed a Christian editorial policy) and to student Rosenberger citing “religious activity” as the cause the denial, the student sued the school. Rosenberger claimed that the university funded other religious groups, and that the schools actions amounted to a violation of his and other Christian students’ right to express a point of view. The question before the court was: “did the University of Virginia violate the First Amendment rights of its Christians publishers by denying them the same funding resources that it made available to secular student-run magazines?”

The Supreme Court held that the “guideline invoked to deny SAF support, both in its terms and in its application to [the student], is a denial of their right of free speech.” Rosenberger extended the Lamb’s Chapel ruling, thereby allowing facilities to be used for religious presentation. Public money could then be given directly to the people conveying sectarian messages. This addressed the question about the extent to which public institutions are obliged to provide support to religious organizations propagating their viewpoints.

The Court's language used in Rosenberger was to partisans because it foregrounded the issues of freedom of speech and religious freedom among groups that seek government funding and at the same time provided an authoritative for pubic debate. The Court said the university "imposed a financial burden on the student's speech and amounted to viewpoint discrimination" also made distinction between content discrimination and viewpoint discrimination.

> ...this Court has observed a distinction between, on the one hand, content discrimination – *i.e.,* discrimination against speech because of its subject matter – which may be permissible if it preserves the limited forum's purposes, and, on the other hand, viewpoint discrimination – *i.e.,* discrimination because of the speaker's specific motivating ideology, opinion, or perspective – which is presumed impermissible when directed against speech otherwise within the forum's limitations,…. the State's actions are properly interpreted as unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination rather than permissible line drawing based on content: By the very terms of the SAF prohibition, the University does not exclude religion as a subject matter, but selects for disfavored treatment those student journalistic efforts with religious editorial viewpoints (Rosenberger, 1995 Pp. 7-11).

After the Rosenberg decision religious groups continued to receive federal funds, and provide social services and educational services with certain restrictions. The details of Rosenberger were widely reported in both the *New York Times* ("Justices Hear Campus Religion Case," March 2, 1995) and in the *Washington Post* ("Virginia Press Case Hinges on Funding, Justices Told; High Court Shows Some Sympathy for University Aid to Student-Run Evangelical Magazine," Mar 2 1995).

As shown earlier, the terms and concepts of "discrimination" and "freedom of speech" and "burden" reverberated throughout the hearings. They were used by opponents as well as advocates of the plan. An early version of the initiative proposed by President Bush would have exempted religious groups from law forbidding hiring discriminations. Consequently, advocates

for gay and non-Christian Americans played the discrimination card as a centerpiece of their opposition in the hearings. Religious groups who might have been excluded from receiving federal dollars because of the explicitly promotional aspect of sectarian programs claimed that people of faith need protection from discrimination and that faith practices should not be barrier to participation in federal programs. Working first from the narrow confines of the court room, through news articles and word of mouth, Lambs Chapel and Rosenberger both became part of the public debate.

When Walker says that “charitable choice" violates taxpayer rights, his discourse is activity building since it situates him as a protector and those who oppose the initiative are the true taxpayer guardians.

> “Charitable choice" results in excessive entanglement between government and religion. It is an iron law of American politics that government regulates what it funds… Just as funding pervasively religious organizations violates the First Amendment's Establishment Clause, taking my taxes to pay for your religious organization, or vice versa, violates the First Amendment's free exercise principles…. Government should not be allowed to use your tax money to promote my religion.

At the same time opposition to the initiative is protection of religion from big government intrusion. Walker says

> …. For all too often a friendly pat by Uncle Sam turns into a hostile shove by Big Brother. ...[R]eligious organizations that receive grants must make sure that the tax money is not used to pay for "sectarian worship, instruction or proselytization." It is a mystery how this legislative language will be enforced without a government officer standing in the sanctuary or poring over the church books.

By focusing on the supposed conflict between the interest of taxpayers and religious groups Walker picks up the argument advanced earlier by Edwards, but also adds an element:

opposition to the faith based initiative protects the taxpayer and the religion, too. So either as a taxpayer or as sincere religious person, one is “protected” by those who oppose the initiative. By lifting the image of the big brother government auditor looking over the shoulder of church bookkeepers to enforce the faith based initiative, Walker is able to opine about other ways in which the initiative harms religion:

> "Charitable choice" encourages unhealthful rivalry and competition among religious groups. We enjoy religious peace in this country despite our dizzying diversity for the most part because government has stayed out of religion…. "Charitable choice" is a recipe for religious conflict. "Charitable choice" also drags religion into the ugly governmental appropriations process--the underbelly of democracy. Government does not have the money to fund every religious group in this country. It will have to pick and choose. All too often, the majority faith in a particular area will prevail.

Here the rhetorical tactic was to create images of a debased government function and helpless organizations. Here not only are government processes painted as ugly and “the underbelly,” but religious groups are portrayed as the victims of big brother government but their own inabilities to avoid fighting each other and discerning when competition is unhealthy or works at odds with their own best interest. The result of creating the image of conflict is to allow the opponents to rhetorically establish their own activity as protector of the little guy, of taxpayers and little guy religious servants.

The final move in this testimony is to position the initiative as a threat to the foundational role of the church in society. Walker claims that

> ...‘charitable choice" dampens religion's prophetic voice. Religion has historically stood outside of government's control, serving as a critic of government. How can religion continue to raise a prophetic fist against government when it has the other hand open to receive a government handout? It cannot. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., arguably the twentieth century's best example of

> religion's prophetic voice, warned: "The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority."

At this point, Walker shifts the image of the religious groups as potential helpless victims of big brother's intrusions, and re-creates it as a fighter, a "prophetic" fist against government. By invoking the name of a Nobel Peace Prize winner, the witness is presumptuous enough to "remind" the church of its role in society (as if it had forgotten) and in doing so, insert himself as a prophet. By implication, if the church is allowed to participate in government run programs like charitable choice it "will become irrelevant," and lose its spiritual authority." So the activity being built here casts initiative opponents as prophets who see the dangers at work in a world where out-of-control bureaucrats seek to ensnare truth-tellers.

The testimony about standing up against government has an added political aspect to it. Smaller government has been one of the main taglines of the Republican Party for a half century. By emphasizing this aspect, the opposition to the initiative is able to remain consistent with the party propaganda (much in the same way the Watts and Blackburn used their testimony emphasizing tax incentives), and at the same time oppose a program advanced by a Republican president.

To summarize, by way of creating specific identities and posturing as social actors, testifiers were able tactically to present themselves as selfless servants, victims of view, point discrimination and social prophets entitled to discriminate in hiring to advance the higher social good of religious autonomy.

Connection Building: The fourth tactic used by hearing participants was to describe their position on the initiative in terms if its connection between a historical past and the envisioned future. Early in the process Congressman Watts framed his argument about the significance of the initiative in terms of its potential for helping people reach a long desired ideal future. In the hearing on H.R. 7.Watts said

> Another important provision of H.R. 7 is the creations of Individual Development Accounts that will help low-income families accumulate assets. It is only by building assets that individuals can establish their economic independence and work toward a better future for themselves and for their children. This is a critical stepping stone for the working poor to escape poverty, and these IDAs will allow these individuals to build the funds they need to buy a first home, to start or expand a business or to pay tuition expenses. (June 14, 2001)

By using the terms "better future for themselves" and "stepping stone" and "buy first home" Watts rhetorically makes the link between the action of approving the initiative and the future individuals and society. This approach was also advanced at the Congressional hearing on April 26, 2001 (*The Role of Community and Faith-Based Organizations*) by Congressman Souder, who stressed the importance of assessing the future impact of "incorporating grassroots faith and community organizations in social service programs." Loren Snippe of Ottawa County Family Independence, a local state-administered agency that provided the State of Michigan's public assistance and family protection programs, said

> Church congregations and family mentoring teams have provided assistance with budgeting, general life coping skills, transportation, backup transportation, child care, backup child care, car repair assistance, assistance in purchasing cars, etc. As a result, we think lives have been changed, families have become self-sufficient, jobs have been retained and friendships have been established. And probably one of the most important things, not only did we address a need at the present time for a family support system, we believe that through the relationships

> that if there is a crisis in the future, this newfound support system for these families, they will turn to them before they turn to us again as a public agency. They will look to their church family support system.

In this statement Snipe picks up the theme connecting current action with long term historical result; her statement links the future to the action of small groups such as "congregations" and "teams," and "family support systems." This statement clearly aims to connect the initiative under consideration with consideration of the long-term future of service delivery. By including such terms as "future," "hope," "better," and "generation's," the tactical effect was to create a reality in which the current debate and current actions are unavoidably linked to the destiny of the nation and the world. This tactic raised the stakes of the debate and uplifted the significance of hearing participation. Other similar discourses are visible in a statement by the Reverend Scott Rowley, from the Empty Hands Fellowship in Franklin TN, who said

> …in terms of just the sheer anthropology of our work, what we are working and dealing with people, and so we talk like people. At the same time, if in the course of that conversation, they ask why we give hope for the future, it certainly does not have a lot to do with our skills and ability, it has to do with our Creator.

In addition, statements by Raymond Bill, president, Faithworks Consulting Service and by Congressman Elijah E. Cummings (Maryland) before the Subcommittee on Criminal Justice and Drug Policy and Human Resources of the Committee on Government Reform on March 23, 2004, reinforced the notion that history depends on faithful actions at the current moment. Congressman Cummings said

> ...there is absolutely no doubt that program like the one you have are essential. ...[S]ome of us in Baltimore need to look at your program and see what you are doing, because we have a lot of unreachables. And we just found out, we were just looking at our stats – 50 percent of all the kids that get to the 9th grade don't graduate through the 12th. Then we see

> something like a 30 to a 38 percent illiteracy rate even with people who graduate, which means that we have a lot of people who are in trouble. And these are the ones that – you know, I am talking about folk who – the ones who graduate, at least they stayed in school. But again, as I said, we in the Congress wrestle with where we fit in history and how our actions will be viewed years from now, and at the same time we want to make sure that we say to people to even go into the history, to go into the future.

Cummings's use of education statistics followed by the words "where we fit in history and how our actions will be viewed years from now " and "go into the future advances the notion that matters under consideration should be evaluated in a larger historic context and is an attempt to give added weight to might seem relatively small programs. Further examples of this tactic are seen in the testimony of Harvey Drake, Executive Director of the Emerald City Outreach Ministry, before the Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee on April 26, 2004. Drake explained how his ministry's participation in the initiative programs relates to the future.

> ….but rather that they give families an opportunity to see how investing a small amount of money in a project could be leveraged into more. Because the biggest factor that we are trying to address now is the transferable wealth issue in America, because in some studies they will say that the income levels are getting closer between people of color and whites. Well, that's debatable as well. But the biggest factor in determining what happens futuristically is who has what to pass on to future generations.

Drake's injection of the phrases "what happens futuristically" and "pass on to future generations" both works in the same way that remakes by Watts and Snipes did. The words of the speakers invoke the image of a better (yet undefined) future, and help to create or reinforce an emphatic linkage between the realization of that future and distribution of government funds to faith based groups.

In a similar vein Congressman Mark Green (Wisconsin) in the March 25, 2003 hearing, grounded the significance of faith based funding on its impact on future generations.

> ...we need to recognize that government and faith-based organizations share many of the same objectives. At their best, all strive to help the less fortunate, both work to strengthen our communities, and both obviously try to make a better future for families. I have always supported the idea of returning to the charitable ideas that built America—local organizations, staffed by local people working on the ground to serve and solve local problems. We in government can do everything in our power to foster a healthy environment for community renewal. We can pass laws. We can implement all kinds of programs and services. We can and we should plow more funds into these areas. In the short term, our efforts will do some good, but there can be no real, long-lasting community renewal unless we succeed in reviving the spirit of individuals, families and neighborhoods. That is something that government cannot do. That takes the hard work of individuals and local organizations like the faith-based groups that are represented here today.

Green's statement is similar those of Watt, Snipe and Drake in that it also invokes the connections with history by using the phrase "make a better future for families," but Green words moves beyond the earlier connections which implied a mere improved material future. Green connects the efforts to pass the initiative as more that just "community renewal; he rhetorically connects the initiative to "reviving the spirit of individuals, families and neighborhoods." By implications this is spiritual renewal has long term historical and societal impact.

In addition to the overt rhetorical patterns seen through the building tasks of language, examination of the hearing text reveals certain argumentative themes specific to advocates of the initiative. In contrast to Gee's emphasis on the work being done by language, Van Dijk's approach recommends that analysis of texts unfold in three moves: "the description of

argumentative structures, the explication of presupposed (tacit) assumptions, examination norms" (Van Dijk 1985, 12).

Witnesses were likely to express outlooks that could be characterized as enacting two main, overlapping argumentative postures. Advocates submitted as self evident the notion that religious groups make a significant difference in addressing social ills, although no empirical evidence was offered in support of the claim. This unchallenged maxim was expressed repeatedly, by nearly all proponents of the initiative (and even occasionally by opponents). This is especially evident during the hearing entitled "Effective Faith Based Treatment of Programs," held Wednesday, May 23, 2001. Mark E. Souder, the Chairman of the subcommittee, opened the hearing by asserting that faith based programs succeed in addressing social ills.

> ...faith-based organizations shape the character of young people. They teach children right from wrong, respect for law, respect for others, and respect for themselves. I agree. And, as I have stated many times in the past, we cannot tackle the problems of drug abuse and the concurrent social problems crime costs our country without an approach that simultaneously addresses prevention, education, treatment, enforcement, interdiction, and eradication (U.S. House May 23, 2001).

Echoing this sentiment, John Castellani, Executive Director of Teen Challenge International, said, "When it comes to taking anyone in the program…we accept whosoever will. In fact, when they complete our program … we say, 'Please go too church.'…" Castellani describes the Jewish and Muslim believers who move through such programs, and says

> when [they] complete our program some of them return to their Jewish synagogue, some of them say they're "completed Jew" now in various forums like this, and we've had individuals that were Muslims that have come in the program, and we just say to them, "Look, as long as you don't disrupt the program — this is who we are, this is what we believe — you can be here." And that's the agreement when he comes in. He knows that coming in. (Ibid)

Similar affirmations are made by Roosevelt Sanders Pastor of Mission Baptist Church, Indianapolis, In., Horace Smith of Group Ministries Baltimore, Inc. (located in Maryland). Even early news articles reported this assertion without challenge, as shown in this *Post* reports as the hearing got underway.

> The key problem," says Robert L. Woodson Sr., who considers himself among the progenitors of the faith-based initiative, "is that this whole thing has gotten bogged down in the grants thing. When the focus is on the governments writing checks to faith-based groups, then you get questions like 'Who qualifies?' or 'Who is legitimate?' or 'How can you enforce the separation of church and state?'"……
>
> It is widely accepted that spiritually based approaches are often more successful than secular ones when success involves changing attitudes and beliefs. Computer training might be done equally well by church-run or government-run programs. But rehabilitation from drug or alcohol abuse, reconnecting with family members, even changing the attitudes that make it hard for some people to escape poverty -- these things may require something closer to transformation than education or training. Faith-based groups tend to do it better (*Washington Post* 19 March 2001).

This assertion that religious groups are effective at healing social ills is here called an axiom because it is repeated so often and so little proof is offered in support of it. In his introduction to the hearings entitled “Faith based Perspectives on the Provision of Community Services" in the 107th and 108th Congresses (August 2003, December 2003, and January 2004), Congressman Souder stated that the purposes of the hearings was to discuss “what characteristics make faith-based providers especially effective at serving the needs of their communities.” Yet, Congressman Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.) said at the April 26, 2001 hearing

> we just do not have the independent and in-depth research to support such views. Last year the National Institute on Drug Abuse, in response to misinformation linking faith-based drug treatment programs to a 60 to 80 percent cure rate, stated there's not enough research in the treatment portfolio for the NIDA to make any valid

> conclusive statements about the role that faith plays in drug addiction treatment. We are not aware of research from any treatment program that has been peer reviewed or published that can attribute a 60 to 80 percent cure rate to faith as a major factor for a group's treatment success. (U.S. House, April 26, 2001)

In quoting the NIDA study, Cummings makes an important distinction between anecdote and hard scientific evidence. Much of the testimony included anecdotes, but Cummings went on to provide more substantive data by quoting Byron Johnson of the University of Pennsylvania Center for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, for the purpose of showing

> ...that there's little reliable research proving the effectiveness of religious programs. There seems to be scant evidence showing which religious programs show the best results and how they stack up against secular programs. Mr. Chairman, given that charitable choice was first added to the welfare reform measure adopted in 1996 and that four charitable choice measures have been enacted into law, I believe it is time to review how well charitable choice is working. Today, I will request that GAO, the investigative arm of the Congress, begin an in-depth review and oversight of charitable choice: The program, States currently engaged in the charitable choice, faith-based organizations receiving money, a look at who is and who is not being served, program accountability, contract award processes, and whether or not the services provided are successfully serving the needs of the people. I am anxious to learn who is currently utilizing faith-based organizations, learn of their value and see how well they measure against secular programs.

In response to the request for evidence, Florida Congressman John Mica offered anecdotes:

> I've seen in my own community education and drug treatment programs that have astounding results. They differ from the government programs because they have two ingredients that are different. They have very low administrative and bureaucratic overhead, and second, they're highly effective. I could just cite two examples: One is House of Hope, which is located in central Florida. It provides drug treatment, started out primarily for young women, has a 70, 80 percent success rate, and I would venture to say from any studies I saw as chair of Criminal Justice, Drug

> Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee, it's just the opposite of what the public programs produce in drug treatment effectiveness, education and drug treatment programs that have astounding results. They differ from the government programs because they have two ingredients that are different. They have very low administrative and bureaucratic overhead, and second, they're highly effective.

At the April 26 hearing John DiIulio, Director of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, brought to the attention of the subcommittee on Drug Policy and Human Resources the important distinction between feel-good stories and persuasive evidence. DiIulio said

> From north central Philadelphia to south central L.A., I could recite literally hundreds of inspiring anecdotes and stories about how people of sacred places working across racial, denominational and other divides, are achieving important civic purposes… But as my social science colleagues like to say, the plural of anecdote is not data.

Danny K. Davis, Congressmen from Illinois expanded the maxim to include the ability to achieve social mobilization:

> ...faith-based activities have the ability to generate a level of participation in terms of the numbers of people who are willing to come and volunteer or voluntarily give of themselves, who won't do it through any other initiative but will do it through a spiritually based or church-based or religious-based activity (U. S. House April 26 2001)

With repetition the claim that churches have a vital role to play in the solution to social ills takes on the force of reality and becomes the premise of argument, and the presupposition that religious groups make a positive difference becomes its own conclusion. From the standpoint of formal logic, no argument is made; but from the practical standpoint that words are being used to persuade, the repetition of the claim conveys an apparent argumentative structure. Rather than constructing an argument, it is a social norm being created. The unchallenged

assertion names and reproduces a social norm. Social norms are constituted of attitudes as well as behavior. Within the society of debaters about the initiative the belief and attitude and the behavior that support that behavior becomes accepted as that which is a common sense fact.

A second argumentative posture advanced by advocates of the initiative was the notion that *religion itself* made a unique contribution to the resolution of social problems. This was seen in the hearings held on May 23, Sara Trollinger, president and founder of the House of Hope in Orlando, Florida, testified about the essential role of religion in the work of her program. She said,

> Teaching troubled teens was like a revolving door. The same ones would come and go without any lasting help because we weren't allowed to mention Jesus Christ and teach Christian principles…. I founded House of Hope for hurting teenagers, with five of us praying and $200. God impressed me that if the heart wasn't changed and healed and if the parents were not an integral part of the program, we would not see lasting results of families being healed and restored…. We have a 95 percent success rate of restoring these teenagers back home to their families.

Castellani also makes plain his view that the basis of program effectiveness is biblical text, specifically the Book of Psalms 103: 3. He said "whether it's a disease, Psalm 103 says, 'Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases.' And so whether it is a sin problem, whether it is a disease problem, we know that the Gospel works, and we are firm in that area. The difference is the Jesus factor."

As with the text of congressional testimony, examination of the news media articles revealed reoccurring patterns of several rhetoric devices. The news coverage, however, focused much more on the stages of conflict, such statements made by opponents which highlighted controversies, and issues — political wheeling and dealing for votes, church-state separation, hiring practices, and the various legal challenges — and much less on the actual provisions of the

initiatives. Although in highlighting the controversial aspects of the initiative, news articles sometimes echoed the same phrases used by debate participants, articles tended to focus the various features of conflict. The day after President Bush announced the executive order beginning the faith based initiatives, the *New York Times* opined:

> Few would dispute the proposition by President Bush yesterday that religious groups can effectively provide social services for the poor. But Mr. Bush's ambitions proposal to channel federal funds to "faith-based" groups to serve social needs is a potentially dangerous erosion of the constitutionally shielded boundary between church and state. As the Supreme Court has observed, that boundary not only protects Americans from improper government support for religion. It guards religion itself from government encroachment and regulation. In announcing his latest initiative, Mr. Bush spoke eloquently of the role of government in helping those in need and invoked a provision of the 1996 welfare law that lowered barriers to religious groups from receiving social service funds. (*New York Times*, January 30, 2001).

News articles about the faith based initiative are better understood in the context of political sentiment, which shifted from early 2001 (when President Bush introduced his plans) through 2002 (when the HR-7 languished in political oblivion for want of Senate approval) and until May 2003, when a greatly modified (some say "watered down") bill was signed into law. During this period, the President's political capital for the initiative dwindled as the new administration's honeymoon ended, terrorist bombs on September 11, 2001, dominated the media's attention, and ideological hostilities stressed the national political parties.

News headlines, news articles, and editorial pages about the initiative revealed a shift from high anticipation to deep struggle during the first year of a new administration. For example, on December 24, 2000 *The New York Times* optimistically reported on how President-elect

George Bush "vowed to rally the armies of compassion" when he met with clergy members to "promote faith based charity as the kinder more cost-effective alternative to government-run help for the needy" (Bernstein, 2000), and it referenced the connections between the younger Bush's efforts and his father's thousand points of light campaign. Although some writers did predict resistance to the initiative (such as in a *Washington Post* article on January 27,2001, headlined "Initiative Will Meet Resistance"), a *Post* headline a few days later emphasized cooperation, "Bush Unveils 'Faith-Based' Initiative; Effort Will Team Agencies, Nonprofits on Social Issues" (*Washington Post*, 30 January 2001) and delineated the tax credit benefits of the plan ("Bush's Plan for Faith-Based Aid," *Post*, 31 January 2001). Then, early opposition to the initiatives drew headlines such as these:

> Bush: Limits Set on 'Faith-Based' Plan; Religious Aspects Still Face Criticism
> — *Washington Post*, 31 January 2001
>
> Robertson Joins Liberals in Faulting Bush's 'Faith-Based' Plan
> — *Washington Post*, 22 February 2001
>
> Bush's Charity Plan Is Raising Concerns For Religious Right
> — *New York Times*, 3 March 2001

Early resistance seemed mild: the criticism referred to in the *Post* article of 31 January was from a religious social service group:

> Official at Catholic Charities, which calls itself the nation's largest private network of social service organizations, said she would warn parishes against grabbing for the contracts that Bush is hoping to make available to church groups. "Our agencies always lose money on contracts with the government, so it would mean the parish subsidizing government," said Sharon M. Daly, vice president for social policy at Catholic Charities USA (Milbank 2001)

The Robertson referred to in the February *Post* headline is the Reverend Pat Robertson, a prominent political spokesman for the Christian right and a highly visible spokesman for

fundamentalist religion. Roberson founded the Christian Broadcasting Network, and this article could be viewed, not so much as political resistance, but as an example of the media reporting on itself. Liberals activist and commentators were known to oppose the initiative and the fact that Robertson could "join Liberals" on any issue may have been deemed newsworthy in and of itself.

The March *New York Times* article does speak more to the mounting opposition or at least a growing hesitancy within the conservative Christian camp. Laurie Goodstein reported that Robertson had been joined by Marvin Olasky in opposition. The article also notes that James Dobson (Focus on the Family), the Southern Baptist Convention, and the National Association of Evangelicals had not expressed support. These groups were notorious for their conservative social views, and also as part of the base of the Republican Party, and in 2001 were still understood as staunch supporters of President Bush. The *Post* reported that there was hesitancy from the right and the left with articles in February "Religious Leaders Cautions on Bush Plan.." (1 Feb 2001) and "Bush Proposal is Worrisome Jackson Says" (5 February 2001). The Jackson referred to in the article is the Reverend Jesse Jackson, former Democratic presidential candidate and liberal champion. On 27 February 2001 the *Post* headlined "Jewish Leaders Criticized 'Faith-Based' Initiative…" and reported that "Leaders of some of the nation's largest Jewish organizations" were worried about the potential impact of the initiative.

These articles mark the journey that the plan began to take during the first six months after it's unveiling. The January 30 *Post* article is markedly upbeat and makes references to the efforts of President Bush's father's effort to launch a similar "thousand points of light" initiative. But as the public debate unfolded and more questions were raised by opponents, the coverage became more detailed and combative in its critique. On April 1, 2001, the *Times* bannered its article on the congressional hearings with "Faith Based Furor" and headlined "President Bush

believes in financing religious charities. But if a group takes government money, should it be able to fire someone like Alicia Pedreira?" (Eval, 2001). The person referenced in the headline is the plaintive in the lawsuit about religious based discrimination. The article went on to rehearse the drama that had been unfolded in the courts around government funding of religious groups.

As the public hearings continued the language of news articles continue to reflect more conflict, struggle and drama. In an article headlined "Getting the charity debate back on track; Subsidies are not the answer for faith based groups," (July 2) the *Times* reported that "President Bush was busy last week trying to save his plan to government financing of charitable work by religious groups" (Sirico, 2001). With a headline that began "Bush Assails Critics of Faith Based Initiative…" the *Washington Post* reported on June 6, that "President Bush today struck back at critics of his plan." In July, the same outlet headlined about the "dwindling 'Armies of Compassion'" and wrote that "President Bush's faith-based initiative is in deep trouble because it lacks a constituency committed to its success" (Milbank , June 6, 2001).

The use of phrases like "faith furor," "assails critics" and "struck back at critics," reflects a combative or at least contentious point of view in the text not reflected in the hearing text itself. In fact, to the extent that language of the hearings reflect struggle at all, it is more reflective of defensive struggle, such as one might expect from those who are being persecuted or denied access.

By the middle of the year the news coverage was strongly implying that the entire venture was on its deathbed. The *Post* headlined in August that "DiIulio Resigns from Top 'Faith-Based' Post; Difficulties With Initiative in Congress Marked Seven Months at White House," and wrote

> In the latest blow to President Bush's signature "faith-based initiative," the head of the White House's effort to boost government support for religious charities said today he will resign after seven tempestuous months on the job, becoming the first senior Bush adviser to leave…. [T]he initiative encountered unexpected difficulty and will now be rewritten by Senate Democrats after a scaled-back version of Bush's proposal cleared the House. Along the way, DiIulio, a registered Democrat who favored a consensus-building approach, sparred with religious conservatives and disagreed with Bush political advisers who pushed the president's plan through the House on a party-line vote — leading Senate Democrats to pronounce the proposal dead in its current form. Some of DiIulio's allies charged that the resignation meant the White House's faith initiative — the cornerstone of Bush's "compassionate conservatism" and a key to his bid to win over minorities — had been taken over by religious conservatives (Milbank, August 18, 2001).

By citing unnamed Senate Democrats as those who "pronounce the proposal dead" the *Post* shifts the reader's attention to the political and competitive view of the process and away from possible evaluations of merit or progress. These terms typify the coverage during the first year of initiative and continuing into the second. By the next year the *New York Times* was reporting bipartisan agreement on the initiative as if it were a defeat for the President. In what could have been reported as progress and reasonable compromise, the *Times* headlined "Accord Reached on Charity Aid Bill After Bush Gives In on Hiring," the *Times*'s lead said,

> President Bush and Senate negotiators announced and agreement today on a bill to give federal money to religious charities, but only after Mr. Bush made major concessions to Democrats on what had been a central proposal of his "compassion conservative" presidential campaign (Bumiller, 2002).

Although the article did go on to point out that the agreement was praised by both Democratic and Republican Senators and it listed several positive provisions of the proposed bill, the combinations of the headline, lead, and clauses such as "The bill would eliminate the most contentious elements of Mr. Bush's original…." give the piece a pessimistic tone.

Although the Republican-controlled U.S. House had given approval to the legislation, the White House was well aware during the second half of 2002 that the struggle continued, a fact reflected in the *Post* and the *Times* as typified by these headlines:

> 'Faith-Based' Initiative to Get Major Push From Bush; President to Use Executive Orders to Implement Some Parts of His Proposed Bill ...
> With President Bush's "faith-based" legislation facing an uncertain fate, the White House is planning an aggressive effort to implement parts of the program this fall even if Congress does not approve, administration officials said .. (Allen, 2002).
>
> Ex-Aide Insists White House Puts Politics Ahead of Policy
>
> A former member of the Bush administration says in a magazine interview that the White House values politics over domestic policy, lacking both policy experts and an apparatus to support them, and has failed to achieve (*TNYT* Dec. 2, 2002)

A year after the House deal, a *Times* article written by Sheryl Stoleberg reported on the deal reached in the U.S. Senate to advance the initiative from presidential decree into codified law by removing two main stumbling blocks. Negotiators agreed that groups who made their services contingent on clients listening to sermons or taking part in religious activities could not receive government funds and that groups with religious names or religious icons in their literature would not receive protection from disqualification. The paper reported that

> President Bush agreed to drop another contentious element, the charitable choice provision, which would have let religious groups favor members of their own faith in hiring and ignore antidiscrimination laws (Stoleberg, 2003).

Yet even as it was reporting in a tone returning to toward optimism the following summer, in an article headlined "The Importance of Believing in Charity," *The New York Times*, 7 July 2003, still inserted a note of conflict:

> President Bush recently called on Congress to make it easier for religious charities that get federal money to hire people based on their religious affiliation. His action is certain to further inflame civil liberties groups,...(Lonconte, 2003)

In addition to the movement from a language of optimism to death struggle and then back to optimism, another striking feature of the initiative news coverage was the sparse amount of attention given to the congressional hearings and to witnesses or recipients of funds. The media published more articles in responses to statements made by the President and reactions to his statements by opinion makers than to the content of the debate at the hearings. This approach to the coverage of the faith based initiative – which emphasized what elected and administration officials said and the reactions by other officials – may have been related to the fact that many hearings were conducted outside of Washington, yet most of the news articles were centered on events in Washington and on opinions of Washington newsmakers. Likewise, while funding to faith based groups has its most obvious impact in local communities where needy citizens are served, most news articles covered the programs from a macro-policy perspective, with emphasis on contending national constituencies and not on those who receive services.

As a result, the hearing testimony and news reports are best regarded as separate and only loosely related texts. The elements of persuasion are revealed and highlighted effectively by applying the six tasks of language, what Gee calls “the work being done” to the images, metaphors and similes submitted by witnesses. Less coherence is revealed in the news articles. This is not to suggest that the articles do not contain persuasive text, but only that the context and audiences are different and perhaps the underlying assumptions and persuasive approaches are more subtle. Additional research might reveal what kinds of discourse analyst methods are more appropriate for the rhetorical analysis of the text of news articles.

There was a noticeable difference between the themes appearing in news articles and those in testimony. For example, witnesses testifying at the congressional hearings rarely used the terms “right to life” and “freedom in hiring." No evidence was presented to show there was any relationship among topics such as gay marriage, abortion, discrimination in hiring and faith based services. But these phrases often appear in news articles and editorials about the initiatives, and were presented as central to the ongoing debate. This disparity might be the result in the different ways in which information is gathered and subjects selected. News writers are inclined to attempt to appear balanced in their coverage and broad in social context. By contrast, the creators and public hearings have no such mandate in constructing the ground rules of testimony.

Chapter Four: Conclusions and Discussion

The foregoing textual examination enables certain conclusions about the tools of discourse analysis, about how language was used in the hearings and the types of further study that might be beneficial. Gee's discourse analysis tools were useful in discerning the tactics used by participants in the congressional hearings, but less helpful when applied to news coverage about the hearings. An examination of rhetorical devices such as repetition, metaphors and paraphrase used in the debate helped to identify major themes in the testimony, to focus on "the work being done" by speakers, and to allow rhetorical tactics to be understood as connected to one another and as part of an emerged strategy. Van Dijik's emphasis upon argumentative structure and cultural understandings was also fruitful of explicating elements of the debate.

Unlike the contestants in many controversies erupting out of grassroots struggles for improved conditions, both advocates and opponents of the initiative first used the tactics of verbally creating an identity as representatives of large numbers of faith-based groups. They verbally presented themselves as attentive, well organized, and vitally interested in the disposition H.R 7. This contrasts with tactics used historically by advocates of community based issues who show up with bus loads community people: service recipients, welfare clients, and multi-sector stake holders. Further, some testifiers presented themselves as representatives of a special class of people of faith: those who are apolitical or bipartisan, devoted to the advancement of specific religious beliefs, and acting as prophetic voices on behalf of the entire society. Others presented themselves as human service delivery professions: committed to addressing innocent human suffering and working to eliminate social ills. Although the hearings

were billed as testimony from the "grassroots," the identity tactics used more closely aligned with those used by professional interest groups.

The view of the world projected by participants was consistent throughout the hearings. Nearly all witnesses used language that painted a picture of America as a great nation in grave danger. To some the danger was the unfair manner in which faith communities are treated; or the disrespect held for religious values. To others the great danger was the injection of sectarian interests into public policy using the power of a massive government. Still others expressed serious concern for the broad confusion among Americans about the roles of government and the roles of religion in American society.

Such concerns are consistent with the national self descriptive narrative which is often stated in terms of personal freedom, citizen participation in limited government, tolerance of religious diversity, and responsive civil institutions. In this narrative, such social features require constant protection and constant vigilance. Testimony at the hearings highlighted conflicting purposes of national identity within certain limits. One conflict was a presidential administration that sought to use government funds in support of the activities of religious groups conflicting with a political party policy that advocates lower taxes and less funding of social services for the poor. Part of the competition also includes a charity establishment and nonprofit service sector seeking to protect for itself a share of domestic government spending.

The arguments within the debate did not focus on the metrics by which program effectiveness might be measured, but rather the legitimacy of the participants and their approaches. The discourse regarding the threats to national wellbeing centered more on power and identity than about the specifics of policy. The argument was not about what the nation should do about social ills, but about who should dominate charity work; the role of religion vis-

à-vis government, and who should be trusted with the responsibility to use government funds to address social ills.

Many witnesses represented their efforts as preventing America society alternately from sliding into godless secularity, or from succumbing to ubiquitous government encroachment onto the sacred domains of religion. A final tactic among participants was to create rhetorically a reality in which Congress' decision about the initiative is understood as vital to the nation's future.

The tactics used by the conveners and the witnesses at the hearings fell into an overall argumentative structure intended to construct a reality of broad based social forces with power to effect national elections. By framing their arguments as coming from dedicated religious groups and from social service organizations, with the goals of protecting a vulnerable America populace from loss of certain freedom and/or protections, communicators shifted the image of the debate away from a formalized struggle for gross political power toward images which were of cultural concern, i.e., the shift was away from "who might be in power" toward "what kind of American might exist in the future."

Close examination of the language behaviors and argumentative structures advanced by hearing participants brought out certain underlying assumptions. One was that American taxpayers have an ethical obligation to uplift the poor. A second assumption was that participants in the programs funded by government might have something to lose by participation. A third assumption was that social problems such as substance abuse, child abuse, poverty, homelessness, urban gangs and domestic violence are of such an intractable nature that public agencies can never hope to solve them. It was as if policy makers who advocated the initiative were saying "rather than admit public policy failure, let's give money to religious groups and

pray that the problems don't get any worse. Perhaps the ills of society can be better addressed by the intervention of spiritual healers than by more public resources and public expertise."

Another belief guiding the debate was that elected representatives, service providers, and journalists all assumed that key decisions about distributions of funds and the continuation of programs are based on political considerations alone, as opposed to need, or program effectiveness. It is perhaps natural to expect that a public hearing about the use of public funds would have strong political dimensions; yet it not unreasonable to expect that some hard evidence might be presented related as to the effectiveness of programs seeking funding. Although there were some homilies among statements from testifiers about good works and anecdotes about changed human lives, neither the news articles nor the testimony provided hard data recommending a faith-based approach. Analysis and evaluation of the selected texts clearly reveal the great extent to which public debate about charity and government centered less on objective data, and more around subjective feeling about the weaving together of church and state and feelings about the rise of influence among religious groups in the political life of the United States.

The fact that so little news coverage was devoted to hearings, to program provisions and to program results points to a social disconnect between those who write about and shape public opinion about the programs and those who are actual participants in the programs. This disconnect is manifested most clearly in issues related to sexuality and reproductive rights. Specifically, the possible discrimination against gays in hiring is mentioned often in the news articles mostly as conjecture in news stories or within opinion pieces, but never as straight news story reporting of factual events. Within the hearings the issue is framed as either "freedom in

hiring" or "discriminations against gays and lesbians in hiring." Only in court cases is there systematic presentation of concrete examples and issues.

The news coverage emphasized an expanding politicalization of the faith based initiative of 2001. This polarization was evident not only in the Administration's failure to achieve legislative consensus in favor of its basic tenets (efforts to provide more access to faith based groups were codified, if at all, through executive order and not through legislation), but also by the increased reported strife about expanding roles for faith based organizations (FBOs) in the provision of services. News accounts reported that the efforts to achieve broad based support were stymied in part because of suspicion by evangelical religious groups that their policies of denying employment to avowed homosexuals would be stripped away, in part because of suspicion by Republican insiders that grant funds might go to urban enclaves who vote overwhelmingly Democratic, and in part because of suspicion by pro life activists that federal dollars would be used to support women's groups that endorse abortion. Such political calculations combined with the dearth of factual data about religious group program effectiveness leads to the conclusion that future prospects of funding of faith based groups will be based more on how our national leaders view the role of the church, and how well those views can be translated into political muscle.

In many ways the debate about faith based initiative was an extension of the 2000 presidential election and connected to larger public struggles regarding national political identity and purpose of government. During the 2000 election campaign, presidential candidates Gore and Bush both indicated support for the Charitable Choice approach as a complement to ongoing efforts addressing issues related to poverty, drug treatment and urban homelessness. The

Republican platform called for massive tax cuts to insure domestic well being, and the Democrats advocated provisions that would expand funding for social programs.

These same impulses were exhibited in hearings during the 2001-2004 period. However, in the hearings the contest about approaches no longer split along party lines. Because Republicans controlled both the White House and the House of Representatives, disagreement divided those who supported the President from those who wanted only a tax-cut approach to charity, and the resulting arguments also split religious conservatives. Democrats were left mostly wringing their hands and expressing concerns about the separation of church and state and discrimination in hiring. Evangelical Christian groups and political conservative organizations were initially solidly in strong support of the proposal, but as debate continued became more ambivalent. Oddly it was coalitions (or the combined resistance) among religious conservatives and separation of church and state advocates that bogged the initiative down in the House.

Such alliance shifting in hearings is typical of the ongoing national struggle among those who want small government, those who want government to protect the interest of capital and property, those who want to expand government protection of the vulnerable and disenfranchised, and those who want the government to lead in the continuing development of society. These postures are often characterized as by the terms “conservative, liberal, reactionary and radical.” However they are labeled, they connect to the identity question of how the U.S. understands itself and its identity among the nations of the world. In this way the testimony of the hearing reflected the instability of the national image and identity this is being contested in larger society.

Examination of the on language behaviors in the hearings not only revealed what rhetorical work was being done by the witnesses but also insights into collective cultural self

understanding of the participants. Hannah Arendt showed that the origins of collective political identity and group self understandings are rooted in common beliefs in stories about past events that are transmitted culturally from one generation to the next (Gottsegen, 1994). When Congressman Souder opened the April 26, 2001 hearings, he said their purpose was

> To learn from social service providers and intermediaries about their experiences in employing public funds to assist people in need….[and that] The role of the faith community in providing publicly funded social services on an equal basis as secular providers has been the topic of considerable public policy debate in recent years. Although faith groups have been assisting scores of people in need for decades, recent charitable choice provisions encourage an even larger role.

But clearly Souder meant for the terms "to learn," "social service providers and intermediaries," and "larger role" to be understood in a very particular and narrow way.

Examination of the language in the hearing revealed that narratives of personal freedom and limited government were set against alternative accounts of the historical role of church groups and the nation's founding, and to accounts of how poverty has been addressed in the United States. For example, when Chet Edwards testified that "separation of church and state … means, according to our Founding Fathers, keeping government out of religion," he was arguing from several unstated premises: (1) that the points of view of the signers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence (or U. S. Constitution) should be revered by the hearing's audience and all by all citizens, and (2) that this reverence warrants the notion that activities provided by religious groups unsupervised or unregulated by government comprise a social good. Edwards could advance his argument in this way because the collective cultural self understanding of his audience (and his political constituency) accepts these assumptions as uncontested facts. Ignoring or conveniently forgetting that the Founding Fathers systematically murdered thousands of people, stole land, excluded women from public polity and maintained a brutal slave trade,

and ignoring or conveniently forgetting that religious groups perpetrated horrid acts of violence, Edward's audience holds a common belief that its members are part of a tradition of tolerance, moderation, fair play and reason.

Similarly, when the *New York Times* opined in January 2001 that "Few would dispute the proposition by President Bush yesterday that religious groups can effectively provide social services for the poor" they were publicly rehearsing the uncontested and unproven premises about the benefits that religious groups provide when they work with the poor. This "few would dispute" proposition is based on a common acceptance among *NYT* readers in what might be termed the George-Washington-chopped-down-the-cherry-tree version of American history. In this view of history, the handful of fighters in Great Britain's 18th century American colonies were not terrorist and traitors, but freedom fighters; the plantations owners were southern gentleman; the witch burners and land thieves in New England were pilgrims and settlers. In this view of American history, the enormous concentration of wealth in the United States is not the result of receiving stolen property stolen labor, but of honest hard work and courage. This view of past events is one element in a set of stories that has been culturally transmitted from generation to generation. Thus it comprises a major element of the national cultural self understanding; at least to the extent that that cultural self understanding is reflected in mainstream media.

Much of the testimony at the faith based congressional hearings was based on this view. Because in this cultural understanding the unstated premises about history remained uncontested, and the fundamental questions about addressing social ills remained unasked and are finally unanswered, the claim of wanting to learning about ways of "helping people in need" is belied. The hearings neither looked at the underlying causes of poverty, nor evaluated effective

treatment for drug addiction, nor sought structural solutions to homelessness, youth violence and other social problems.

For this reasons the hearings themselves were not public testimony in any true sense of the terms. The ideas advanced, the testimony given and competition about national identity was narrowly drawn. Points of view that fell outside of the common conservative/moderate/liberal cultural understanding were not in evidence. People who participated advanced views of society that align within the acceptable ahistorical narrative which includes stories about personal freedom, limited government versus incremental government activism, and religious and ethnic diversity. No attempts were made to learn how social ills might be affected by fair skin privilege or gender bias. No questions were posed regarding the national distribution of wealth and distribution of opportunity. No libertarians, socialists, or representatives from other disenfranchised fringe groups were invited to testify. Thus, the hearings could be seen as a set of taxpayer funded, dramatized events that allowed various parts of the politically connected establishment to have a conversation with itself about various political risks and options. To summarize: analysis of language behavior revealed that the political identity and self understanding of participants was rooted in stories portraying a narrow view of American history, and that cultural competition among participants focused on possible incremental changes in power relationships. The real fight was about whether the benefits of distributing funds in different ways would out way the political risks from expanding access to government support.

The initiative and the ensuing public debate did advance moderate changes in the mainstream national conversation about the role of FBOs in charitable work. Candidate Bush had promised to devote billions of dollars and create comprehensive legislation to support religious organization's involvement in social service programs. The administrative action and attempt to

pass legislation to support that vision triggered widespread debate among the administration's friends and foes in Congress and the debate highlighted divisions within the Republican Party and between certain religious denominations.

Political savvy officeholders understood that the faith-based and community initiative had the potential to influence structural changes within the federal bureaucracy. As Greg Kepferele, Executive Director of Catholic Charities in New Mexico said in his testimony at the July 2 hearing

> They knew that organizational change for institutions as large and complicated as Federal Government agencies doesn't happen overnight. Similarly this initiative is creating the possibility of organizational change for smaller community and faith-based organizations and the way they operate. This can create a positive change in terms of collaboration and transforming relationships. (U.S. House July 2, 2003)

As time passed, serious questions were posed those who were supposed to benefit most from the effort. Many religious groups, particularly evangelical Christian groups were wary about the long term effects of accepting government money. Would taking government money hinder the religious part of religious charity? Pastors of churches in poor neighborhoods were suspect of the long term political effects of the grants as well as the motives of the grantors. Would accepting money from this administration compromise the vigor of protest for social justice?

Perhaps more importantly, debate about the initiatives brought issue of poverty in American to the center of political and policy attention within a Republican, avowedly conservative administration and congress. Showing the extent of the need and the constancy of poverty, it revealed how little is actually is being achieved to address human suffering and poverty in a land of plenty.

During the nine years since the executive order establishing a White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives the discussion has shifted to means rather than ends. No longer do elected officials debate if there should be government funding of FBOs, nor do they publicly question if government should expand the participation of faith community. More current discussions center on how government funding can deal with issues such as hiring practices in religious nonprofits. In its October 2009 issue the *New York Times* reported that

> President Obama promised in his campaign to preserve President George W. Bush's faith-based initiative aimed at helping social service programs sponsored by religious organizations win federal grants and contracts. He also promised a vitally important change: groups receiving federal money would no longer be allowed to hire employees on the basis of their religion…. As a candidate, Mr. Obama drew the right line. Effective social service programs should not be ineligible for federal dollars just because they have a religious affiliation. But they should be required to abide by the same anti-discrimination laws as everyone else. Public money should not be used to pay for discrimination (October 14, 2009, pg. A30).

A new environment favoring the expansion of faith community participation in federal funding accompanied these changes in the conversation (along with heightened national awareness of government debt). In February 2009, President Obama unveiled the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships with the mandate to coordinate a national effort to expand opportunities for faith-based and other community organizations, and to strengthen their capacity to meet social needs in America's communities. While President Obama's program represented a revamping of efforts started in 2001 by President Bush, during the eighteen months following the Obama election, the nation's attention was shifted toward a great economic crisis. At the same time, partisan battling for control of the political process sharpened, and public cooperation between the national Democratic and Republican parties

evaporated. Accordingly, relatively little public attention was paid to the newly designed program. Only as the economic crisis abates can the public expect renewed interest and renewed debate over the relationship between government and philanthropy.

Further academic study of these phenomena would benefit from the use of psycholinguistics and sociolinguistics ; these communication tools might provide an expanded understanding of the intricate discourses within social institutions, and in doing so might be more successful in teasing out concrete elements of chauvinism, ethnocentrism, and class interest within the hearing's narratives. Such an approach is beyond the scope of this inquiry. If future hearings include more diverse audiences and more divergent points of view, such academic approaches could also help identify variations in style, ethnic attitudes, storytelling and argumentation.

The current political landscape includes a presidential administration that seems committed to reaching out to groups and communities that have not so far played a part in policy development. The new administration has created an advisory council of religious leaders to look at matters such as abortion and international relations. This has sometimes caused tension with those who were supporters of the new president. Barry Lynn, Executive Director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State said "This administration has used faith more overtly than any other in its first hundred days…" (Gilgoff, 2009). This landscape also includes closer media scrutiny of government spending, a heated and divisive electronic media, and a higher profile among faith groups and among populace conservative groups. These factors suggest future inquiry into funding of faith based organizations might include a wider spectrum of opinion, and further suggest that government entities will be locked into an ever expanding partnership with churches and other religious organizations.

When the public debate re-emerges, these factors may make the old way of viewing separation of church and state archaic. It is reasonable to conjecture that future debate will center on how well FBOs accomplish their social objectives, and in meeting their spiritual commitments, whether they treat clients, applicants and employees fairly.

If public support for new relations among churches and federal, state and local governments continues to increase, if services provided by faith based groups are ever measured and show themselves to be effective, if challenges to these types of initiatives continue to survive ongoing court battles, then it is likely that separating religious service providers from the pool of tax dollars could be deemed by lawmakers as counter productive.

Such a future expansion is not assured, however. Two historical facts still may play a role in holding back broad public support for providing tax dollar support to religious groups for services to the needy. First, in the first part of the 20th century social reformers strove vigorously to clean up the conditions such as of poor education, poor nutrition and physical abuse that were found in orphanages run by church groups. This struggle led to the creation of the public relief devices such as state controlled foster care to be separated from church control. Secondly, at the first part of the 21st century, rising mistrust among Christian conservative groups of Muslims generally and of the activities for Muslim organizations in particular may stall acceptance of expanding funding for faith-based groups, and stall the expansion of the number of faith based participants in government charity.

The economic and fiscal environment is another factor that always has to be considered. The way in which the general population perceives public spending can be a key to success. Both Charitable Choice and Faith-Based Initiatives were introduced in times of federal budget stability (1996-98 and 2001). This situation has changed. Projected trillion dollar budget deficits may be

a semi-permanent fixture of American public life. What Van Dijk called "norms and values" that emerge from the texts are also identifiable as zero-sum. Even in prosperous times of 2001, contestants for government funds expressed the belief that their own fortunes were negatively related to others, so that potential outcomes could only be seen as lose-win. Neither in the text testimony nor in the news articles are cooperation, mutual benefit and compromise encouraged. Zero-sum attitudes hardly portend mutual aid and teamwork within American's political debates.

Nonetheless, there are facts that point to increased participation by FBOs. Those who sincerely care about addressing social suffering and who are also willing to sacrifice toward that end might find encouragement in the following factors. Not only have recent U. S. court cases allowed for more participation by religious groups in publicly funding, but also increasingly people in the United States (as portrayed by mainstream media) consider religious institutions important elements in the civilizing process. President Osama's continuation of faith based initiative met with virtually no resistance. All of these factors point to the emergence of a future where faith based charity is an uncontested and uncontroversial norm.

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