

Chapter 1 : NPR Choice page

Religious institutions are the visible and organized manifestations of practices and beliefs in particular social and historical contexts. Like human emotions and attitudes, religious beliefs and practices project outward onto the social and historical plan. They create identities and.

As the scholar Diana Eck reminds us, for most of our history our religious discourse was dominated by a culturally conservative European heritage—people like me. Alternative visions of faith rarely reached the mainstream. That has changed markedly as we steam deeper into the twenty-first century. Almost 80 percent of Americans still identify themselves as Christians, but they are a far more motley lot than the mainstream media understand or report. Other faiths are now making their presence felt, and our religious landscape is being re-created right before our eyes. Travel the country as I do as a journalist and you see an America dotted with mosques—in places like Toledo, Phoenix, and Atlanta. By one estimate, there are , religious congregations of one kind or another across the country, and that roughly million people attend worship services regularly. It is important, therefore, to keep reminding ourselves that in the Abrahamic tradition the first murder arose out of a religious act. Adam and Eve have two sons. Cain, a farmer, offers the first fruits of the soil. Abel, a shepherd, offers the first lamb from the flock. Cain is so jealous that their rivalry leads to violence and ends in death. Religion has a healing side; we know this. But it also has a killing side. As I write, conservative Christians have been pressing their agenda toward political outcomes, first through the Republican primary campaign and in local elections as well. For example, I read on the website bullyingstatistics. By now this is a familiar tactic: We Americans have wrestled from the very beginning of our country with the best ways to protect the church and state from encroaching on each other. Some of our forebears feared the church would corrupt the state. Others feared the state would corrupt the church. Churches and religious zealots did get punitive laws passed against what they said were moral and religious evils: But churches also fought to end slavery, help workers organize, and pass progressive laws. Government had its favorites at times; for much of our history, it privileged the Protestant majority. As we argue over how to respect religious liberty, including the liberty not to believe, these thoughtful Rules for Mixing Religion and Politics call on us to acknowledge the tensions that are inherent to protecting in law and policy both freedom of religion and freedom from religion. We can simultaneously share a strong commitment to religious liberty, while disagreeing over the application of that principle in a given circumstance. Over many years of covering these issues, I know that Americans can talk about their beliefs in public without politicizing religion or polarizing the community; I have seen and heard them do it. From experience I know that seriously religious people can press their argument in the public sphere without advocating injury to others. And we can engage with others in serious conversation about the most deeply felt subjects and truly challenge each other, teach each other, and learn from each other. As Salman Rushdie told me in an interview: In free societies you must have the free play of ideas, there must be an argument, and it must be impassioned and untrammelled. Free societies are dynamic, noisy, turbulent, and full of radical disagreement. So—let there be Rules. The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the free exercise of religion and prohibits the establishment of religion by the government. These two principles work together to protect religious freedom and a thriving and perse religious landscape. Most Americans embrace freedom of religious expression and the separation of church and state, but the application of these principles in electoral, political and policy settings is a perennial source of controversy. The appropriate role for religion and religious language in political debate is often the source of confusion and conflict across the political spectrum, particularly as our communities grow more perse religiously. The line between an appropriate accommodation of religion and an inappropriate establishment is not always clear; good faith policymakers frequently engage in complex efforts to balance competing interests. These Rules reflect our understanding of the Constitution and the body of federal court cases on religious liberty as well as our judgment on issues beyond the law. Some things that are legally permissible may still be damaging to religious tolerance and civic discourse, and should be discouraged. We do not believe it was unconstitutional, as some argued, for Texas Gov. Rick Perry to launch his presidential

bid with an exclusionary prayer rally sponsored by religiously divisive voices; we do think it was an unfortunate, unwise, and inappropriate decision for someone who was seeking to be president of all Americans. It is important to acknowledge that some situations bring the principles of free expression and nonestablishment into creative tension, and there is room for principled disagreement about just where the lines should be drawn in a given circumstance. Judges as well as policymakers wrestle with these complexities. Other public officials, like teachers and school administrators, often face situations with more ambiguities than bright lines. That lack of clarity, especially when exacerbated by misleading political rhetoric, can lead to bad decisions. Sometimes these mistakes are easily corrected; sometimes they are resolved through litigation. People For the American Way Foundation has participated in several projects over the years in which advocates from across the political and religious spectrum have worked to minimize these mistakes by clarifying the state of the law in legal guides for school officials. Misinformation and misunderstanding can also lead to divisive rhetoric. Sometimes media wrongly portray policy debates as if there are religious voices on only one side of the issue. These are recurring issues. As leaders of an organization whose board and membership include Catholics, Jews and mainstream and evangelical Protestants, we feel this false dichotomy most strongly. Because many Americans derive their values from their faith, religious people and religious beliefs have always played a significant role in American politics and culture, and in fact have been at the forefront of many justice-seeking movements. It is unavoidable that religion and politics will mix. The question is whether they will mix in ways that promote the common good and are true to the spirit of the Constitution, or whether they mix in ways that divide Americans along lines of faith and undermine our sense of community. America is a religiously pluralistic country, with increasing numbers of adherents to minority faiths and a significant and growing number of people who claim no religious affiliation. At the same time, efforts to use religious language and imagery to motivate political involvement have flourished on all points of the political spectrum. All that civic engagement makes it even more important that Americans figure out how to mix religion and politics in ways that respect constitutional principles and democratic values. All Americans, religious or non-religious, should be welcomed to play an active role in their communities and the political life of our nation. These rules are an effort to create guidelines that can build a better, more productive, less divisive public conversation. There can be no religious test for public office, nor a religious test for participation in the political process. Even still, some states kept religious tests on the books well into the 20th century. Some religious leaders and public officials have asserted a de facto religious test for public office, insisting that American Christians must vote for Christian politicians. Some evangelical activists have suggested that it would be wrong, for example, for a Christian to vote for a Mormon presidential candidate, because having a Mormon president might lead people to adopt his faith. One declared candidate in the presidential race announced that he would not appoint a Muslim to his cabinet; other presidential candidates in the past have said they would not permit Hindus or atheists to serve. No American should be discouraged or barred from participation in the political process simply on account of their religious views. The Constitution explicitly forbids the requiring of any religious test as a qualification for holding office. To impose such a test by popular vote is as bad as to impose it by law. To vote either for or against a man because of his creed is to impose upon him a religious test and is a clear violation of the spirit of the Constitution. While it is appropriate to discuss the moral dimensions of public policy issues, religious doctrine alone is not an acceptable basis for government policy. Because government represents all the people, not just those who share the faith of particular government officials, and because the First Amendment prevents the government from establishing religion, it is inappropriate for government policy to be based solely on religious doctrine. Debates over who speaks for God or who has a superior interpretation of scripture should not form the basis for policymaking. This does not mean that government officials and other players in policy debates are expected to abandon their faith as the price for taking part in the political process—or that it is inappropriate to talk about moral or religious values in politics. Laws prohibiting murder and stealing, as well as laws protecting worker safety and the environment, reflect moral judgments. Those judgments may be rooted in specific religious teaching for some people, but they are also shared broadly across religious and secular lines. In contrast, some elected officials have cited the Bible story of the great flood as a definitive

argument against government policy to address global warming. At a hearing, Rep. In , Maryland State Senator and American University law professor Jamie Raskin was asked to testify before a Maryland senate committee considering a proposed amendment to the state constitution to prohibit same-sex couples from getting married. For me, this is an issue solely based on religious principles. But they must respect that not all Americans share their faith, and that even Americans who share their faith might well disagree with their political position on any given issue. This is an area in which there is a clear distinction between what is legal and what is wise or responsible. Claims to speak for God in public policy are protected as free speech by the First Amendment, but that does not mean they will lead to constructive debate or effective policy. Public officials have every right to express their personal religious beliefs, and no right to use the power of their office to proselytize or coerce others to adopt any religious beliefs or practices Public officials are free to talk about their faith, the role it plays in their lives, and how it influences their approach to issues, but must not use the power of their office to proselytize or impose particular religious beliefs or practices on others. This principle is sometimes neglected by those who should know better. Some judges, for example, have inappropriately posted statements of religious dogma on the walls of their courtrooms. Former and running again in Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore was removed from office after he defied federal court orders to remove a religious display of the Ten Commandments that he had installed, in the middle of the night, in his courthouse rotunda. Public officials who assert the supremacy of their faith over the faith of others risk alienating some of their constituents. Courts have held that the Constitution does not prohibit officials from making references to religion in their official capacities. Government institutions must show neither official approval nor disapproval of religion, or favor one religion over another Government should not take sides when it comes to religion, either to favor one particular religion or to favor religious people generally over nonreligious people. This fundamental principle finds its legal roots in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Government can run afoul of that prohibition in two principal ways. One is excessive entanglement with religious institutions – The second and more direct infringement is government endorsement or disapproval of religion. Endorsement sends a message to non-adherents that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community. Disapproval sends the opposite message. This basic principle of church-state separation continues to be contested by some who argue that it is permissible and desirable for the government to promote or favor religion, a narrative of America going back to the Puritans. Recent policies that would reflect inappropriate government favoritism toward religion include prisoners getting favored treatment for enrolling in religious programs or most instances of government-funded religious organizations receiving special exemptions from laws and regulations that apply to other nonprofit organizations. Houses of worship are exempt from civil rights laws in some areas directly related to their religious mission – notably the hiring of clergy – but they do not and should not get a blanket exemption from government regulation. Public schools are often an arena for conflicts on church-state issues. Students in public schools are free to share their faith with other students, to pray over lunch, and to start religious clubs if their high school permits other non-curricular clubs. But public schools may not require students to participate in any religious activity.

Chapter 2 : Understanding Why Americans Seem More Religious Than Other Western Powers | HuffPost

American religious institutions are under increasing pressure from the government to sacrifice their religious beliefs in order to comply with the latest norms of the sexual revolution.

Like human emotions and attitudes, religious beliefs and practices project outward onto the social and historical plan. They create identities and representations, and determine attitudes, emotions, and behavior. These manifestations and outward projections originate from beliefs and practices, but they are also limited by historical contexts. Geographical, social, and political considerations modify attitudes and practices. Religious institutions, then, take shape in relation to both religious impulses and contextual configurations. The following entry suggests some of the enduring and changing features of religious institutions in Islam in broad historical strokes. Religious beliefs and practices have been noticeably expressed in key institutions constructed in uniquely different social and historical contexts. The caliphate as a universal political and social order was the key institution developed in the early period of Islam. This was followed by more clearly religious institutions like the school of law madhhab and Sufi order tariqa. The modern period has witnessed the emergence of various forms of religious states together with the independent religious association in secular contexts.

Early Islam The early period of Islamic history begins with the life of the prophet Muhammad and ends with the weakening of the Abbasid Empire. Following Marshall Hodgson, we can use the year 661 as a significant point in that history when the independence of the caliphate was finally shattered. A general of a regional power, the Buyids, occupied Baghdad and laid to rest the more than two hundred years of a universal political authority. The eventual failure notwithstanding, early Islam laid the foundation of the caliphate as a vital religious institution that moved and inspired Muslims. It is also an institution that has provided considerable inspiration for subsequent political and social movements in diverse cultural and historical contexts up to the present time. The caliphal order was the most important religious institution the Muslims created during this period. The word "order" is used to include the political system and ideas themselves, as well as the related notions of self, society, and others. Early Islam was a period of intense political conflicts, many of which raged particularly over the nature and shape of this political order and its related issues. At the same time, these conflicts and disagreements created opportunities for great creativity that inspired legal, theological, philosophical, and literary productions in support of one or the other conceptions of the political order. Who must be the caliph? After the death of the prophet Muhammad in 632, one of the first questions that needed to be answered was that of his succession. Would it be someone close to him from the beginning? Would it mean the split of the Muslim community between its Meccan and Medinan followers? Or would it be someone from his family? Or would the community simply choose one among equals? In time, these political questions were answered in religious and theological terms. The history of religious ideas of early Islam revolves around questions and answers about the identity, nature, and authority of the caliphate. One of the close associates of the prophet Muhammad, Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, was selected as his immediate successor in a tense political context. Even though it remained a minority, and the various factions were hardly unanimous on the particular descendant of Ali as the rightful successor, the Shi'a produced notions of legitimate and rightful leadership for religious leadership in general. The prophetically chosen one was divinely guided, and ready to go into battle against injustice and usurpation. Such a notion of a religious leader became the cornerstone of other religious groups and political parties. Mystical schools took on the notion of direct or indirect divine assistance, and leaders of political and religious movements followed the inspiration of its revolutionary aspects. In light of this particular discussion, such a notion of religious and political leadership is an important part of the religious institution of the caliphate of early Islam. Another important aspect of this institution was the nature of the community and its boundaries. The family of the Prophet would enjoy a level of recognition and respect above ordinary believers. However, the egalitarian message of earlier biblical religions found a profound resonance in Islam as well. The Kharijis developed another philosophy of revolution against authority. The first theological questions emerged directly from the issues raised by these early groups. Islamic theology, for example, asked to what extent the wrongdoing of a

reigning caliph could be tolerated. But they said that such a person was suspended between belief and disbelief. The majority of the scholars gravitated toward a more accommodationist position, and argued that grave acts or sins by themselves do not declare a person a non-Muslim. The theological arguments were the first political arguments concerning the identity of the caliph, but it is quite clear that they contributed in no small part to the definition of a Muslim against disbelief. And the early theological debates among Muslims themselves and between Muslims and other religious groups in the Near East established the boundaries and identity of Islam and Muslims. The identity of Muslims also raised the issue of the Arabs and Arabic. As Islam spread from Arabia and embraced many different cultures and traditions, it confronted the question of the relationship between Arabs and non-Arabs, and between Arab culture and local languages and cultures. The spread of Islamic power went hand in hand with Arabization. Against this hegemony of Arab authority, the Islamic impulse favored a greater sense of egalitarianism between Arabs and non-Arabs. One of the main factors that supported the Abbasid revolution against the Umayyads was the alliance between Arab and non-Arab forces. The victory of the Abbasids meant the victory for universalism in the house of Islam. But the position of the Arabs and Arabic was not abandoned. The Arabic language, as the language of divine revelation par excellence, took on an elevated position in society in general and in religious scholarship in particular, and became the lingua franca of aspiring religious teachers and scholars. Legal, exegetical, and philological studies emphasized the indispensability of Arabic even while keeping the door open to conversions. The boundaries of the community against outsiders were more clearly drawn, even though not always consistently applied. The caliphate was justified on the basis of a universal and expanding empire that engaged the reigning superpowers of the day. The latter remained a major adversary and target until its capital, Constantinople, fell in A condition of war between the caliphate and other political orders was accepted as the norm, even though such a norm could be temporarily regulated by treaties. The relationship with other religions followed this political norm. The expanding caliphate tolerated no polytheistic religious communities. They had to abandon their religions, and accept Islam. In contrast, Christians and Jews were recognized as People of the Book and were tolerated in the caliphate order. But still, the caliphate was a political institution driven by the interests of those who were able to command power. Various factions of Arab tribes played a dominant role in the balance of power during the Umayyad period and the early Abbasid period, and the history and success of conquest created significant opportunities for others. The religious element was reinforced through the development of a religious literature on the legacy of the Prophetic period. As an institution, then, the political and religious elements of the caliphate were not so easily separated. Those who possessed this knowledge, the ulema, were distinct from those who wielded power and from the mass of followers, even though they did not always form a distinctive institution that bound them to each other on the public plain. Sometimes one gets the impression that, in the earliest period of conquest, those who wielded brute force disdained such men of learning. But the accumulation of scholarly tradition could not be ignored in the administration of justice, the bureaucracy, and in the general legitimization of the political order itself. In the latter half of the Umayyad and the early part of the Abbasid caliphates, the accumulation of the teachings of the Prophet and the early Muslims began in the important towns and cities such as Medina, Mecca, Kufa, and Basra. The most well known of these teachings were from prominent individuals who later came to be associated with schools of law like Abu Hanifa d. Their discussions on issues such as criminal justice, evidence, military warfare, and slavery provided the political and social foundations for the caliphate. At the same time, and of more lasting significance, they founded the basic framework for a religious way of life by defining and specifying the way in which to fulfill the religious duties in Islam. Theological discussions defined the boundaries of belief and membership, juridical discussions elaborated the performance of ritual practices, and mystical notions explored religious experience with the Divine. Eventually, the apparatus of scholarship inscribed a distinct zone of authority that the caliphs and other political rulers could not access through the exercise of military means. One of the most interesting episodes in Abbasid history illustrates the limits of political authority against the authority of religious scholarship. A celebrated and most popular teacher of hadith, Ahmad b. Hanbal, refused to embrace the doctrine. The event reinforced the authority of the religious scholars and their role in society. Some have seen in this episode the divergence of political from

religious authority in Islam. The caliphate was a religious institution created and established in early Islam. It defined a religious order of power and authority that included the meaning of the self, community, and the Other. The history of the caliphate during this period indicates that the precise details of the order were determined by the historical exigencies of internal disputes, and conflict with the Other. In general, however, the caliphate bequeathed to Muslims the idea of a universal egalitarian community *umma* with a special place for the Arabic language and the family of the Prophet; an expanding political order and hegemony over Jews, Christians, and other recognized religious communities; complete dominance over polytheistic communities; and a religious authority based on knowledge of the revelations received by the prophet Muhammad. The Middle Period The universal caliphate faced daunting challenges from the outset, and finally collapsed as an effective political authority. The middle period refers to the time when the caliphs lost effective power to regional authorities until the modern period. One can also point to as a quasi midpoint of this period, when the Ottoman Empire conquered Constantinople and became the model of extensive, but not universal, Muslim empires until the emergence of nation-states. As challengers from religious and political groups were regular features of the caliphate, individual caliphs relied more and more on slave soldiers and generals for their personal rule and effective control. The Abbasid revolution unleashed the force of regional powers, particularly in the areas previously controlled by the Sassanian Empire. From the tenth century these regions witnessed the emergence of powerful governors and generals who wielded more power than the central government. In this same century, challenges to the universality of the institution also became apparent. A rival caliphate was established in the West by survivors of the Umayyad family who fled to North Africa and southern Spain. The Buyids took effective control of Baghdad in , even though they did not completely replace the caliph with a recognized imam. The Fatimids, with the support of Berber clans in North Africa, lay claim to the universal caliphate from Spain to India. They occupied Cairo in and went on to become the largest and longest surviving political order until the s, when they were defeated by the Seljuks, another group of Turkish military adventurers. The religious elements developed during the early caliphate did not completely disappear, but they were transformed in the context of these new social and political experiences. The idea of a universal community of believers *umma* persisted through the political breakdown of the empire, but a political unity became impossible. Moreover, the foundation of the religious discourse during the caliphate was now employed in the production of new institutions. The juridical, theological, and mystical ideas that emerged during the late Umayyad and Abbasid periods were developed, and slowly produced institutions like the schools of law and theology, and mystical orders. It is precisely the latter institutions that were a dominant feature of the Middle Period of Islam. The caliphate gave way to more clearly definable religious institutions that expressed the emotions, attitudes, and behaviors of Muslims.

Chapter 3 : This is how bogus quotes are born | Thomas Jefferson's Monticello

A new survey suggests the logistics of going to services can be the biggest barrier to participation and Americans' faith in religious institutions is declining.

The Changing Religious Composition of the U. Christians remain by far the largest religious group in the United States, but the Christian share of the population has declined markedly. In the past seven years, the percentage of adults who describe themselves as Christians has dropped from 70% to 63%. Once an overwhelmingly Protestant nation, the U. Today, by comparison, While there have been declines across a variety of Protestant denominations, the most pronounced changes have occurred in churches in the mainline Protestant tradition, such as the United Methodist Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The share of adults belonging to mainline churches dropped from 45% to 35%. This is similar to the drop seen among U. Catholics, whose share of the population declined from 24% to 20%. In contrast with mainline Protestantism, there has been less change in recent years in the proportion of the population that belongs to churches in the evangelical or historically black Protestant traditions. Protestants identified with evangelical churches. While the overall Christian share of the population has dropped in recent years, the number of Americans who do not identify with any religion has soared. This chapter takes a close look at the current religious composition of the United States and how it has changed since 1990. A full-page table PDF summarizes the religious affiliation of U. The chapter also explains how Protestant respondents were sorted into the three distinct Protestant traditions – the evangelical Protestant tradition, the mainline Protestant tradition and the historically black Protestant tradition – and it documents which Protestant denominations are shrinking, and which are growing. Finally, the chapter examines the growth of non-Christian religions in the U. Measuring and Categorizing Protestantism American Protestantism is diverse, encompassing more than a dozen major denominational families – such as Baptists, Methodists, Lutherans and Pentecostals – all with unique beliefs, practices and histories. The Terminology of Religious Identity Denominations: A denominational family is a set of religious denominations and related congregations with a common historical origin. Examples of families include Baptists, Methodists and Lutherans. Most denominational families consist of denominations that are associated with more than one of the three Protestant traditions. The Baptist family, for instance, consists of some denominations that fall into the evangelical tradition, others that belong to the mainline tradition and still others that are part of the historically black Protestant tradition. A religious tradition is a set of denominations and congregations with similar beliefs, practices and origins. In this report, Protestant denominations are grouped into three traditions: Because of this great diversity, American Protestantism is best understood not as a single religious tradition but rather as three distinct traditions – the evangelical Protestant tradition, the mainline Protestant tradition and the historically black Protestant tradition. Each of these traditions is made up of numerous denominations and congregations that share similar beliefs, practices and histories. For instance, churches within the evangelical tradition tend to share religious beliefs including the conviction that personal acceptance of Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation, practices like an emphasis on bringing other people to the faith and origins including separatist movements against established religious institutions. Churches in the mainline tradition, by contrast, share other doctrines such as a less exclusionary view of salvation, practices such as a strong emphasis on social reform and origins. Churches in the historically black Protestant tradition have been shaped uniquely by the experiences of slavery and segregation, which put their religious beliefs and practices in a special context. As much as possible, Protestant respondents were categorized into one of the three Protestant traditions based not on their denominational family, but rather on the specific denomination with which they identify. Most Protestant denominational families include denominations that are associated with different Protestant traditions. For example, some Baptist denominations like the Southern Baptist Convention are part of the evangelical tradition; others such as the American Baptist Churches USA are part of the mainline tradition; and still others such as the National Baptist Convention are part of the historically black Protestant tradition. While the Baptist family of denominations includes churches in all three Protestant traditions, this is not the case for all denominational families, some of which have members in just one or two of the Protestant

traditions. Despite the detailed denominational measures used in the Religious Landscape Study, many respondents more than a quarter of all Protestants were either unable or unwilling to describe their specific denominational affiliation. Black respondents in denominational families without a sizable number of churches in the historically black Protestant tradition were coded as members of the evangelical or mainline Protestant traditions depending on their response to a separate question asking whether they would identify as a born-again or evangelical Christian. Second, non-black respondents who gave vague denominational identities and who described themselves as born-again or evangelical Christians were coded as members of the evangelical tradition; otherwise, they were coded as members of the mainline tradition. The Shifting Composition of American Protestantism Recent years have brought a dramatic decline in the share of Americans who identify with mainline Protestant denominations. By comparison, evangelical Protestantism and the historically black Protestant tradition have been more stable. Evangelicals now constitute a clear majority of all Protestants in the U. Many Protestant denominational families have seen their share of the U. Methodists and Lutherans also have declined by more than a full percentage point in recent years. The family that shows the most significant growth is the nondenominational family; today, 6. The Southern Baptist Convention an evangelical denomination and the United Methodist Church a mainline denomination continue to be the two largest Protestant denominations in the U. Both denominations, however, have experienced declines in their relative share of the population. In the Religious Landscape Study, 5. The largest of these faiths is Judaism, with 1. The Muslim and Hindu shares of the population have risen significantly since And it is possible, even despite this growth, that the Religious Landscape Study may underestimate the size of these groups. The study was conducted in English and Spanish, which means that groups with above-average numbers of people who do not speak English or Spanish such as immigrants from Asia, Africa and other parts of the world may be underrepresented. The Religious Landscape Study finds that 0. Atheists and Agnostics Make Up a Growing Share of the Unaffiliated The religiously unaffiliated population “including all of its constituent subgroups” has grown rapidly as a share of the overall U. The share of self-identified atheists has nearly doubled in size since , from 1. Agnostics have grown from 2. The answer depends on how evangelicalism is being defined. There are a number of ways this can be done. The approach taken in the Religious Landscape Study, for example, focuses only on Protestants. It looks at the denominations and congregations with which Protestants identify, and determines whether these denominations and congregations are part of the evangelical Protestant tradition, mainline Protestant tradition or historically black Protestant tradition. Those who belong to denominations and churches that are part of the evangelical Protestant tradition such as the Southern Baptist Convention, the Assemblies of God and many nondenominational churches are categorized as evangelical Protestants in the study; those who belong to denominations or churches in the other two Protestant traditions are not. Using this approach, the study finds that Another way to identify evangelicals is to ask people whether they consider themselves evangelical or born-again Christians. The Religious Landscape Study includes a question asking Christians: The share of self-described born-again or evangelical Christians is very similar to what it was in , even though the overall Christian share of the population has declined. When Catholics, Mormons and other non-Protestants are excluded, the study finds that three-in-ten U. Another way to define evangelical Protestants is to identify a set of religious beliefs or practices that are central to evangelicalism, and then assess how many people profess those beliefs or engage in those practices. When measured this way, the size of the evangelical population depends on the particular beliefs and practices that are used to define the category. While this type of analysis is beyond the scope of the Religious Landscape Study, a forthcoming report will examine the beliefs and practices of major religious groups and their views on social and political issues. Of course, some denominations are difficult to classify, and other researchers may prefer to employ alternative strategies for categorizing denominations into religious traditions or use different criteria for sorting respondents who offer a vague religious identity. As with all Pew Research Center surveys, the raw dataset from the Religious Landscape Study will be made freely available to scholars and others wishing to conduct secondary analysis, providing the opportunity to explore new and innovative approaches to categorizing religion and yielding new insights in this important area.

Chapter 4 : 12 Rules for Mixing Religion and Politics | People For the American Way

In the Roman Catholic Church, a religious institute is "a society in which members pronounce public vows and lead a life of brothers or sisters in common".. Consecrated life may be lived either individually or as a member of an institute.

Constitution which is the Supreme Law of the Land. Dan Albee - November 13, The government has no business dictating anything to religious groups. When is the Obama administration going to tell Muslims what to do? Sylvia Berggren - November 13, The government should stay out of the religious institutions decisions since the government decisions have been horrible. When you have a person like Obama in the white house ANY decision he makes will be horrible. Our country is falling apart. James - November 13, I know that the government has overstepped its mandate stated clearly in the Constution. Moral and sexual activities are outlined in the Bible. Leave personal decisions to the individual and his God. The government is established to protect the citizens from foreign threats and not the citizens from themselves. They are requiring things that religious people just cannot accept. We need religious liberty protected. Donald Waggener - November 13, Our country was founded on religious freedom and we must do everything that we can to protect it. The Bill of Rights lays out the bedrock of our republic and our individual freedom to participate in our democracy. Marno Patterson - November 13, It is outrageous that the government totally ignores the Constitution and tries to control what we believe. Our country was founded on religious liberty and that is what has made America great. William Frost - November 13, Keep church and state separate. Who in government should or has the right to decide. Arthur Williams - November 13, The currant occupant of the White House apparently does not understand the principles this country was founded on. The constitution was dedicated to God by George Washington at his innaugeration and the prayer of dedication Apr 30 If our leaders had the wisdom to read about our founding fathers, things would be much different. Robert Griffin - November 13, Religious freedoms are in danger here and around the world. We must fight to keep our religious freedoms or we will no longer have them! Patricia - November 13, According to the Constitution we have religious freedom in America. But not according to the Obama White House! He does not believe in religious freedom. You cannot insult a Muslim, but insulting a Christian is O. They are certainly NOT a peaceful group of people! Licata - November 14, It stinks to high heaven! Christine Paul - November 14, American Christians seem numb to the attacks on religious liberty as a reality. The Dems have a PR machine which labels non-believers in same sex marriage, special laws for non-specific gender identity and want to impose special benefits on the most in favor of the least. It starts with the children in schools being influenced by the federal government instead of local control. Universities descend into riots lead by liberal egg heads especially those masters of Government Philosophy! If the nuns do not want to have anything to do with abortion they need not have one. They do however need to provide their employees with medical plans which meet the legal requirements. Kate Barnett - November 14, Religious organizations and citizens have the right to practice their religion without interference. Mike Mulcahy - November 14, Religious freedom is definitely under attack. Our constitution garenteed freedom of Religion. We must be careful about this freedom or we may end up under Sherea law. By being compromising, the church is failing to stop our nation from wiping out religion here in America. A few churches has given in to gay marriages which is not promoted in our Bible. Eleanore Rideout - November 14, The U. Constitution is still the law of the land. This founding document was intentionally written so plainly a child could understand it. All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested inâ€"Congress. Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof Government imposing by law any philosophy on religion is unconstitutional and therefore null and void. If you are an American who believes in our constitution, who loves our country and our God-given right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happinessâ€" become active in the Fight to Stop the tyranny of government take-over and the abuse of Executive power. Tell every other American patriot you know to do the same. If the majority of We the People do nothing to keep and preserve our liberty and freedom, then the minority of a few will incrementally, dismantle, destroy and compromise our human liberties and take away our freedom. Carolyn Goodin - November 14, I think it is a blatant abuse of our First amendment right to freedom of religion. The

ridiculous interpretation that the first amendment means freedom from religion needs to be clarified once and for all. Hay - November 14, The downward spiral in morality in this country is a precursor to the downfall of our nation. We are following the path of Rome and its downfall. Thank you for doing all you can to help prevent this downfall. Come over here, respect our faith, be loyal to our flag, obey our laws, and speak our language. Marilee Reilly - November 14, What morality? The Dems have managed to destroy morality, now they are working on religion. The LGBT has succeeded in changing the definition of marriage. Not that we will endorse any particular candidate or party, but that we make an effort to get Christians registered and inform them of the issues and particulars for each of the candidates. Thank you for all that you do! White - November 14, I am opposed to and appalled by the WH policies designed to blunt and dilute our religious liberties. Religious freedom and liberty to worship the God of our Fathers is inherent in American history to give us a firm foundation in which to raise a family and educate them for the future. They have no authority, constitutionally, to force this. Sally L Krouth - November 15, It seems there is a double standard here. It seems it only applies to religious institutions. But for a minority of morally ill individuals in our country the government assumes it has the power to dictate moral religious beliefs. Sal Robert Sonnelitter - November 15, Any attempts to coerce religious institutions on any subject indicates contempt for the Constitution; especially with respect to free speech and religious liberty. Regulations that reflect such coercion are also abuses of executive power and likely violate the law underlying the regulation. Joseph Gerant - November 15, The thugs in control will not be stopped therefore we must get a better quality of thugs in charge. Congress has proven toothless, which are weak without a compliant Attorney General. Bill Coates - November 15, Earthly governments nearly always try to take the place of God in some way. The Obama administration is the worst offender in this respect, because it is even sneakier and more deceptive than China and North Korea which simply use force. God does not change, and this government will collapse, learn a lesson, and reconstitute itself in accord with Biblical teachings. Regulatory agencies will become advisory only, with little enforcement power. Laraine - November 16, The government has no right to interfere with our religion. We need more judges, term limits and age limits. The country has grown since Holder - November 16, The Constitution provides us with religious freedom. Anything that attempts to reduce that must be ignored and all not comply with policy that attempts to infringe on freedom of religion. Since the government is now funding almost everything access to our religious teachings of honesty, morality could, in the future, become out of sight, out of mind. Freedom of religion is like freedom of speech, we should be able to express our religious beliefs anywhere, anytime. Leave a Reply Your email address will not be published. We remind everyone that The Heritage Foundation promotes a civil society where ideas and debate flourish. Please be respectful of each other and the subjects of any criticism. Opinions posted here are those of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of The Heritage Foundation. About myHeritage myHeritage is the online home for Heritage Foundation members, a resource that explains how Heritage and Heritage members are making a difference in advancing conservative ideas..

Religion. Religion is a social institution that answers questions and explains the seemingly inexplicable. Religion provides explanations for why things happen and demystifies the ideas of birth and death.

Table of Contents Religion Religion is a social institution that answers questions and explains the seemingly inexplicable. Religion provides explanations for why things happen and demystifies the ideas of birth and death. Religions based on the belief in a single deity are monotheistic. Those that encompass many deities are polytheistic. Uniting Traditions When families attend religious services or put up decorations in honor of a holiday, they are teaching their children about their religion and how to observe it. By engaging in these activities and traditions, children are united with others of the same religion around the world. In this way, families teach their own culture as well as the culture of the society at large. Major World Religions Most of the world subscribes to one of the following religions: The most widespread world religion, Christianity derived from Judaism. It is based on the belief that Jesus Christ was the son of God and the redeemer of mankind. There are many different Christian denominations. Followers of Islam are called Muslims. Muslims believe that the true word of God was revealed to the prophet Muhammad around a. God in Islam is the same god as the Christian and Judaic deity. Hinduism is the oldest major world religion, dominant in India. Hindus do not worship a single person or deity but rather are guided by a set of ancient cultural beliefs. Karma can be strengthened with good acts and harmed by bad acts. Hindus believe that karma plays a role in reincarnation, a cycle of continuous rebirth through which, ideally, the soul can achieve spiritual perfection. Buddhists, most of whom live in Japan, Thailand, Cambodia, and Burma, follow the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, a spiritual teacher of the sixth century b. Types of Religious Groups Sociologists group religious organizations into three categories: A church is a religious group integrated with society. The Roman Catholic Church is well integrated in the society in Spain. A sect is a religious group that sets itself apart from society as a whole. The Amish of Pennsylvania are a classic sect. Though Christian, they choose to set themselves apart from the rest of society by their lifestyle, which eschews many aspects of modernity. A cult is a religious group that is outside standard cultural norms, typically centered around a charismatic leader. Jones started his cult in San Francisco, then convinced several hundred followers to move with him to Jonestown, Guyana. He claimed to be a god and insisted on strict loyalty. In , he and of his followers committed mass suicide. Religion in the United States In the United States, the degree to which people are religious is related to their social class, race, and ethnicity. The most affluent people in the United States tend to be Protestant, although Jews also enjoy a higher-than-average standard of living. Northern Europe, which is mostly Protestant, was the area of origin for most of the early settlers in America, so people of Northern European descent tend to come from the most established families and encounter the least amount of prejudice. People who emigrated from predominantly Roman Catholic countries in Southern and Eastern Europe and, later, Latin America encountered more prejudice and tend to be less affluent than the Protestants. However, there is wide variation among the groups. African-American churches have blended the traditions of Christianity and the African faiths of the slaves brought to America. These churches have played a major role in promoting civil rights for blacks. The Rise of Fundamentalism Fundamentalism is a strict, literal adherence to religious doctrine accompanied by a rejection of intellectualism and worldliness. All religions can experience a rise in fundamentalism. Among Southern Baptists, for example, fundamentalism has been on the rise. The Taliban regime in Afghanistan adhered to fundamentalist Muslim doctrine.

Churches, synagogues, mosques and other religious institutions are keystones of their communities. If a member slips and falls injuring themselves on the property, or the institution suffers loss through theft or water damage, they can be held financially responsible.

Many Western Europeans think of Americans as hopelessly, bafflingly, and dangerously, religious. Many Americans think of Western Europeans as distressingly, inexplicably, and unrelentingly, secular. And are we as religious as we seem? How did we get that way? How did they get that way? And how different are we? Maybe everyone is religious. Maybe sports fans who live or die each week with the fortunes of Manchester United or the Pittsburgh Steelers are as religious, in their own way, as earnest participants in churches, synagogues, mosques, and temples. But whether the question is about beliefs, practices, identity, the veneration of tradition, or some other familiar view of religion, most Americans answer it one way and most Western Europeans another. We are talking about Western Europe and the United States. That is more than enough. Of course it is possible that neither Americans nor Western Europeans mean what they say. After all, some forty percent of Americans have told the Gallup pollsters for half a century that they could have been found the previous week in some religious building doing something religious. A few enterprising sociologists have come up, however, with some imaginative ways of counting, and they conclude that the actual number is closer to twenty percent. A few equally enterprising scholars who study religion in Europe have argued that in some countries, people may practice more religion than they admit. Why might some Americans feel obligated to exaggerate their religious practice and some Europeans to minimize theirs? The prevailing view in some sociological circles is that the difference goes back to the separation of church and state. The First Amendment to the U. Constitution—along with state laws and constitutions—produced a competitive religious marketplace in which scores of sects competed with one another while the stodgy Europeans stuck with their state churches, and everyone in America knows that the marketplace outperforms monopolies, especially state-supported monopolies. American competition meant that denominations multiplied, religious entrepreneurs flourished, immigrants imported traditions, uneducated clergy attracted uneducated followers, educated clergy attracted educated followers, and radio preachers and televangelists bought up the airwaves. Though historians have shared no consensus about what it meant to adhere. True, American competition might be exaggerated. The region is about as homogeneous, once you leave the cities, as Italy, though the Pentecostals threaten some trust-busting. Furthermore, a place like England, burdened or buoyed by an Anglican establishment, had about fifteen competing denominations by the mid-nineteenth century and even more after World War I. The competitors attracted about as many members as the Anglican establishment. Since we are looking at trends that began in the eighteenth century, we might want to recall that the American states formed themselves as a nation during the Enlightenment—a period in which it sometimes seemed, at least to the orthodox, as if deists were to become as prominent as revivalist Christians. As a result, the clergy invested themselves in an extended polemic against deistic thought, arguing, among other things, that the deists provided an inadequate support for morality. If ever a theological argument took hold among a population, the association between religion and morality captured the American imagination. To this day, only a handful of politicians could hope to be elected to office if they did not let the voters know that they are religious—a requirement richly productive of unending irony. In Western Europe, voters seem not to see any necessary relation between morality and religious belief. It comes, of course, from the Gospel of John, and most Americans mean by it an experience resulting in a deeply felt relationship to Jesus as their Savior. But that was not exactly what sixteenth-century Catholics or even the Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin meant by the words. The current American usage of the term comes from revivalist traditions, a point that makes it abundantly clear that revivalism is one source of American religiosity. Revivalist traditions also appeared in Europe and Great Britain among puritans, pietists, Wesleyans, and evangelicals, and in Catholic missions, but Europe also had strong counterweights: American revivalists were well-attuned to the individualist dimensions of American culture. The difference is a matter of degree, but degrees make a

difference. Nor can one forget that America has been, since the first Native Americans wandered onto the continent, an immigrant nation. Of course, Europe had its own immigrants, sometimes motivated, at least in part, by religious desires. But America has received more immigrants than any other country. Between 1790 and 1860, 33 million Europeans alone came to the United States. Between 1860 and 1914, twenty million more immigrants arrived. Immigrants were not invariably religious, but the three institutions that immigrants brought with them were families, schools, and religious institutions. And the religious institutions became not only places of worship, but also of recreation, cultural preservation, social organization, and association, with people from the home country. Whatever the reasons, the multiple functions kept people close to churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques. Before 1860, nearly 75 percent of the immigrants to America came in some condition of unfreedom: Europe also had slaves and serfs, but for most of the eighteenth century almost half of all immigrants to America were enslaved Africans, and slavery altered Christianity. For one thing, it helped to produce a conservative white religious culture in the South. By the 1850s, the Southern planter class associated unorthodox thought with the northern movement to abolish slavery. Something of that amalgam of religion and white southern culture stuck. But the slaves themselves also helped make the South the most religious section of the United States. After the revivalists reached out to the slaves, who eventually formed their own churches. Seventy-nine percent of African Americans—84 percent of African American women—say today that religion is very important to them. Take them out of the Gallup and Pew religious polls, and the American religious statistics would look a little bit more like the Western European ones. European congregations did some of the same things, but the Americans continued long after the Europeans put the brakes on: When the culture popularized efficiency, so did religious institutions. In some small towns, the only sources of public face-to-face social events outside the religious institutions are the holy trinity of American entertainment: Religion has also reflected the American class system. Almost anyone familiar with religious groups in America can do a hasty class analysis of denominations and congregations. Two sociologists, Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, recently correlated the prominence of religiosity and the sense of economic vulnerability in the nations of the world. America seems an anomaly: Norris and Inglehart believe that the solution lies in the distinctive form of American capitalism, a system with a sadly porous safety net. One need not adopt a flat economic determinism in order to wonder why four of the five states with the lowest median income have the highest percentage of people who say that their religion is very important to them, while three of the five states with the highest median income have the highest percentage of people who say that is only moderately important. And finally—at least for now—is the long tradition of association between religion and nationalism. Europeans could be as religiously nationalistic and nationalistically religious as any American ever dreamed of being. But Western Europeans watched as their cultures collapsed after they invested their nineteenth and twentieth-century wars with religious meaning, and it is rare now to see a national flag in a Western European religious building. It is this American sanctifying of national adventures with religious rhetoric that most worries Western Europeans. But this worries many Americans, as well, including some of the most religious among us. Why do Americans seem so religious?

Chapter 7 : American Religion Statistics: Trends in U.S. Religious Affiliations

"Religious institutions that use government power in support of themselves and force their views on persons of other faiths, or of no faith, undermine all our civil rights. Moreover, state support of an established religion tends to make the clergy unresponsive to their own people, and leads to corruption within religion itself.

Categorization[edit] Since each and every religious institute has its own unique aim, or charism , it has to adhere to a particular way of religious living that is conducive to it, whether " contemplative ", " enclosed ", mendicant , or apostolic. Thus some religious institutes " especially of nuns who are subject to " Papal Enclosure " strictly isolate their members from the outside world, of which the " grilles " in their parlours and churches are tangible evidence. Several founders, in view of their aim, require the members of their institute not only to profess the three Evangelical Counsels of chastity, poverty, obedience, but also to vow or promise stability or loyalty, and maybe certain disciplines, such as self-denial, fasting, silence. Religious orders are subdivided as: Some religious orders, for example the Franciscans or the Dominicans , have " Third Orders " of associated religious members who live in community and follow a rule called Third Order Religious or TOR , or lay members who, without living in formal community with the order, have made a private vow or promise to it, such as of perseverance in pious life, hence are not "religious", that is to say, not members of the Consecrated life often called Third Order Secular, or TOS. Historically, what are now called religious institutes were distinguished as either religious orders or religious congregations. The Church no longer makes that distinction and applies to all such institutes the single name "religious institute" and the same rules of canon law. Broadly speaking, after a lengthy period spanning postulancy, aspirancy and novitiate and whilst in "temporary vows " to test their vocation with a particular institute, candidates wishing to be admitted permanently are required to make a public profession of the Evangelical counsels of chastity, poverty and obedience by means of a vow which may be either simple or solemn binding in Church law. One of the effects of this vow is that members of a religious institute are no longer free to marry; and should they subsequently want to leave the institute after permanent profession, they would have to seek a papal indult of dispensation from their vow. The benefits of the profession are of a spiritual nature. In making their religious profession, they are "incorporated into the institute, with the rights and duties defined by law", and "through the ministry of the Church they are consecrated to God". This period may not be less than three years nor longer than six years. Some institutes take additional vows a "fourth vow" is typical , specifying some particular work or defining condition of their way of life e. Daily living in religious institutes is regulated by Church law as well as the particular religious rule they have adopted and their own constitutions and customaries. The traditional distinction between simple and solemn vows [17] no longer has any canonical effect. Solemn vows once meant those taken in what was called a religious order. Rule of St Basil , Rule of St. Benedict , Rule of St. Augustine , and the Rule of St. Western monastics Benedictines , Trappists , Cistercians , etc. The Rule of St Augustine stresses self-denial, moderation, and care for those in need. Jesuits follow what is called not a Rule, but the Constitutions composed by Saint Ignatius of Loyola , which laid aside traditional practices such as chanting the liturgy in favour of greater adaptability and mobility under a more authoritarian regime. Thus the Capuchin Constitutions of are added to the Rule of St. Francis [22] In addition to the more fundamental provisions of the Rule or Constitutions, religious institutes have statutes that are more easily subject to change. After time has provided proof of the rectitude, seriousness and durability of the new association, the bishop, having consulted the Holy See, may formally set it up as a religious institute under his own jurisdiction. They have left no confirmed archaeological traces and only hints in the written record. Communities of virgins who had consecrated themselves to Christ are found at least as far back as the 2nd century. Saint Anthony was the first to leave the world to live in the desert for specifically spiritual reasons; St Athanasius speaks of him as an anchorite. In upper Egypt , sometime around , Saint Pachomius decided to organize his disciples into a form of community in which they lived in individual huts or rooms cellula in Latin , but worked, ate, and worshipped in shared space. This method of monastic organization is called cenobitic or "community-based". Towards the end of his life St Pachomius was therefore not only the abbot of

a monastery but also the head of a whole group of monasteries. St Basil the Great of Cappadocian Caesarea and the Syriac-speaking east had their own monastic traditions e. St Ephrem of Nisibis and Edessa. Gaul[edit] The earliest forms of monasticism in Western Europe involved figures such as Martin of Tours , who after serving in a Roman legion converted to Christianity and established a hermitage near Milan. He then moved on to Poitiers , where a community gathered around his hermitage. In he was called to become Bishop of Tours , and established a monastery at Marmoutiers on the opposite bank of the Loire River. His monastery was laid out as a colony of hermits rather than as a single integrated community. John Cassian began his monastic career at a monastery in Palestine and Egypt around to study monastic practice there. In Egypt he had been attracted to the isolated life of hermits, which he considered the highest form of monasticism, yet the monasteries he founded were all organized monastic communities. About he established two monasteries near Marseilles , one for men, one for women. In time these attracted a total of 5, monks and nuns. Italy[edit] The anonymous Rule of the Master Regula magistri , was written somewhere south of Rome around The rule adds administrative elements not found in earlier rules, defining the activities of the monastery, its officers, and their responsibilities in great detail. Benedict of Nursia was educated in Rome but soon sought the life of a hermit in a cave at Subiaco , outside the city. He then attracted followers with whom he founded the monastery of Monte Cassino around , between Rome and Naples. It became by the 9th century the standard monastic rule in Western Europe. The first identifiable founder of a monastery was Saint Brigid of Kildare , who ranked with Saint Patrick as a major figure of the Irish church. The monastery at Kildare was a double monastery, with both men and women ruled by the Abbess, a pattern found in many other monastic foundations. Commonly, Irish monasteries were established by grants of land to an abbot or abbess, who came from a local noble family. The monastery became the spiritual focus of the tribe or kin group. Irish monastic rules specify a stern life of prayer and discipline in which prayer, poverty, and obedience are the central themes. However Irish monks read even secular Latin texts with an enthusiasm that their contemporaries on the continent lacked. By the end of the 7th century, Irish monastic schools were attracting students from England and from Europe. Saint Columba and his followers established monasteries at Bangor , on the northeastern coast of Ireland, at Iona in Scotland, and at Lindisfarne , in Northumbria. Saint Columbanus , an abbot from a Leinster noble family, travelled to Gaul in the late 6th century with twelve companions. He and his followers spread the Irish model of monastic institutions established by noble families to the continent. A whole series of new rural monastic foundations on great rural estates under Irish influence sprang up, starting with St. Columbanus travelled east to Metz, where Theudebert II allowed him to establish a new monastery among the semi-pagan Alemanni in what is now Switzerland. Gall on the shores of Lake Constance, while St. Columbanus continued onward across the Alps to the kingdom of the Lombards in Italy. There King Agilulf and his wife Theodolinda granted St. Columbanus land in the mountains between Genoa and Milan, where he established the monastery of Bobbio. Developments around [edit] A monastic revival already begun in the 10th century with the Cluniac reform , which organized into an order with common governance the monasteries following the Benedictine Rule that chose to join it or were founded by it, [30] continued with the foundation in of the Carthusian monasteries, which combined the hermit life with that of the cloister, each monk having his own hermitage, coming together only for the liturgy and an occasional meal, and having no contact with the outside world, and the foundation a few years later of the Cistercians , a foundation that seemed destined to fail until in a band of 30 young men of the noblest families of Burgundy arrived, led by Bernard of Clairvaux , then 23 years old, who was to prove a dominating figure in the life of Western Europe for forty years. It also prepared the way for the quite different religious orders of the 13th century. While the monasteries had chosen situations in the remote countryside, these new institutes, which aimed at least as much at evangelizing others as at sanctifying their own members, had their houses in the cities and towns. Under this rule, enclosure was optional, enabling non-enclosed followers of the rule to engage in various works of charity not allowed to enclosed religious. After at first being merely tolerated, they afterwards obtained approval, [35] finally gaining on 8 December recognition as religious by Pope Leo XIII. The number of these " congregations " not " orders " increased further in the upheavals brought by the French Revolution and subsequent Napoleonic invasions of other Catholic countries, depriving thousands of monks and nuns of

the income that their communities held because of inheritances and forcing them to find a new way of living their religious life. A special case happened in Ignatius of Loyola obtained authorization for the members of the Society of Jesus to be divided into professed with solemn vows and coadjutors with dispensable simple vows. The members of a religious order for men were called "regulars", those belonging to a religious congregation were simply "religious", a term that applied also to regulars. For women, those with simple vows were simply "sisters", with the term "nun" reserved in canon law for those who belonged to an institute of solemn vows, even if in some localities they were allowed to take simple vows instead. It recognized no totally indispensable religious vows and thereby abrogated for the Latin Church the special consecration that distinguished "orders" institutes with solemn vows from "congregations" institutes with simple vows, while keeping some juridical distinctions between the two classes. Even these remaining juridical distinctions were abolished by the Code of Canon Law, which distinguishes solemn from simple vows but does not divide religious into categories on that basis. By then a new form of institutes of consecrated life had emerged alongside that of religious institutes: Hostie argued that the life of a religious institute passes through successive stages: In this view, a religious institute lasts 600 years before being replaced by another religious institute with a similar life-span. Hostie recognized that there are exceptions: Benedictines, Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and some others have lasted longer, either because transformed from what they were originally or because of the prestige of their founders. In 1980, Giancarlo Rocca suggested that attention should be given not so much to the life-span of individual religious institutes, as to the duration of what Rocca called "religious institutions", corresponding to the juridical categories of monastics, canons, mendicant orders, clerks regular, priestly societies, religious congregations, secular institutes. The religious institutes that have disappeared since have mostly been congregations. This class of institutes with simple vows and a strong emphasis on apostolate arose shortly before the French Revolution. They modernized the Church, the State, and religious life itself. Older institutes adopted some of their features, especially in the fields of education and health care, areas, however, that the State has now almost entirely taken over. This suggests that the life-span of a religious institute is largely determined by the point at which it comes into being within the life cycle of the "religious institution" to which it belongs.

Chapter 8 : Religious institute - Wikipedia

Religious institutions that use government power in support of themselves and force their views on persons of other faiths, or of no faith, undermine all our civil rights. Moreover, state support of an established religion tends to make the clergy unresponsive to their own people, and leads to corruption within religion itself.

David Smilde June 15, Religious institutions often play an indispensable role in contexts of state crises. From the civil rights movement in the s United States, to the struggle against communist dictatorships in Eastern Europe, to the struggle against right wing dictatorships in Latin America , religious institutions have played an essential role. In the current Latin American context in which multi-faceted crime and violence stem simultaneously from low state capacity and high state complicity, religious institutions have become one of the main actors in protecting the human rights of average Latin Americans. There is no recipe for how religious institutions can address such challenges. Evangelical groups often provide people with a safe space away from violence, in which they can reformulate themselves and develop new social networks. Catholic religious institutions more often provide religious institutions and professionals that can accompany, advocate, and directly confront abusive authorities. There will always be complaints that religious institutions should restrict themselves to their spiritual vocation. The problem is that most every interpretation of the spiritual has implications for life in this world, and clear threats to basic human dignity frequently provoke religious responses. Of course, there is no clear model for just what those responses should be. The Venezuelan hierarchy has been a critic of the Chavista project virtually since it started 20 years ago see Chapter The challenge they faced is that this position clearly mapped on to the long-term class conflict that undergirded the political conflict over the past 20 years. In March , this equilibrium was altered. The first Latin American and first Jesuit pope, he brought to the papacy an entirely new progressive direction. The Pope and the Vatican also slowly became more involved in the Venezuela conflict. That dialogue actually brokered an impressive set of agreements. However, the Maduro government soon made clear that it had no intention of honoring them. As a result, the Vatican special representative announced he would be discontinuing his involvement and put forward a series of requirements for the Vatican to continue facilitating dialogue. None of these requirements were met, and the Vatican kept its distance as promised. During the course of , the Venezuelan hierarchy weighed in frequently with respect to the four-month cycle of protests and government repression which together took at least lives. Most recently the Church suggested the May 20, presidential elections were illegitimate and should be repeated. During the Venezuela crisis the Church so far has had an important but not a decisive role. In the current circumstances, the Church has the highest approval of any institution in Venezuelaâ€”the most recent polling shows it has an approval rating of 57 percent, more than 20 points higher than its closest competitor the opposition-led National Assembly. This includes half of all those identifying with Chavismo. And the Pope is popular as well. The Church is perhaps in a better position than any other institution in Venezuela to play a role in a transition back to democracy. One of the most important impediments for such a transition is the fear officials have that if they let go, they will be the objects of retribution and reprisals. Discover similar content through these related topics and regions.

Chapter 9 : The Catholic Church and the Venezuela Crisis, 20 Years On

Forsaking formal religious organizations, these people have instead embraced an individualized spirituality that includes picking and choosing from a wide range of alternative religious philosophies.

By David Masci While the U. Indeed, one of the most striking findings in the recently released Religious Landscape Study is that Millennials young adults born between and are much less likely than older Americans to pray or attend church regularly or to consider religion an important part of their lives. Why do you think this is? Most age differences at any given time are the legacy of the times people grew up in. Also, they rejected the idea that a good kid is an obedient kid. And more than any other group, Millennials have been and are still being formed in this cultural context. Oh, it is widespread. You see evidence of their lack of trust in the labor market, with government, in marriage and in other aspects of life. General Social Survey data on confidence in the leadership of major institutions show that younger people particularly are not as confident as older adults when it comes to institutions like the press, government and churches. But I think trust is not the whole story. For one thing, there has been a long list of scandals in recent decades, such as Watergate, that have undone the reputations of major institutions the Greatest Generation trusted. And these institutions have let people, particularly young people, down. Are these trends likely to be long term? There used to be this view that there was a religious life cycle, that when you got older and married and had kids you got more active in organized religion. With respect to the Catholic Church " lack of trust is fueled by the sexual abuse scandals in the church. What we see across all denominations is a gap emerging between politically liberal and moderate young people and leadership among conservative churches who are taking political positions on abortion, gay marriage and other social issues. Moderates show the same tendency, just not as clearly. On a couple of measures of religiosity " namely belief in heaven and hell and willingness to share their faith with others " Millennials do seem more similar to older Americans. Why is this the case? I think you see higher levels of these things among Millennials because they require very little in the way of institutional involvement. I think people assume that people who do not belong to an organized religious group reject religion altogether. Some people find God in the woods rather than in a church.