Mixed Reactions:

How Religious Motivation Explains Responses to Religious Rhetoric in Politics

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Abstract

This paper hypothesizes that religious motivation can explain the varied response to the political use of religious rhetoric. Religious motivation is an important individual difference, and variation in religious motivation can explain why some religious citizens are attracted to candidates using religious appeals while others are clearly not. Using a survey-experiment, this paper tests the effect of religious language and attempts to isolate differences among the religious in how they respond to religious rhetoric. The goal of this paper then becomes twofold. First, it introduces a measure of religious motivation and demonstrates that it is a unique measure of individual difference with independent effects beyond traditional measures of religiosity, personality, and conservatism. The second goal is to demonstrate that religious motivation can explain the variance in reactions to religious rhetoric within a campaign environment. Religious individuals respond differently to religious appeals, with some evaluating candidates much higher when religious words were used while others rated the candidate lower. Religious motivation is shown to be a much better predictor of response to religious rhetoric than traditional measures of religiosity.
Religious rhetoric is a fixture in American political culture. All of the past 30 State of the Union Addresses have mentioned the word “God” and 16 of those 30 have used “God” outside of the phrase “God Bless America.” According to the American Presidency Project, in the past 30 years 175 public presidential addresses have used the word “scripture.” Domke and Coe (2008) show that religious rhetoric within the political sphere is increasing in the US. One might assume that the more religious someone is, the more appealing religious rhetoric will be, and it appears that most politicians who use such appeals are operating under such an assumption (Domke and Coe 2008; Djupe and Calfano 2014). This paper challenges the simplicity of that assumption. Studies testing this relationship between religious rhetoric in politics and candidate appeal do find positive correlations (Albertson 2015; Djupe and Calfano 2014; Weber and Thornton 2012). These studies use broad measures of religiosity or fundamentalism to classify religious citizens. However, other research has shown that there are important differences among religious citizens that are not as straightforward as their religious tradition or their observable religious behavior (Allport and Ross 1967; Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Batson et al 1993; Eisenstein 2006; Jennings 2015). If research glosses over these differences, it takes the chance of missing or underestimating religion’s effect on important political behavior. While some scholars acknowledge that the religious vary in their acceptance of religious rhetoric (e.g., Djupe and Calfano 2014; Albertson 2015), previous research has not fully dealt with how religious differences may affect responses to religious cues within a campaign environment.

This paper hypothesizes that religious motivation can help explain different responses, even among the religious, to the political use of religious rhetoric. Religious motivation is an important individual difference, and variation in religious motivation can explain why some
religious citizens are attracted to candidates using religious appeals while others recoil from such appeals. Using a survey-experiment, this paper tests the effect of religious rhetoric and attempts to isolate differences among the religious in how they respond to religious rhetoric. In doing so, this paper introduces a measure of religious motivation that best explains the variance in reaction to religious rhetoric in the campaign environment.

The goal of this paper then becomes twofold. First, it introduces a measure of religious motivation and demonstrates that religious motivation is a unique measure of individual difference with independent effects beyond traditional measures of religiosity, personality, and conservatism. Religious motivation is a measure of the place religion has in an individual’s life and gives a perspective on how religion is used to interact both with one’s internal and external life. This measure allows for a more personal measurement of religiosity, one that can indicate the place and importance of religion in someone’s life. The second goal of this paper is to demonstrate that religious motivation can explain the variance in reactions to religious rhetoric within a campaign environment. To accomplish these goals, the paper makes use of a nationally representative survey-experiment that varies the use of religious rhetoric by a fictitious mayoral candidate. The results establish religious motivation as a distinct and compelling measure of individual difference that also helps us understand the varied response to religious campaign rhetoric. This response to religious rhetoric is not nearly as simple as previously thought. Religious individuals respond differently to religious appeals, with some evaluating candidates much higher when religious words were included in a quote while other religious individuals rated the candidate lower. The types of religious motivation help us understand these differences.
Measuring Religion

Religion has always presented social scientists with a measurement problem, and this problem is only exacerbated as societies modernize and diversify. Much work has been done to overcome these problems. The measures used traditionally have been grouped into three categories: religious behavior, religious belonging, and religious belief (Steensland et al 2000; Smidt, Kellstedt and Guth 2009). These measures have taken the field of religion and politics a long way, and have explained a great deal of political differences. They have been shown to be useful predictors of political variables such as turnout (Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Kellstedt, Green, Guth, and Smidt 1994), vote choice (Green, Kellstedt, Smidt and Guth 2007), and partisanship (Kellstedt 1989, Layman 2001).

As religious traditions and denominations split and individualize their theology, making generalizable claims about important difference becomes more complicated to the point of verging on impossibility. Further complicating the issue is the rise of those who do not associate with any institutional religion and attend religious services irregularly if at all. Some of these people still consider themselves to be religious and most likely believe in God. This explains the decline of religious membership over recent decadesiii but the relatively steady belief in a divinity.iv

At the same time as these measurement issues are becoming more complicated, the field of political science has begun to recognize the value of considering individual differences in psychological predispositions and motivations. Political scientists have found that measurement tools that target differences at the individual level have given them leverage to better answer questions that had previously been misunderstood or over-simplified. It is hard to dispute that people cannot be fully understood by merely looking at the groups they belong to or the behavior
they exhibit, but the field, until recently, had failed to connect base-level characteristics to political science. By importing the fruits of decades of research in psychology and social psychology, recent research has used measures such as authoritarianism, dogmatism, and the five-factor personality traits to introduce the field of political science to the benefits of studying individual differences (Stenner 2005; Gerber et al 2011; Eisenstein and Clark 2014). The field of religion and politics, too, has the opportunity to yield benefits from research in psychology and social psychology.

**Religious Motivation**

Imagine observing three people sitting near each other in a pew. These three people see each other nearly every week, hear the same sermon and sing the same hymns. Current theories of religion and politics would lead us to believe that these three individuals should look as alike in politics as they do sitting together on that pew. After all, they nod along to the same sermon, identify with the same religious tradition, and attend religious services at the same rate. While these aspects of their religious practice hold clues about their politics, they also paint an incomplete picture. The drive to be religious can be different from person to person, and our three parishioners may experience three different reasons for sitting in that pew. It is important to consider what motivates them to adopt their religious practices. Measures of religious motivation are connected to a long history of research within the field of the psychology of religion (Allport 1954; Batson and Gray 1981; Donahue 1985; Kirkpatrick and Hood 1990; Tsang and Rowatt 2007), but have made minimal inroads into our understanding of religion and politics. In this stream of research, the three types of religious motivation have come to be known as “extrinsic,” “intrinsic” and “quest” religious motivation. Those who are high in
extrinsic religious motivation are driven to be religious by external forces. For the extrinsically motivated, religion is a means to another end and that end is typically social or community related. Those who are high in intrinsic religious motivation are religious because of internal reasons. Religion is an end in itself and their relationship with God is important to their self-conception. Those high in quest religious motivation are driven to be religious by an inquisitive desire to search for answers to existential questions and learn more about God. Asking questions and embracing doubts about religion are central to their motivation to be religious.

Psychologist Gordon Allport (1954) introduced the first measure of religious motivation, making a distinction between two motivations – intrinsic and extrinsic. Building on Allport’s work, Batson and Gray (1981) added the quest motivation. This additional type was created in response to a critique that the extrinsic/intrinsic typology did not adequately represent the various dimensions of religiosity. Religious motivation is a stable trait. Although it can be shaped by major life events, it should not be altered easily by changing pastors or churches, and as a psychological measure of motivation, it should be fairly durable throughout an adult’s life.

Religious motivation is measured by listing a battery of statements and having the respondents agree or disagree with each statement. Each statement is connected to one of the motivation types, and the more a respondent agrees with a statement, the higher level of that particular motivation she has. For instance, a statement connected with the extrinsic motivation reads, “[t]he church is most important to me as a place to share fellowship with other Christians.” The more the respondent agrees with this statement, the more she is described as having extrinsic religious motivation. For each motivation type, there are multiple questions and each response is added together to create a scale for each motivation type. Much like personality types generated from tests such as Myers-Briggs (Myers 1985) or the Five-Factor Model (Costa and McCrae
1992), each subject can be high or low on each of the religious motivation dimensions. Because of this, researchers often discuss the characteristics of each motivation in terms of those who score high (or low) in a particular religious motivation even though the types are not mutually exclusive and each individual will have varying levels of each of the three dimensions of religious motivation.

Religious motivation is, at its core, a measure of the place religion has in an individual’s life and gives a perspective on how religion is used to interact both with one’s internal and external life. Because of this, religious motivation is expected to give us added insight into why those who are religious have different responses to politicians using religious rhetoric as seen in past research (Albertson 2015; Djupe and Calfano 2014; Weber and Thornton 2012). Responses to religious rhetoric within politics are related to how one views religion’s position in life. It is expected that those who are high in the different types of religious motivation should differ in how they respond to religious rhetoric in politics. Those high in intrinsic motivation view religion as an all-encompassing aspect of life, and this would lead to a sense of solidarity and respect for politicians who use religious rhetoric. Those who view religion in less black and white terms, like those high in the quest motivation, may meet religious rhetoric with a level of skepticism that may cause them to be wary of politicians who use it. Finally, for those high in extrinsic motivation, who view religion as a means to meeting external needs such as social interaction and prestige, the invocation of religious rhetoric will neither impress nor displease. These differences among the religious suggest a need to consider religious motivation when predicting responses to religious rhetoric. Table 1 below summarizes the primary hypotheses of this paper.
Individual Differences

While the study of individual differences has become common in political science, the sub-field of religion and politics has often overlooked these differences. This is particularly concerning considering the relationships social psychology has found between religion and measures of authoritarianism, dogmatism, and the five-factor personality traits (Hoge and Carroll 1973; Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Saroglou 2000; Rowatt and Franklin 2004). If, as the research suggests, the personalities of the religious are not randomly distributed, and personality is not included in the study of religious political behavior, then we are unsure if the analysis is presenting relationship isolated to religion or if the effects shown are due to some combination of religion and personality. By including these measures in the analysis, religion’s independent effects can be more accurately portrayed. As the measures of authoritarianism, dogmatism and the five-factor personality traits will be included in this study, they are briefly introduced below.

Conceptually, authoritarianism and dogmatism are closely related, yet distinct. The difference, at least in theory, is that dogmatism is a cognitive style that allows people to hold on to the feeling that what they believe is correct despite evident contradictions. Authoritarianism is aided by the dogmatic personality, but necessitates a connection to an authoritarian figure or entity. In reality, however, measures of authoritarianism and dogmatism are highly correlated (Altemeyer 1996). Both dogmatism and authoritarianism focus on different aspects of a central
dichotomy: group authority versus individual autonomy. Those high in authoritarianism have strong preferences for group authority and tend to discount freedom of individuality. Those high in dogmatism adhere to social or traditional norms and reject open-mindedness.

The five-factor personality traits are the product of over a century of research attempting to classify the broad dimensions that people use when thinking about personalities. The “Big Five” factors as they have come to be known are: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience. Within political science, research using the Big Five has been associated with various political outcomes including political interest (Gerber et al. 2011a), frequency of political discussions and level of political knowledge (Mondak and Halperin 2008), participation in political campaigns (Gerber et al. 2011b), and political ideology (Carney et al. 2008).

**Religious Motivation’s Relationship with Measures of Religiosity and Individual Difference**

The relationship between religious motivation and traditional measures of religiosity has remained fairly unknown despite the many studies including either of these measures. Psychology, social psychology, and the psychology of religion have used measures of religious motivation for decades, but infrequently include measures of religious tradition or denomination. Even when such measures are included, the studies are of convenience samples, such as undergraduates or church members. Previous research has not provided evidence to allow for any conclusions about the breakdown of religious motivation types across religious traditions. Nor has it asserted the percentage of any large general population that may be high on a particular type of religious motivation. There is evidence regarding the behavior of different motivation
types (frequency of attendance and prayer) and about their belief in Biblical literalism, but generalizing these findings from cohorts of 18-22 year olds or a few specific religious affiliations to the mass public presents problems. In political science and sociology, there are many surveys of general populations on religious tradition, behavior, and belief of the religious, but no surveys that include a measure of religious motivation.

Social psychologists created the measure of religious motivation to account for various forms of religiosity. Although this measure may be foreign to most political scientists, it has been studied in comparison to other psychological measures such as authoritarianism, dogmatism, and the five-factor personality traits that political scientists are more likely to be familiar with. The research connecting authoritarianism and dogmatism to religious motivation has produced modestly consistent empirical findings. Both concepts are negatively connected to the Quest type, which is not surprising considering doubt, the antithesis to dogmatism, is a prominent feature of the Quest type orientation (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Leak and Randall 1995; Wilkenson 2004; Jankowski et al. 2011). Research connecting authoritarianism and dogmatism to the extrinsic and intrinsic types has been less clear-cut. Some studies fail to uncover evidence of a relationship between authoritarianism and extrinsic/intrinsic types, as well as a relationship between dogmatism and extrinsic/intrinsic, while some studies do. When significant results have been found, they are consistent: authoritarianism is positively correlated with intrinsic religiosity (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992; Rowatt and Franklin 2004; Wilkinson 2004); while dogmatism has been found to be positively correlated with intrinsic religiosity and, tentatively, with extrinsic religiosity (Hoge and Carroll 1973). The connection between authoritarianism, and especially right-wing authoritarianism to religious motivation (Altemeyer and Hunsberger 1992) can also lead to some expected relationships between religious motivation.
and conservatism. It is expected that those high in intrinsic religious motivation will be more politically conservative while those high in quest religious motivation will be less conservative.

Several studies have connected the relationship between religious motivation and the five factor personality traits. The relationship is clearest between intrinsic motivation and the five factors. Multiple studies show a statistically significant positive relationship between intrinsic motivation and agreeableness (Taylor and McDonald 1999; Kosek 1999; Saroglou 2002; Henningsgaard and Arnau 2009), conscientiousness (Taylor and McDonald 1999; Kosek 1999; Henningsgaard et al. 2009), and emotional stability (Saroglou 2002b; Henningsgaard and Arnau 2009). Extrinsic religious motivation was found to be negatively related to emotional stability in two different studies (Taylor and McDonald 1999; Saroglou 2002b). Kosek (1999) finds a positive relationship between extrinsic motivation and extraversion, and Taylor and McDonald (1999) find a negative relationship between extrinsic motivation and openness. Quest religious motivation has been found to have a positive relationship with extraversion (Saroglou 2002), agreeableness (Kosek 1999; Saroglou 2002), and openness (Saroglou 2002).

There is scant empirical research connecting religious motivation to traditional measures of religiosity. From what is known about the religious traditions, some relationships can be hypothesized. Evangelicals are more likely than other Protestants to be fundamentalists, and since intrinsic religiosity has been positively linked with fundamentalism, it would be expected that there would be a positive relationship between being an Evangelical and scoring high on intrinsic religiosity. Previous research has shown that Mainline Protestants are more trusting of others than both Catholics and Evangelicals (Smidt 1999; Welsh et al. 2007). Increased trust is also associated with denser social networks and increased activity in secular organizations (Welsh et al. 2007). This evidence suggests, although indirectly, that extrinsic religiosity would
be associated more highly with Mainline Protestants. As quest religiosity is associated with openness to doubts and uncertainty of faith – something contrary to fundamentalism, the relationship between high quest scores and being an Evangelical is expected to be negative.

As for the relationship between the religious motivation types and religious behavior and belief, those high in intrinsic religious motivation should have positive relationships with frequency of attendance and believing in the infallibility of the Bible. Those high in extrinsic motivation should have a positive relationship with frequency of attendance, as it is a social and external religious behavior variable. Quest types should be less sure about the infallibility of the Bible and therefore, high quest scores should be negatively associated with the Biblical literalism measure. It is not hypothesized that the traditional measures of religiosity will explain large amounts of the variance within religious motivation. This will be particularly true for the extrinsic and quest sub-scales where the connections between the measures are more indirect. Table 2 below summarizes these secondary hypotheses.

Table 2 about here

Testing Relationships between Measures

The sections above introduced the concept and measurement of religious motivation and how it has been connected to other measures of religiosity and individual difference in previous
research. Now this paper will test the expected relationships using original data collected through a nationally representative survey. Qualtrics recruited 800 respondents through a Survey Sampling International (SSI) online panel conducted the second week of March 2014. All respondents were adult U.S. residents, and SSI takes measures to ensure their panels are representative of the U.S. population on a variety of demographic variables. Although SSI draws from a large general population panel, this survey over-sampled Christians by setting quotas for different religious preferences.

As mentioned above, the measure of religious motivation contains three sub-scales: extrinsic, intrinsic and quest. For each of these sub-scales there are six statements regarding the place of religion in their life and the respondents are asked to rate how much they agree to each statement on a scale of 0-6. For the sake of context, those high in extrinsic religious motivation (defined by scoring within the top third of the scale) represent 233 subjects while those who scored high in intrinsic religious motivation numbered 477 subjects. Those scoring high in quest religious motivation represented 317 individuals within the study. Appendix B contains the frequency distribution and lists the mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach’s Alpha for each of the sub-scales from the March 2014 SSI Panel Survey.

In addition to the religious motivation items, respondents were asked other questions about their religious belonging, belief, and behavior. For religious belonging, respondents were asked about the tradition of their religious preference. For religious belief, respondents were asked about their thoughts on the Bible, specifically about whether the Bible is the literal word of God, inspired by God, or a book of fables. Religious behavior is measured by frequency of religious service attendance. Eight measures of individual differences are also measured. These
measures are political conservatism, dogmatism, authoritarianism and the five-factor personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientious, emotional stability, and openness.

Testing the relationship between religious motivation, traditional measures of religiosity, and measures of individual differences by analyzing the pairwise correlations between each of the measures has two primary benefits. First, it adds to the description of the religious motivation measures. The correlations will provide evidence of the raw relationships between a variety of measures through the sampling of a nationally representative panel – something that has not been done previously in published studies of religious motivation. Second, it also describes the other measures of individual difference by showing how they relate to the measures of conservatism, dogmatism, authoritarianism, and personality. For instance, the correlations between conservatism and the five-factor personality traits help to explain the politics of the five-factors. For the purpose of presentation, the correlations are broken into two figures with one graph containing the religious motivation sub-scales and the traditional measures of religiosity and another graph containing the religious motivation sub-scales and the remaining eight measures of individual difference. These correlations will also serve to set up the models testing the response to religious rhetoric. Since many of these variables are measures imported into political science from other fields, it is important to first know how they relate to more common variables before using them in the primary research analysis.

The first set of correlations can be found in Figure 1, which shows the pairwise correlations between each of the three religious motivation sub-scales, dummy variables for evangelical protestant, mainline protestant, and catholic religious traditions and the two measures of religious behavior. Extrinsic religiosity is positively associated with being Catholic and a slight increase in religious service attendance and belief in biblical literalism. Extrinsic
Religiosity has a negative relationship with being Evangelical Protestant. Unsurprisingly, intrinsic religiosity is positively associated with being an Evangelical Protestant, increased attendance and biblical literalism. Quest religiosity has a small but negative relationship with being Evangelical, biblical literalism, frequency of attendance, and a small positive relationship with being Catholic. While some patterns emerge among religious motivations and the religious traditions, the patterns for the behavior and belief measures are different. Increased extrinsic and intrinsic religious motivation correlates with increased belief in biblical literalism and religious service attendance, while quest motivation has a negative relationship. The purpose of this exercise is both to describe the measures of religious motivation by comparing them to traditional measures of religiosity and to demonstrate that while there are some relationships between the two measures they stand rather distinct from each other. Only intrinsic religious motivation has correlations higher than .5 with any of the traditional measures of religiosity.

**Figure 1 about here**

Next, the results of the pairwise correlations between the religious motivation sub-scales and eight different measures of individual differences are presented in Figure 2. The results show intrinsic religious motivation has a positive relationship with conservatism, while both extrinsic and quest religiosity have a negative relationship with conservatism. Both intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity are positively correlated with dogmatism, and only intrinsic religiosity is positively
correlated with authoritarianism, while quest religiosity has a negative relationship with authoritarianism. Turning to the five-factor personality traits, neither extraversion nor openness to experience has statistically significant correlations with any of the religious motivation sub-scales. Agreeableness follows the pattern of conservatism with intrinsic religiosity having a positive relationship and both extrinsic and quest religiosity having negative relationships. This pattern holds for emotional stability as well, and nearly so for conscientiousness, save for a non-significant relationship with intrinsic religiosity. Political conservatism has a positive relationship with both dogmatism and authoritarianism and a negative connection with openness to experience. The purpose of this exercise is both to describe the measures of religious motivation by comparing them to frequently used measures of individual difference and to demonstrate that while there are some relationships between the two measures they stand rather distinct from each other. None of the religious motivation types have a correlation higher than .3 with any of the other measures of individual difference.

Figure 2 about here

Religious Motivation and the Response to Religious Rhetoric in Politics

Now that the measure of religious motivation has been described, its use in previous research summarized, and its correlation with other measures of religiosity and individual difference presented, this paper can now test the measure as a predictor of candidate evaluation
and response to the use of religious rhetoric. Previous research has shown that voters’ perceptions of candidates can be easily manipulated by varying the characteristics of the candidate and even by subtle religious cues within the campaign advertisements (Sigelman and Sigelman 1982; Campbell, Green and Layman 2011; Weber and Thornton 2012). As religious motivation is a measure of religion’s place in one’s life, it is expected that the different measures of motivation will have drastically different relationships with the responses to religious rhetoric. High levels of intrinsic religious motivation will lead to a sense of solidarity and respect for politicians who use religious rhetoric. This will be in contrast to high levels of quest religious motivation which will lead to skepticism of the politicians who use religious rhetoric. Religious rhetoric is not expected to alter the perceptions of those high in extrinsic religious motivation. These differences in the response to religious rhetoric are expected to produce large and important differences in how candidates are evaluated.

Methods and Procedure

In order to test the response to religious rhetoric in politics, a survey-experiment was designed and administered to the same SSI panel use to test the pairwise correlations above. The survey-experiment was in the form of a short article that was randomly altered in order to insert religious rhetoric into the candidate quote of the treatment group. The article was newspaper coverage of two fictional non-partisan mayoral candidates in Akron, Ohio. The article was only two paragraphs, and the first paragraph ended by quoting a candidate on a new city program promoting healthy living. The respondents were then randomly assigned into groups, with half being asked to read an article where the candidate quote contains religious rhetoric and half where there is no religious rhetoric. The treatment with the religious rhetoric included the words
“Scripture” and “God” evoking reflection on religion. Appendix A includes the articles used in this study. After reading the article the respondents were asked whether their feelings toward the fictional candidate were favorable or unfavorable. At the end of the survey, and after several questions related to their political and social attitudes, the respondents were asked a battery of questions to determine their level of religiosity and religious motivation using the eighteen-item Religious Orientation Scale (Francis 2007). This version includes adapted question wording from Allport and Ross’s (1967) extrinsic and intrinsic scales, with six questions each. It also includes a variation on Batson and Gray’s (1981) quest scale, which also has six questions. Respondents were also subjected to a pre-test battery of questions including the Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), a measure of authoritarianism, and a dogmatism scale.

Results

To begin analyzing the results from the survey-experiment, the religious motivation model is used to predict candidate evaluation. For each of the religious motivation scales, roughly half received the religious rhetoric treatment and half did not. The predicted values derived from the OLS regression model are presented in the three graphs within Figure 3.
The three graphs show the drastic difference in responses among those high in each motivation type. Those high in extrinsic religious motivation have almost no response to the treatment with the two lines running nearly parallel and having no statistical difference between each other at any point. Consistent with expectations, the treatment had a positive effect on those who are high in intrinsic religious motivation, increasing their rating of the candidate by about a half a point on a 7-point scale. This stands in contrast to those high in quest religious motivation, where the treatment had a negative effect and decreased favorability toward the candidate by over half a point. Among those who received the treatment, those high in intrinsic religious motivation had a predicted candidate evaluation of 5.93 out of a possible 7 points, whereas those high in quest had a predicted candidate evaluation of 4.49 -- a difference of 1.44. This difference is large and shows the varied effect of the treatment between those high in intrinsic and quest religious motivation. As a reference, this effect is larger than the 1.05 standard deviation of the candidate evaluation variable among the control group. These findings make clear that those who have a high score in intrinsic religious motivation respond positively to the use of religious rhetoric by candidates. They also show that those high in the quest motivation are more skeptical of candidates who use religious rhetoric. These results provide support for the hypotheses that religious rhetoric will have little to no effect on extrinsic religious motivation, while those high in intrinsic and quest religious motivation will have a strong positive and negative relationship, respectively, with the use of religious rhetoric.

While these findings provide strong support for the hypothesis that differences in religious motivation affect how individuals respond to religious rhetoric, further tests are necessary to check the robustness of these results and particularly to allow comparison to variables more commonly used in political science. Specifically, two other models will be tested
– traditional measures of religiosity and measures of individual difference, and a third model that will combine all three models into one full model. This will provide two key pieces of information. First, a comparison of the adjusted $r^2$ will test the variance explained by each of the models and suggest which set of variables best explains candidate evaluations. Second, the full model will allow for a comparison of individual variables and their independent effects. Variables found to be significant predictors in both the limited models and the full model can be thought of as being more explanatory than variables only significant in the limited models.

Table 3 includes four models: the religious motivation model, a model containing traditional measures of religiosity, a model containing various measures of individual differences, and a full model that combines the three previous models. In each of the models, the religious rhetoric treatment is interacted with each of the explanatory variables. The interaction coefficients show the relationship between the explanatory variable and candidate evaluation when the respondent received the religious rhetoric treatment while the coefficient for the explanatory variable shows the relationship when the respondent received the control condition. The results from the religious motivation model are the ones depicted graphically above, showing intrinsic religious motivation has a positive response to the religious rhetoric treatment and quest has a negative response. In the model containing the traditional measures of religiosity, only the religious treatment variable and the biblical literalism variable are significant. Those who believe that the Bible is the literal word of God and received the religious rhetoric treatment rated the candidate more favorably. Neither the measures of religious tradition (Evangelical Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Catholic, non-religious) nor the measure of religious behavior (frequency of religious service attendance) affected candidate evaluations in a significant way. In the model containing the measures of individual differences, those high in agreeableness are
more likely to rate the candidate more favorably regardless of the treatment. Both extraversion and conservatism show positive and significant responses to the religious rhetoric treatment. The individual differences model has an adjusted $r^2$ of .083, which is just slightly higher than the adjusted $r^2$ of the religious motivation model at .077. The model with the traditional measures of religiosity had an adjusted $r^2$ below both at .067.

Table 3 about here

In the full model the religious motivation variables have a very similar interaction with the treatment effect as they had in the limited model. Those high in extrinsic religious motivation have no response to the religious rhetoric treatment. Intrinsic religious motivation responds positively, and quest religious motivation responds negatively. None of the variables included in the traditional measures of religiosity model are found to be statistically significant in the full model. Biblical literalism’s response is much smaller in the full model than in the limited model and is no longer significant. The religious rhetoric treatment had a significant negative effect on those who are high in agreeableness. Extraversion has a positive and significant response to the religious rhetoric treatment. Overall, the full model compares favorably to the limited models with an adjusted $r^2$ of .139.
Discussion

This paper had two primary goals. First, it introduced religious motivation to political science. Through a nationally representative survey this paper placed religious motivation in the context of other more accepted measures of religiosity and individual difference, something not done before, while also providing evidence that it is a distinct measure. Second, this paper used religious motivation and a survey experiment to show that religious rhetoric has a varied effect on candidate evaluation, even among the religious. Those high in intrinsic religious motivation increased their evaluation of a fictional candidate when that candidate used religious rhetoric, while those high in quest religious motivation decreased their evaluation. The religious rhetoric treatment had no effect on those high in extrinsic religious motivation. Furthermore, religious motivation was shown to be a much better predictor of the response to religious rhetoric than traditional measures of religiosity. And while measures of personality performed equally well when predicting the response to the religious rhetoric treatment, the full model provided evidence that religious motivation effects were independent of personality or other measures of individual difference. This cannot be said for traditional measures of religiosity whose effects disappeared in the full model.

These results have implications in the areas of candidate evaluations, religious rhetoric, and the measurement of religiosity. Religious rhetoric does affect most religious citizens, but it cannot be assumed that this effect is always in one direction. Those high in the quest religious motivation, even while controlling for several measures of religiosity and personality still responded negatively to religious rhetoric. And those high in extrinsic religious motivation had no response to the religious rhetoric. Only those high in intrinsic religious motivation had a response predicted by previous research. This leads to the implications for how religiosity is
measured within political science. Traditional measures of religiosity explained very little of the variance in response to religious rhetoric in this study. Furthermore, when these measures were included in a model also containing the measures of religious motivation and individual differences, they all failed to significantly contribute to the explained variance. This survey design cannot determine the causal order between religious motivation and traditional measures of religiosity such as religious preference or frequency of religious service attendance. The findings of the full model, with religious motivation remaining significant and traditional measures of religiosity having no effect on candidate evaluation, provides some suggestion that religious motivation may be a determinant for other religious behavior. Of course, a different research design is needed to further investigate this possibility.

Previous research within social psychology has provided evidence that religious motivation is an important predictor of a variety of behaviors and attitudes largely unrelated to political science. This study provides evidence that religious motivation can take political science further in its understanding of how religion interacts with politics, and in particular how religious rhetoric affects citizens’ views of candidates. Candidate evaluations are likely not the only area of political science in which this measure may have an impact. Previous research has connected religious motivation or similar measures to racial prejudice (Allport and Ross 1967), sexual orientation prejudice (McFarland 1989), mental health (Ventis 1995), helping behavior (Darley and Batson 1973), and volunteering (McCrohan and Bernt 2004), which may indicate that this measure has the ability to explain religion’s relationship with a host of variables that are of interest to political science.

Religious motivation also has implications for an important trend in American religious life. The rise of “nones” - those who profess no specific religious adherence has been well-
documented (Putnam and Campbell 2010), as has the frequent switching of religious traditions (Hout and Fischer 2011.) The days where Americans identify themselves by their religious denomination or tradition appear to be numbered. Non-denominational mega-churches and small house churches are frequently disconnected, either officially or functionally, from the doctrinal structures of organized religious hierarchies. This trend signals the need for better measures of religiosity -- measures that focus more on the individual and move away from asking about identification with religious traditions, beliefs in certain doctrines, or even on their attendance of group religious services. By moving to measures based on base-level characteristics and not religious organizations or specified beliefs or behaviors, the religious nones, who may still hold some level of religiosity, can be accounted for in the same way as the traditionally religious. Religious motivation is a move in this direction, and has the benefit of a rich history of scholarship in social psychology.
Tables

Table 1

**Primary Hypotheses**
- Those high in intrinsic religious motivation will respond positively to religious rhetoric in politics
- Those high in extrinsic religious motivation will have little to no response to religious rhetoric in politics
- Those high in quest religious motivation will respond negatively to religious rhetoric in politics

Table 2

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<th>Secondary Hypotheses: Expected Relationships</th>
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<td>Extraversion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional Stability</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

Measures of Individual Difference

| Evangelical                                | Unclear    | +         | -     |
| Mainline Protestant                        | +          | Unclear   | Unclear |
| Catholic                                    | Unclear    | Unclear   | Unclear |
| Non-Religious                               | Unclear    | Unclear   | Unclear |
| Attendance                                  | +          | +         | Unclear |
| Biblical Literalism                         | Unclear    | +         | -     |
### Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Models Explaining Candidate Evaluation</th>
<th>Religious Motivation Model</th>
<th>Traditional Religiosity Model</th>
<th>Individual Difference Model</th>
<th>Full Model</th>
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<td>-0.975 **</td>
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<td><strong>Dogmatism</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Authoritarianism</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Conservatism</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RT x Agreeable</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RT x Conscientious</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RT x Emotional</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RT x Openness</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RT x Conservatism</strong></td>
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<td>**0.215 **</td>
<td>0.004</td>
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<td>**4.987 **</td>
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<td>733</td>
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* Indicates P-Value < .10; ** Indicates P-Value < .05
Figures

Figure 1

Religious Motivation and Traditional Measure of Religiosity
Pairwise Correlations

Extrinsic  Intrinsic  Quest

Evangelical  Mainline  Catholic  Non-Religious  Biblical Literalism  Attendance

Figure 2

Religious Motivation and Measures of Individual Difference
Pairwise Correlations

Extrinsic  Intrinsic  Quest

Conservatis  Dogmatism  Authoritarianism  Extraversion  Agreeableness  Conscientious  Emotional Stability  Openness
Figure 3

**Extrinsic**

- **Level of Extrinsic Motivation**
  - Low
  - High
  - Candidate Evaluations (1-7)
  - Control
  - Treatment

**Intrinsic**

- **Level of Intrinsic Motivation**
  - Low
  - High
  - Candidate Evaluations (1-7)
  - Control
  - Treatment

**Quest**

- **Level of Quest Motivation**
  - Low
  - High
  - Candidate Evaluations (1-7)
  - Control
  - Treatment
Sources Cited


Appendix A – Example of article used in survey-experiment

Only the second paragraph was changed between the treatment and the control group.

Mayoral Candidates Hit the Trail

Akron, Ohio – The race for Mayor is in full swing, and the two leading contenders to become Akron’s chief executive have been hitting the campaign trail. Both candidates made several public appearances yesterday, taking time to meet citizens and talk to community leaders.

Front-runner in the latest poll and current City Council President Robert Dover stopped at the Downtown YMCA meeting with organizers and participants of a new program to improve health and encourage exercise. “Those of us who are religious know that the Scripture tells us that our bodies are a temple, and that we must be good stewards of all that God has given us,” Dover said. “I think programs like this deserve the City’s support, so that we as a community can do our best to live up to those standards.”

Local business leader and former Ohio State Legislatur Allen Maddux spent the day visiting local elementary schools talking to students, parents, and teachers. Maddux is trailing Dover in the latest poll by only 4 points, re-energizing a campaign that had been trailing by double digits immediately following the primary. The candidates only have two weeks to make their case to local citizens before the election on November 5th. Information on all local elections and polling locations can be found at the Akron Journal’s website: www.akronjournal.com.
Appendix B – Frequency Distribution of Religious Motivation Scales

The graph below contains the frequency distribution and lists the mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach’s Alpha for each of the sub-scales from the March 2014 SSI Panel Survey. Cronbach’s Alpha is a measure of internal consistency of indexed items and gives an estimate of reliability for each of the sub-scales. Generally scores above .70 are considered internally consistent and therefore reliable, and all three of the sub-scales are above that threshold. Intrinsic religious motivation has the largest mean at 20.1 out of a potential 30, but also has the largest standard deviation at 6.5. This tells us, and Figure 1 confirms, that the intrinsic measure skews toward larger scores with a long tail extending to the lowest scores. Extrinsic religious motivation has the smallest mean at 16.6, with quest religious motivation more than a point higher at 17.8. The figure shows that the extrinsic and quest sub-scales have a pattern not very different from the normal distribution centering near the middle of the scale. The intrinsic sub-scale, however, peaks at a higher score of 22-24 and still has relatively high frequencies at the right tail.

^This data were accessed through Policy Agendas Project website at www.policyagendas.org and were originally collected by Frank R. Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, with the support of National Science Foundation grant numbers SBR 9320922 and 0111611, and were distributed through the Department of Government at the University of Texas at Austin. Neither NSF nor the original collectors of the data bear any responsibility for the analysis reported here.

http://www.gallup.com/poll/1690/religion.aspx
http://www.gallup.com/poll/147887/americans-continue-believe-god.aspx

The article did not identify the party of the candidates and attempted to provide no cues indicating candidate ideology or political leanings. However, in light of the findings of Campbell, Green, and Layman (2011) showing that religious candidates are perceived as being Republican, robustness tests were conducted to ensure that political party was not driving the results presented below. The subject’s party identification did not alter any of the findings in a substantive way, and since conservatism outperformed party identification, it was included in the model instead so as to avoid multicollinearity.

A slight language variation was also included to test the possible effect of exclusive/inclusive language. This variation did not produce any substantive differences and therefore the two variants of the treatment condition of been combined.

The religious motivation measure was asked at the very end of the survey unlike the candidate evaluation question which was asked immediately after the treatment. The number of questions between the treatment and the religious motivation questions were assumed to buffer the religious motivation measure from treatment effects and the nearly identical scores for the treatment and control group for all three sub-scales of religious motivation back up that assumption.