

The aim of this research is to 1) identify politically relevant descriptive differences among white evangelicals, 2) explain how, when, and why evangelicals' religious identities matter for politics, and 3) explore how evangelicals' religious identities operate in conjunction with other social group memberships.

A first set of research questions seeks simple, yet to date unknown, answers aimed at understanding what evangelicals look like in the United States today, religiously, socially, and politically. Despite there being abundant survey data on religion and politics, religious (political) surveys rarely ask enough or the right amount of political (religious) questions to please scholars interested in the intersection of both identities. To address this deficit in the data, I fielded a large national survey, including an evangelical oversample that measures Americans' religious beliefs and behaviors; political attitudes, preferences, and behaviors; and politically relevant social-psychological measures. These data will offer, for the first time, important descriptive insight into how white evangelicals are similar to and different from both others within their religious tradition as well as the rest of the American public.

A second set of questions related to evangelical Christians' political attitudes is, to what extent do religious elites and religious messages affect evangelicals' political attitudes and behaviors, and what happens when these religious messages conflict with evangelicals' partisan identities? These questions are difficult to answer, in part, because religious and partisan identities often lead evangelical Christians to take the same political position, making it impossible to identify whether religion is actually the driving force behind political preferences. If religious leaders offer a policy position that is consistent with its members' political viewpoints, it is unsurprising that we see a strong relationship between religious and political outlooks.

In this part of the project, from which a paper is forthcoming at the *Journal of Politics*, I try to understand whether and how religious messages matter for politics. To do so, I look at evangelical Christians' immigration attitudes, which represents a unique opportunity to understand religious elites' role in changing attitudes. The Evangelical Immigration Table (EIT) is an umbrella group of roughly 140 evangelical organizations and leaders advocating for progressive immigration reform and includes leaders from the major denominations within the evangelical tradition. The EIT represents a break from most evangelical leaders' previous silence on the issue of immigration reform. Since its inception in 2012, the EIT has both been urging Congress to pass progressive immigration policies and working to rally evangelical Christians under the banner of immigration reform. The EIT's aim is to transform the religious group least supportive of liberal immigration reform and most supportive of a deportation policy into champions of immigration reform. In addition to the disconnect between religious leaders' positions and group members' positions, most of the EIT's intended audience also hold a competing partisan identity that pushes them toward a conservative set of immigration opinions. Using originally collected panel, survey experiment, and field experiment data, I show that the EIT's message—particularly coming from a credible source—can influence evangelicals' immigration attitudes, even among strong Republican partisans. These attitudinal shifts in the pro-reform direction, however, do not correspond with

changes in behaviors. Rather, the EIT's message has been more successful at demobilizing evangelicals who oppose immigration reform. The findings from this research not only offer insight into the ongoing immigration debate, but also provide the first evidence of how individuals respond when their religious and partisan offer opposing cues.

I further explore how different identities come to matter politically by taking advantage of Donald Trump's presidential candidacy. Donald Trump's relationship with evangelical Christians represents an excellent opportunity to understand how identities and outlooks separate from religion influence evangelical Christians' attitudes for two reasons. First, a surprising number of evangelical Christians supported Trump during the primaries, despite the plethora of religiously conservative candidates running for the nomination. And second, evangelical Christians have enthusiastically and vocally rallied behind Trump as the Republican nominee despite a mixed response from many of the most prominent evangelical leaders. Whereas researchers frequently see evangelical elites and laypersons alike supporting religiously conservative candidates, thereby making it difficult to separate religion's effect from other effects, Trump's candidacy allows me to explore the determinants of evangelicals' electoral preferences by identifying what kinds of evangelicals support Trump and to what aspects of Trump's candidacy do some evangelicals respond. Using both originally collected survey data collected in the weeks leading up to the election coupled with panel data that spans from 2007 through 2016, I show how political and religious identities interact in determining vote choice.

In addition to answering questions related to public opinion, a third aspect of this research explores the determinants of political mobilization, as evangelical Christians' political power rests on their ability to act. In designing and implementing a series of field experiments in partnership with an organization that does evangelical political outreach, I hope to uncover: when and how evangelical identities can be activated for political mobilization, to what extent other identities matter for mobilizing evangelicals politically, and if and when religious identities can galvanize action that stands in contrast to other political relevant identities.

These individual pieces of research draw on and test political science and psychological theories related to identity activation, cross-pressured identities, and mobilization. Applying these theories specifically to one of the largest political blocs in American politics today will, for the first time, offer systematic insight into evangelicals' political attitudes and behaviors.