

## Beyond Partisanship: The Impact of Ethno-Religious Identities on Political Opinions in the United States

### **Abstract**

Different group identities influence people's political opinions. Currently, the prevailing line of political thought is that party identification trumps all other identities. However, I argue that while party identification is important, certain groups of people hold ethno-religious identities that are important enough to influence those people's political opinions. Using Cooperative Election Study data collected in late 2022 from 60,000 people across the United States, I find that there is indeed an effect on political issues above and beyond that of party identification for Muslims, Mormons, Jews, Catholics, Protestants, and Buddhists. This effect is ethno-religious for some religions and just religious for others; however, the effect exists no matter how it is described. These results moderate support for the recent notion that party identification has subsumed all other group identities and indicate that religion is a vital identity that needs to be considered when it comes to people's voting behaviors.

## Appendix

### **Survey Question for Party Identification**

Question: “Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a ...?”

Possible Answers: Strong Democrat, Not very strong Democrat, Strong Republican, Not very strong Republican, Lean Democrat, Lean Republican, Independen, Not sure

### **Survey Questions for Geographic Region Control Variable**

Question: “In which census region do you live?”

Possible Answers: West, South, Northeast, Midwest

### **Survey Question for Gender Control Variable**

Question: What is your gender?

Possible Answers: Man, Woman, Non-binary, Other

### **Survey Question for Education Control Variable**

Question: What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Possible Answers: No HS, High school graduate, Some college, 2-year, 4-year, Post-grad

### **Survey Question for Race Control Variable**

Question: What racial or ethnic group best describes you?

Possible Answers: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American, Middle Eastern, Two or more races, Other

### **Survey Question for Employment Status Control Variable**

Question: Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

Possible Answers: Full-time, Part-time, Temporarily laid off, Unemployed, Retired, Permanently disabled, Homemaker, Student, Other

### **Survey Question for Income Control Variable**

Question: Thinking back over the last year, what was your family's annual income?

Possible Answers: Less than \$10,000, \$10,000 - \$19,999; \$20,000 - \$29,999; \$30,000 - \$39,999; \$40,000 - \$49,999; \$50,000 - \$59,999; \$60,000 - \$69,999; \$70,000 - \$79,999; \$80,000 - \$99,999; \$100,000 - \$119,999; \$120,000 - \$149,999; \$150,000 - \$199,999; \$200,000 - \$249,999; \$250,000 - \$349,999; \$350,000 - \$499,999; \$500,000 or more; Prefer not to say

### **Survey Questions to Create the Religiosity Index**

Question: How important is religion in your life?

Possible Answers: Very important, Somewhat important, Not too important, Not at all important

Question: People practice their religion in different ways. Outside of attending religious services, how often do you pray?

Possible Answers: Several times a day; Once a day; A few times a week; Once a week; A few times a month; Seldom; Never; Don't know

### **Survey Question for Christian Nationalism Control Variable**

Question: Who did you vote for in the election for President in 2020?

Possible Answers: Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Jo Jorgenson, Howie Hawkins, Other, Did not vote for president

### **Survey Question for Religion Independent Variables**

Question: What is your present religion, if any?

Possible Answers: Protestant, Roman Catholic, Mormon, Eastern or Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Atheist, Agnostic, Nothing in particular, and Something else.

As a note, I have chosen not to count Atheist, Agnostic, Nothing in particular, and Something else as religions, for purposes of this survey.

### **Broader Questions Asked**

To measure attitudes about opinions on health care in the United States, respondents were asked, "Thinking now about health care policy, would you support or oppose each of the following proposals?"

To measure attitudes about opinions on immigration in the United States, respondents were asked, "What do you think the U.S. government should do about immigration? Do you support or oppose each of the following?"

To measure attitudes about opinions on abortion in the United States, respondents were asked, "On the topic of abortion, do you support or oppose each of the following proposals?"

## Summary Statistics:

### Summary Statistics for Party Identification

	Democrat (any type)	Republican (any type)	Independent/Not Sure (these were dropped)
Percent	48.68%	33.85%	17.67%

### Summary Statistics for Geographic Region Control Variable

	Northeast	Midwest	West	South
Percent	18.35%	22.05%	20.81%	38.79%

### Summary Statistics for Gender Control Variable

	Man	Woman	Other
Percent	46.12%	53.16%	Less than 1%

### Summary Statistics for Education Control Variable

	No HS	HS Graduate	Some College	2 Years	4 Years	Post-grad
Percent	4.57%	27.75%	22.26%	10.74%	22.29%	12.39%

### Summary Statistics for Race Control Variable

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Middle Eastern	2+ Races	Other
Percent	69.17%	13.43%	8.93%	2.7%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	2.7%	1.88%

### Summary Statistics for Employment Status Control Variable

	Full-time	Part-time	Temporarily Laid Off	Unemployed	Retired	Permanently Disabled	Homemaker	Student	Other
Percentage	39.19%	11.04%	Less than 1%	6.63%	24.17%	6.28%	6.23%	3.63%	2.01%

### Summary Statistics for Income Control Variable

	Less than 10,000	10,000-19,999	20,000-29,999	30,000-39,999	40,000-49,999	50,000-59,999	60,000-69,999
Percentage	6.2%	7.39%	9.85%	9.57%	8.18%	8.42%	6.21%

	70,000-79,999	80,000-89,999	90,000-99,999	100,000-119,999	120,000-149,999	150,000-199,999	200,000-249,999
Percentage	7.17%	8%	8%	5.98%	6.38%	4.45%	1.77%

	250,000-349,999	350,000-499,999	500,000 or more	Prefer not to say
Percentage	1.28%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	Less than 1%

### Summary Statistics to Create the Religiosity Index

#### Personal Religion

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not at all Important
Percentage	33.95%	24.93%	15.53%	25.58%

#### How often do you pray?

	Several times a day	Once a day	A few times a week	Once a week	A few times a month	Seldom	Never	Don't know
Percentage	25.8%	13.28%	11.76%	2.78%	6.43%	15.35%	21.54%	3%

### Summary Statistics for Christian Nationalism Control Variable

	Trump	Other
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Percentage	47.38%	52.62%
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### Religion Summary Statistics

What is your present religion, if any?

	Protestant	Roman Catholic	Mormon	Eastern or Greek Orthodox	Jewish	Muslim
Percentage	30.8%	18.37%	1.18%	Less than 1%	2.66%	Less than 1%

	Buddhist	Hindu	Atheist	Agnostic	Nothing in Particular	Something Else
Percentage	Less than 1%	Less than 1%	7.39%	7.06%	22.64%	7.12%

**Figure 10: Basic Regression Results**

	Healthcare	Immigration	Abortion	Trust in the Federal Government
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Intercept	0.820*** (0.009)	0.632*** (0.012)	0.690*** (0.010)	0.322*** (0.007)
Mormons	-0.021 (0.016)	-0.057*** (0.019)	-0.077*** (0.017)	-0.009 (0.012)
Muslims	0.105*** (0.019)	0.084*** (0.024)	0.041** (0.020)	0.074*** (0.017)
Jews	0.003 (0.011)	0.008 (0.013)	0.052*** (0.011)	0.033*** (0.007)
Catholics	0.011** (0.005)	0.068*** (0.006)	0.017*** (0.005)	0.054*** (0.003)
Democrats	0.295*** (0.006)	-0.210*** (0.007)	0.325*** (0.006)	0.193*** (0.005)
Midwest	-0.012** (0.005)	-0.039*** (0.007)	-0.028*** (0.006)	0.002 (0.004)

South	0.005	-0.011*	-0.028***	0.010***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.004)
West	-0.009	-0.026***	-0.002	0.010**
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Woman	0.028***	-0.037***	0.059***	-0.015***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)
Other Gender	0.040*	-0.137***	0.065***	-0.148***
	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.024)	(0.018)
Income	-0.010***	-0.007***	-0.001*	0.0001
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.0004)
Education	-0.013***	-0.040***	-0.005***	0.003***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Black	0.040***	0.098***	0.050***	0.018***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Hispanic	0.051***	-0.040***	0.002	0.004
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.005)
Asian	0.042***	-0.006	0.023*	0.013
	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.008)



Native American	0.047**	0.061***	0.015	-0.011
	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.014)
Middle Eastern	-0.010	-0.050***	-0.015	-0.050***
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Two or More Races	-0.067***	0.007	-0.043***	-0.051***
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)	(0.010)
Other Race	-0.037	0.011	-0.012	-0.037
	(0.038)	(0.047)	(0.040)	(0.028)
Employment	-0.015***	-0.003***	-0.006***	-0.0005
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Religiosity	-0.106***	0.104***	-0.274***	0.039***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.004)
Christian Nationalism	-0.286***	0.198***	-0.200***	-0.139***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.005)
N	43,045	43,022	43,025	37,411
R <sup>2</sup>	0.404	0.217	0.392	0.293
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.403	0.217	0.392	0.292

Residual Std. Error	0.357 (df = 43022)	0.436 (df = 42999)	0.374 (df = 43002)	0.240 (df = 37388)
F Statistic	1,322.999*** (df = 22; 43022)	542.131*** (df = 22; 42999)	1,260.822*** (df = 22; 43002)	703.999*** (df = 22; 37388)

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\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White

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**Figure 11: Religion and Religiosity Interaction Results for the First Three Issues**

	Healthcare	Immigration	Abortion
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Intercept	0.826*** (0.010)	0.626*** (0.012)	0.691*** (0.010)
Mormons	0.041 (0.050)	0.146** (0.061)	-0.082 (0.052)
Muslims	0.031 (0.062)	0.188** (0.076)	-0.008 (0.065)
Jews	-0.056*** (0.018)	0.031 (0.022)	0.008 (0.019)
Catholics	-0.029*** (0.010)	0.094*** (0.013)	0.019* (0.011)
Religiosity	-0.117*** (0.006)	0.113*** (0.007)	-0.276*** (0.006)
Democrats	0.294*** (0.006)	-0.209*** (0.007)	0.325*** (0.006)
Midwest	-0.012**	-0.039***	-0.028***

	(0.005)	(0.007)	(0.006)
South	0.005	-0.011*	-0.028***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.005)
West	-0.009*	-0.026***	-0.002
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Woman	0.028***	-0.037***	0.059***
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.004)
Other Gender	0.037	-0.135***	0.064***
	(0.023)	(0.029)	(0.024)
Income	-0.010***	-0.007***	-0.001*
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Education	-0.013***	-0.040***	-0.005***
	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.001)
Black	0.042***	0.096***	0.050***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Hispanic	0.052***	-0.040***	0.002
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Asian	0.042***	-0.006	0.023*
	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.012)

Native American	0.047**	0.061**	0.015
	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.020)
Middle Eastern	-0.010	-0.050***	-0.015
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)
Two or More Races	-0.068***	0.007	-0.043***
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)
Other	-0.038	0.008	-0.012
	(0.038)	(0.047)	(0.040)
Employment	-0.015***	-0.003***	-0.006***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Trump	-0.286***	0.198***	-0.200***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Mormon*Religiosity	-0.075	-0.259***	0.007
	(0.060)	(0.073)	(0.062)
Muslim*Religiosity	0.098	-0.136	0.063
	(0.075)	(0.092)	(0.079)
Jew*Religiosity	0.137***	-0.053	0.100***
	(0.034)	(0.041)	(0.036)
Catholic*Religiosit	0.062***	-0.042**	-0.002

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	(0.014)	(0.018)	(0.015)
N	43,045	43,022	43,025
R <sup>2</sup>	0.404	0.218	0.392
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.404	0.217	0.392
Residual Std. Error	0.357 (df = 43018)	0.436 (df = 42995)	0.374 (df = 42998)
F Statistic	1,121.724*** (df = 26; 43018)	459.720*** (df = 26; 42995)	1,067.293*** (df = 26; 42998)

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\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White

### Figure 12: Religion and Religiosity Interaction Results for the Political Issue

	Trust in the Federal Government
Intercept	0.322*** (0.007)
Mormons	0.036

	(0.037)
Muslims	0.138***
	(0.053)
Jews	0.022*
	(0.013)
Catholics	0.047***
	(0.007)
Religiosity	0.038***
	(0.004)
Democrats	0.193***
	(0.005)
Midwest	0.002
	(0.004)
South	0.010***
	(0.004)
West	0.010**
	(0.004)

Woman	-0.015***
	(0.003)
Other Gender	-0.148***
	(0.018)
Income	0.0001
	(0.0004)
Education	0.003***
	(0.001)
Black	0.018***
	(0.005)
Hispanic	0.004
	(0.005)
Asian	0.013
	(0.008)
Native American	-0.010
	(0.014)
Middle Eastern	-0.050***



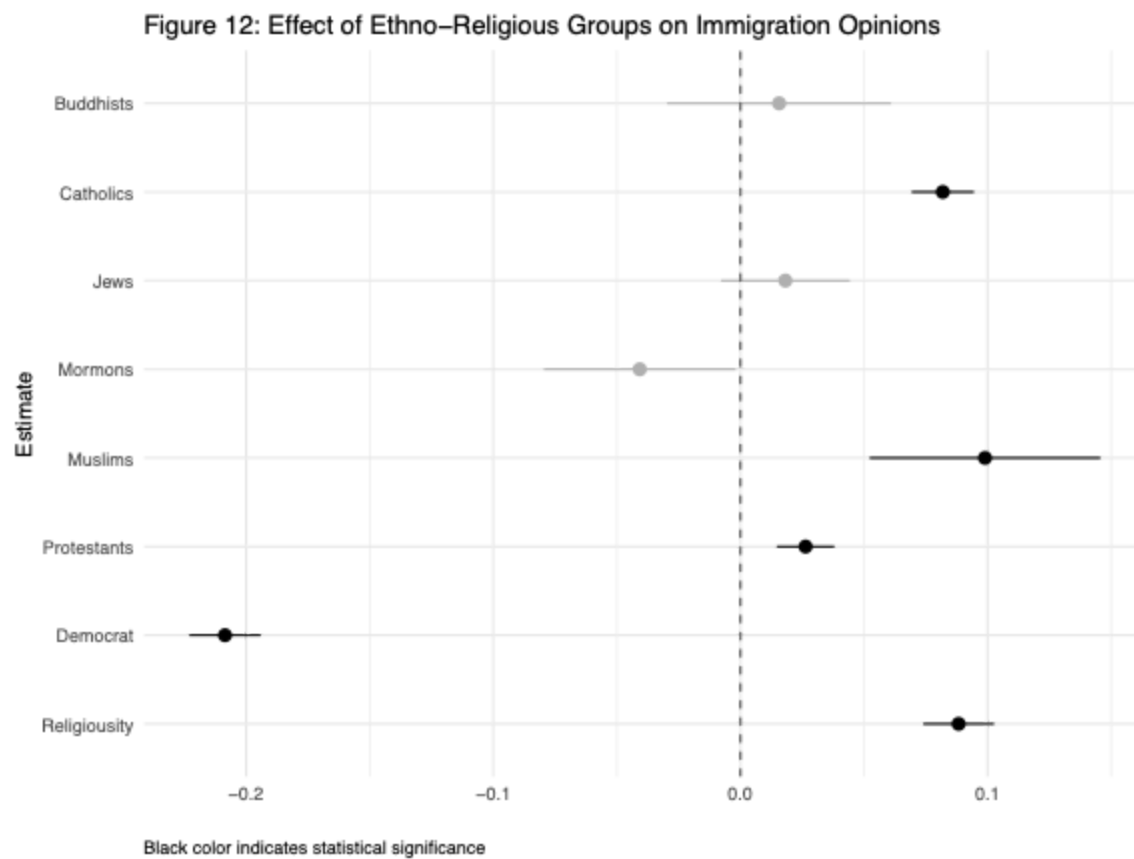
	(0.009)
Two or More Races	-0.051***
	(0.010)
Other	-0.039
	(0.028)
Employment	-0.0005
	(0.001)
Trump	-0.139***
	(0.005)
Mormon*Religiosity	-0.055
	(0.044)
Muslim*Religiosity	-0.080
	(0.062)
Jew*Religiosity	0.028
	(0.024)
Catholic*Religiosity	0.011
	(0.010)

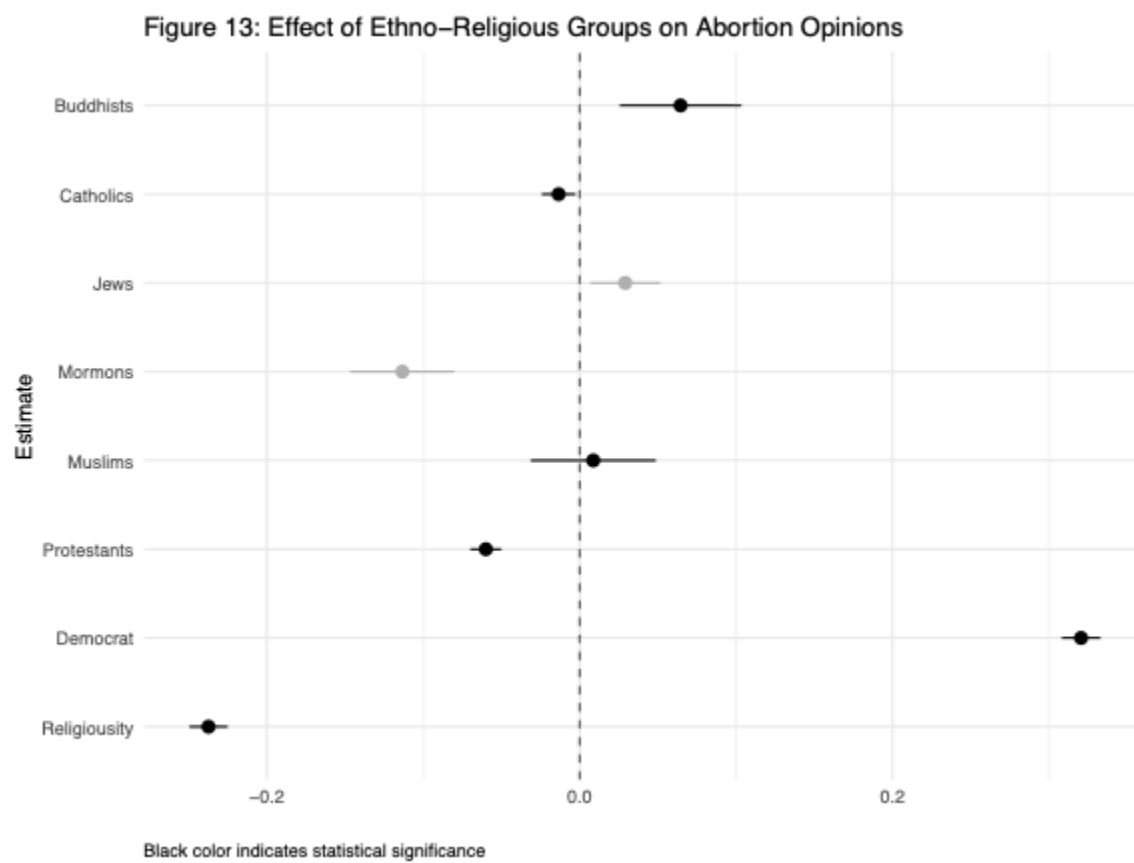
N	37,411
R <sup>2</sup>	0.293
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.293
Residual Std. Error	0.240 (df = 37384)
F Statistic	595.941*** (df = 26; 37384)

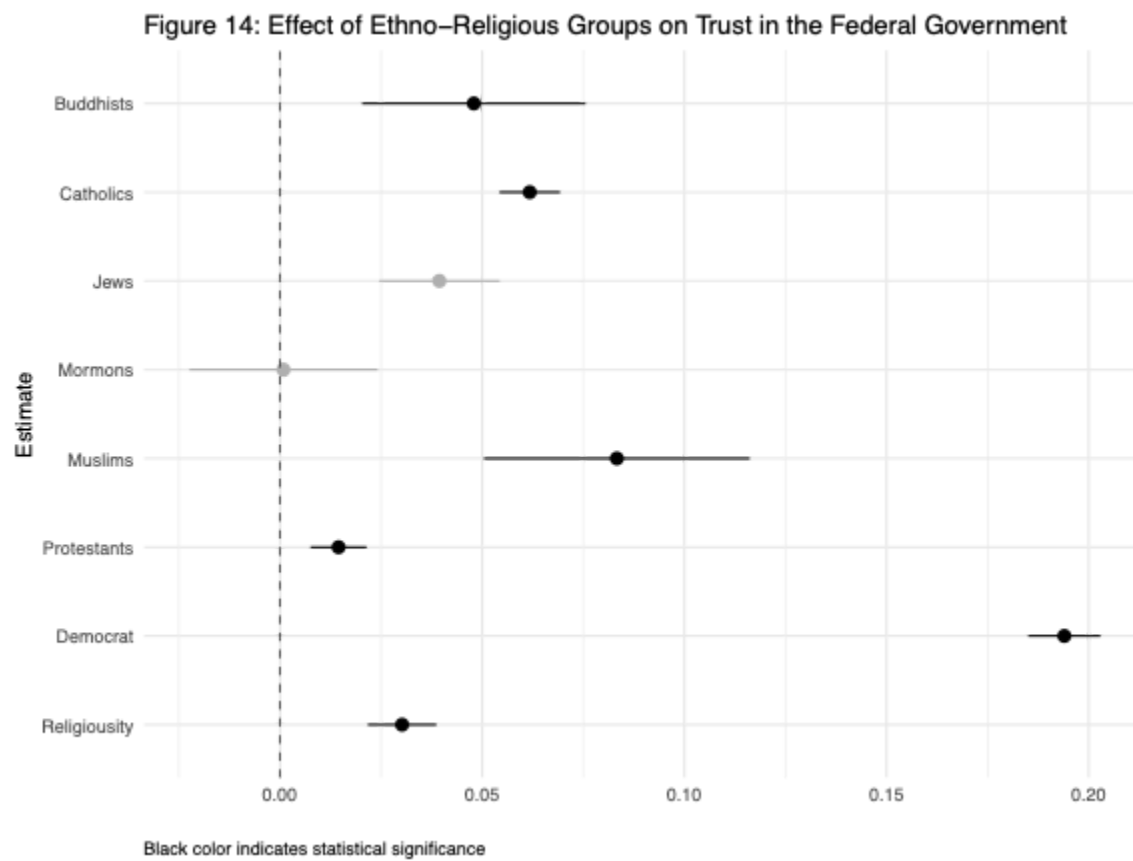
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\* p < .1; \*\* p < .05; \*\*\* p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White







**Figure 15: Many Religions Regression Results for the First Three Issues**

	Healthcare	Immigration	Abortion
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Intercept	-0.063*** (0.016)	-0.041** (0.020)	-0.113*** (0.017)
Mormons	0.068*** (0.019)	0.099*** (0.024)	0.009 (0.020)
Muslims	-0.023** (0.011)	0.018 (0.013)	0.029** (0.011)
Jews	-0.024*** (0.005)	0.082*** (0.006)	-0.013** (0.006)
Catholics	-0.068*** (0.005)	0.026*** (0.006)	-0.060*** (0.005)
Protestants	0.042** (0.019)	0.016 (0.023)	0.064*** (0.020)

Buddhists	0.290*** (0.006)	-0.209*** (0.007)	0.321*** (0.006)
Democrats	-0.011* (0.005)	-0.039*** (0.007)	-0.027*** (0.006)
Midwest	0.007 (0.005)	-0.012* (0.006)	-0.027*** (0.005)
South	-0.011* (0.006)	-0.025*** (0.007)	-0.004 (0.006)
West	0.026*** (0.004)	-0.037*** (0.004)	0.057*** (0.004)
Woman	0.033 (0.023)	-0.134*** (0.029)	0.059** (0.024)
Other Gender	-0.010*** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.001 (0.001)
Income	-0.013*** (0.001)	-0.041*** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.001)
Education	0.041***	0.098***	0.051***

	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Black	0.048***	-0.039***	-0.001
	(0.006)	(0.008)	(0.007)
Hispanic	0.032***	-0.005	0.012
	(0.011)	(0.014)	(0.012)
Asian	0.041**	0.063***	0.010
	(0.019)	(0.024)	(0.020)
Native American	-0.016	-0.048***	-0.020
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)
Middle Eastern	-0.072***	0.009	-0.047***
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)
Two or More	-0.043	0.012	-0.018
Races			
	(0.038)	(0.047)	(0.040)
Other Race	-0.014***	-0.003***	-0.005***
	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Employment	-0.065***	0.088***	-0.237***



	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Religiosity	-0.284***	0.197***	-0.198***
	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)
Christian	0.825***	0.629***	0.694***
Nationalism			
	(0.009)	(0.012)	(0.010)
N	43,045	43,022	43,025
R <sup>2</sup>	0.406	0.218	0.394
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.406	0.217	0.394
Residual Std. Error	0.356 (df = 43020)	0.436 (df = 42997)	0.374 (df = 43000)
F Statistic	1,227.134*** (df = 24; 43020)	497.975*** (df = 24; 42997)	1,166.418*** (df = 24; 43000)

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\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White

**Figure 16: Many Religions Regression Results  
for the Last Issue**

	Healthcare
Intercept	0.001
	(0.012)
Mormons	0.083***
	(0.017)
Muslims	0.039***
	(0.008)
Jews	0.062***
	(0.004)
Catholics	0.014***
	(0.004)
Protestants	0.048***
	(0.014)

Buddhists	0.194***
	(0.005)
Democrats	0.002
	(0.004)
Midwest	0.009**
	(0.004)
South	0.010**
	(0.004)
West	-0.014***
	(0.003)
Woman	-0.146***
	(0.018)
Other Gender	0.00001
	(0.0004)
Income	0.003***
	(0.001)
Education	0.017***

	(0.004)
Black	0.004
	(0.005)
Hispanic	0.011
	(0.008)
Asian	-0.010
	(0.014)
Native American	-0.049***
	(0.009)
Middle Eastern	-0.050***
	(0.010)
Two or More Races	-0.038
	(0.028)
Other Race	-0.001
	(0.001)
Employment	0.030***
	(0.004)

Religiosity	-0.140***
	(0.005)
Christian Nationalism	0.320***
	(0.007)
N	37,411
R <sup>2</sup>	0.293
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.293
Residual Std. Error	0.240 (df = 37386)
F Statistic	646.838*** (df = 24; 37386)

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\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White

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**Figure 17: Original Regression Results Excluding Those That “Lean” Towards a Specific Political Ideology**

	Healthcare	Immigration	Abortion	Trust in the Federal Government
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Intercept	0.982*** (0.009)	0.500*** (0.010)	0.867*** (0.009)	0.403*** (0.006)
Mormons	-0.033** (0.016)	-0.047** (0.020)	-0.089*** (0.017)	-0.015 (0.012)
Muslims	0.115*** (0.020)	0.077*** (0.024)	0.052** (0.021)	0.083*** (0.017)
Jews	0.004 (0.011)	0.005 (0.013)	0.052*** (0.011)	0.030*** (0.008)
Catholics	0.009* (0.005)	0.068*** (0.006)	0.015*** (0.005)	0.050*** (0.003)

Democrats	0.131*** (0.005)	-0.068*** (0.006)	0.147*** (0.005)	0.128*** (0.003)
Midwest	-0.012** (0.006)	-0.038*** (0.007)	-0.028*** (0.006)	0.003 (0.004)
South	0.0001 (0.005)	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.033*** (0.005)	0.008** (0.004)
West	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.027*** (0.007)	0.0005 (0.006)	0.011*** (0.004)
Woman	0.030*** (0.004)	-0.040*** (0.004)	0.061*** (0.004)	-0.017*** (0.003)
Other Gender	0.083*** (0.024)	-0.165*** (0.029)	0.113*** (0.025)	-0.118*** (0.018)
Income	-0.011*** (0.001)	-0.007*** (0.001)	-0.001** (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.0004)
Education	-0.009*** (0.001)	-0.044*** (0.002)	-0.001 (0.001)	0.006*** (0.001)
Black	0.057***	0.080***	0.068***	0.018***

	(0.006)	(0.007)	(0.006)	(0.005)
Hispanic	0.055***	-0.044***	0.007	0.004
	(0.007)	(0.008)	(0.007)	(0.005)
Asian	0.039***	-0.005	0.019	0.009
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.008)
Native American	0.043**	0.064***	0.011	-0.011
	(0.020)	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.015)
Middle Eastern	-0.002	-0.055***	-0.006	-0.043***
	(0.012)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.009)
Two or More Races	-0.064***	0.006	-0.040**	-0.048***
	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.016)	(0.010)
Other Race	-0.045	0.016	-0.020	-0.046
	(0.039)	(0.047)	(0.041)	(0.028)
Employment	-0.015***	-0.003***	-0.006***	-0.0004



	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)
Religiosity	-0.133***	0.125***	-0.304***	0.025***
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.006)	(0.004)
Christian	-0.432***	0.317***	-0.359***	-0.211***
Nationalism				
	(0.005)	(0.006)	(0.005)	(0.004)
N	43,045	43,022	43,025	37,411
R <sup>2</sup>	0.382	0.205	0.368	0.287
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.381	0.205	0.368	0.287
Residual Std. Error	0.363 (df = 43022)	0.439 (df = 42999)	0.382 (df = 43002)	0.241 (df = 37388)
F Statistic	1,207.340*** (df = 22; 43022)	504.067*** (df = 22; 42999)	1,138.898*** (df = 22; 43002)	683.936*** (df = 22; 37388)

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\*p < .1; \*\*p < .05; \*\*\*p < .01

Base categories: Northeast, Male, White

Figure 5

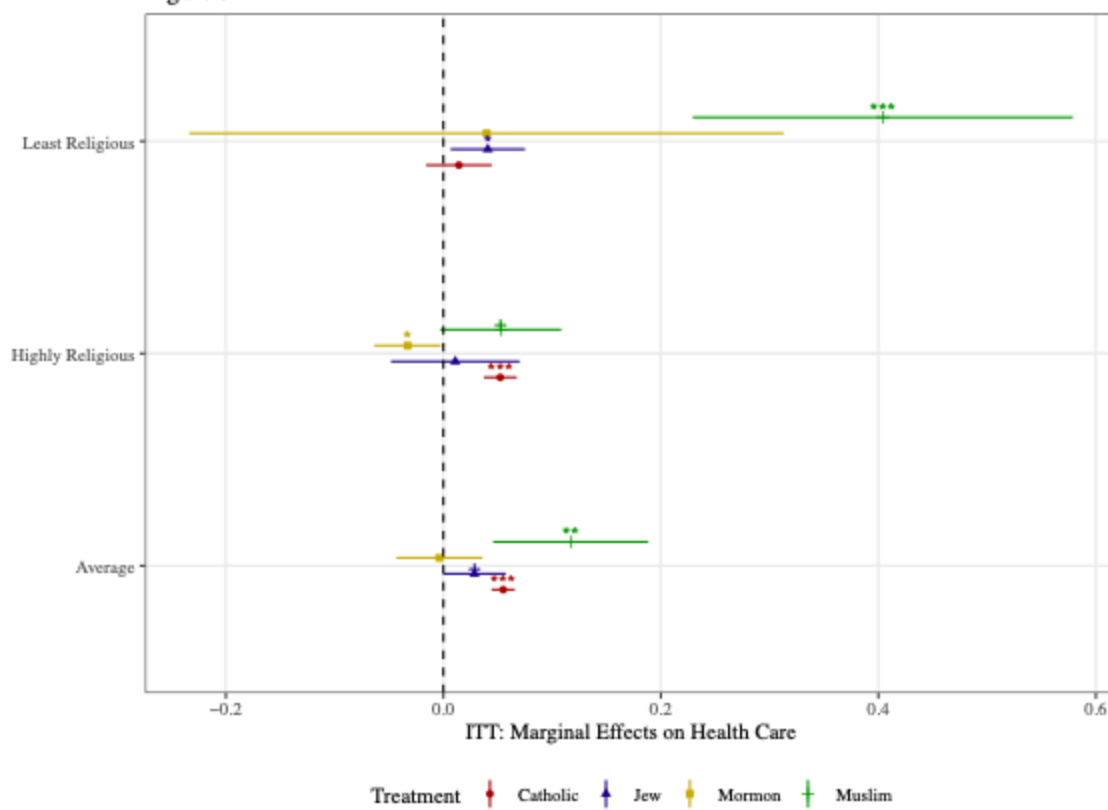


Figure 6

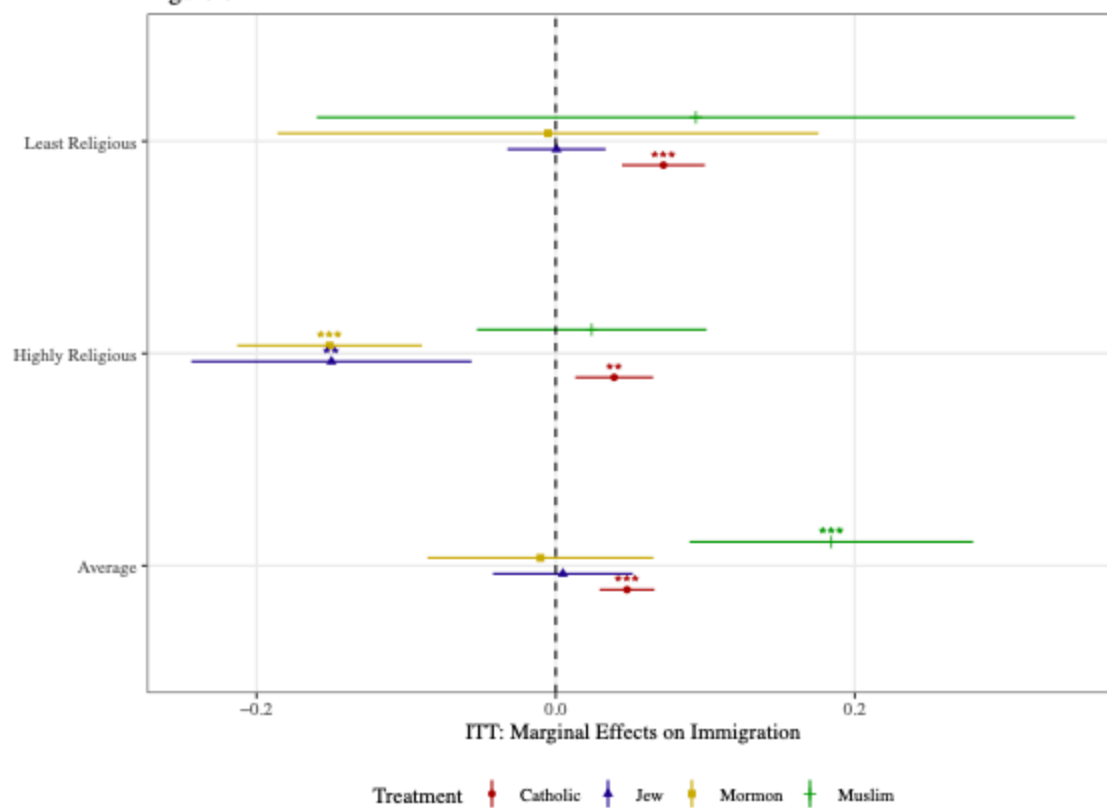


Figure 7

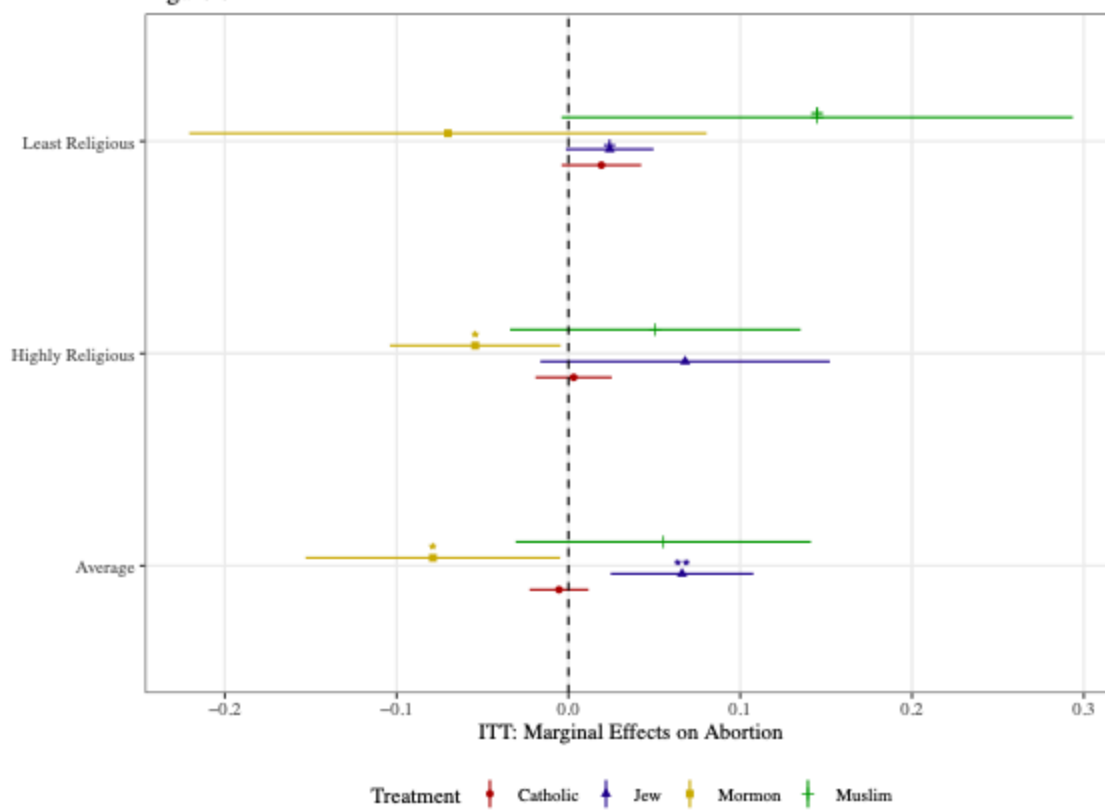


Figure 8

