

10-31-2008

Public Perceptions of the Separation of Church and State

Donald Foster

University of South Florida

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Public Perceptions of the Separation of Church and State

By

Donald Foster

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Liberal Arts
Department of Humanities and American Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
University of South Florida

Major Professor: Robert Snyder, Ph.D.
Mozella Mitchell, Ph.D.
Margaret Sciscento, Ph.D.

Date of Approval:
October, 31, 2008

Keywords: Constitution, Bill of Rights, Establishment,
Wall of Separation, Jefferson

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Public Perceptions of the Separation of Church and State in America

Donald A. Foster

ABSTRACT

Much of the scholarly work in the area of the separation of church and state in America has centered on such lofty goals as examining the Constitution of the United States and voluminous court documents. Others meticulously scrutinize every word ever uttered by the founding fathers on the subject. During the last two decades, there has been a considerable increase in the debate concerning the separation of church and state. The religious right has become determined to infuse our governmental institutions with a decidedly more religious tone, while the religious left prefers the separation of church and state as it is. But how does the average American feel about the separation of church and state?

This project will examine our religious heritage from Europe and the development of the separation of church and state in America. Finally this project conducted surveys of Americans to determine just how much they know about how the separation of church developed in America and perhaps more importantly what they believe it should be. Two separate surveys totaling 19

questions were developed. The questions probed historical facts, the founding fathers and questions regarding the separation of church and state today. The surveys were conducted in Manatee County, Florida during the spring of 2008 and again in late August and early September, 2008. The survey respondents were made up of 4 distinct groups. Those respondents surveyed in Spring 2008 were in-class college students in the University of South Florida at Sarasota/Manatee. Two other groups were made up of high school graduates and college graduates who work for the Manatee and Sarasota District schools. The final group was surveyed during a multi family picnic on Labor Day weekend.

The results of the surveys were tabulated and the respondents were placed in groups according to 2 questions on the back of the surveys that asked the respondents to give their political party affiliation and their religious denomination.

Introduction

Over the last three decades of the twentieth century there has been a considerable increase in interest in the American concept of the separation of church and state. The number of learned scholars who have penned works devoted to the separation of church and state is truly extensive. There are innumerable works that examine every word the founding fathers ever uttered. There are also scholarly dissertations examining every individual member of the Supreme Court's interpretation of the U.S. Constitution on the subject. There are also many scholarly works focusing on the recent controversial faith-based initiatives.

The separation of church and state had been little challenged for over a hundred years, but now many religious conservatives question this concept because they feel it in effect institutionalizes America as a secular nation unintended by the founders of the Republic. The adversaries in the culture wars dedicate their battles to the soul of America. It is a war they proclaim that they cannot afford to lose. Meanwhile, as the bombs of the culture wars explode all around them, most of the populace manages to muddle on seemingly oblivious to the smoke from the smoldering ashes of one battle after another.

The vast body of work in this area has almost exclusively been intended to convince the reader of the merits of one side of the argument or the other in order to sway not necessarily public opinion but the weight of scholarly opinion.

In addition, much work has been done to lay the foundation for court involvement, intended to proscribe by legal means what the public extent of the separation of church and state ought to be.

The concept of the separation of church and state in the United States developed over many centuries, beginning in Europe. It is not a snapshot of a moment in time, but more like a river pebble polished to shiny smooth over time. Legal scholars note that monumental achievements in the history of the western civilization, including the Magna Carta, The Declaration of Independence, and The Constitution are not dead, dusty, old documents, but rather are alive and growing and serving us now. They are then available for interpretation as to how best to serve us in this day and age.

If, as the adversaries in this battle maintain, the battle is dedicated to the soul of America, just what does the average American think about the separation of church and state in America? What do they know about it? Perhaps more importantly, what would they change if they could or should it be maintained as it is?

Two separate surveys totaling 19 questions were developed. The surveys are named Adams and Washington , respectively after the subject matter of the first statement on the survey and are referred to that way in the data results section. The questions probed historical facts, the founding fathers and questions regarding the separation of church and state today. Most of the statements on the two separate surveys have a definite answer. A few of the statements were designed to be argumentative in that scholars are still trying to determine the

correct answer. Many questions were designed to determine what the general public knows about the specific arguments that scholars use in their discussions.

The surveys were conducted in Manatee County, Florida during the spring of 2008 and again in late August and early September, 2008. The survey respondents were made up of 4 distinct groups. Those respondents surveyed in Spring 2008 were in-class college students in the University of South Florida at Sarasota/Manatee. Two other groups were made up of high school graduates and college graduates who work for the Manatee and Sarasota District schools. The final group was surveyed during a multi family picnic on Labor Day weekend. The results of the surveys were tabulated and the respondents were placed in groups according to 2 questions on the back of the surveys that asked the respondents to give their political party affiliation and their religious denomination.

Very quickly in the survey process it became apparent that the public had little legal, spiritual or constitutional knowledge of the separation of church and state or many of the historical developments that effected the development that we have today. Many people had to guess. The responses were calculated in three groups, Republican/Conservatives, Democrat/Liberal and Independents. Much more important though than whether the public could answer the question correctly was how the respondents answered when compared to their religious and political affiliations.

The Christian right attacks what it believes is a “secular United States” claiming that this condition is leading to moral decay and our decline as a leader

of nations. In fact, it is our secular governmental structure that is responsible for our nation being consistently named as one of the most religious nations in the world. Our religious guarantees allow not just one religion to thrive but all religions to thrive. In addition, the results of the accompanying surveys suggest that average Americans, on both sides of the church and state argument, prefer our system of the separation of church and state as it is.

The Protestant Reformation in Europe

Wycliff and Huss

During the High Middle Ages the popes had made increasingly unreasonable demands of the emperors and rulers of Europe. The papal schism that developed after the end of the exiles of the popes in Avignon (1378-1415) was finally resolved by the Council of Constance. This council was needed because the papacy could not have healed the greatest and most damaging scandal in church history by itself. After the Council of Constance the papacy's power was diminished from within the church by the conciliar movement. Both the Council of Constance and the Council of Basel (1431-1439) declared that a general council was superior to the pope. The pope and his successors, however, did not accept these decrees and did all they possibly could to subordinate the councils to the pope (Lohse 9).

There were many problems and abuses in the church during the period of 1300-1500, particularly in the area of papal finances. The popes always needed more and more money to finance the wars that the papal state embroiled itself in. They also needed ever-increasing amounts to maintain their wastefully expensive lifestyles. The princes of the church increasingly used indulgences to increase their incomes. The church used ecclesiastical penalties to enforce the payment of the assessments and taxes that it levied. Ecclesiastical offices were even sold to generate income (Lohse 9).

Even worse than the exploitive financial practices was the fact that the clergy did not take their priestly duties very seriously. Many bishops thought of themselves as worldly rulers rather than as priests. Celibacy was frequently not practiced. The church was in need of thorough reform, but the clergy needed to carry it out was lacking (Lohse 9)

As early as 1328, two religious reformers appeared to be willing to take on the papacy in the name of reform. John Wycliff (c. 1328-84) an English theologian, greatly influenced John Huss (c. 1369-1415) from Bohemia. The movement, started by Huss, was of particular importance to the church of the late Middle Ages. His group was the first large group to gain and maintain independence from Rome, that is, to have a confession of faith other than that of the Roman Church (Lohse 9).

Wycliff, perhaps, because he was not as close in geographic proximity to Rome as Huss, was significantly less cautious. Huss was never as sharp in his criticisms of certain practices and teachings of the church as Wycliff. Both of these early reformers, however, shared a similar regard for the Holy Scripture as the law of God which the church was to follow and as the standard by which the actions of the church were to be judged. They compared the medieval church (worldly, rich and mighty) to the early church, which lived in worldly poverty and found the medieval church wanting (Lohse 11).

The hierarchy of the church reacted to Huss as sharply as possible, excommunicating him. However, the king of Bohemia, and a large part of the nobility as well as the people, supported Huss. Because of this he was able to

continue his work for some time after he was excommunicated. Huss was called to the Council of Constance to explain himself. He was given an official guarantee by the emperor that after the Council he could return safely to Bohemia. At the Council, however, he refused to renounce his teachings and was burned at the stake as a heretic. His death became a scandal in Bohemia. Both the emperor and the pope were considered his murderers (Lohse 11).

After the death of Huss, the Hussites divided into two groups. The first (the Utraquists) basically demanded only the distribution of wine to the laity during communion. The other group was the much more radical Taborites. In 1420, the pope declared a crusade against the Hussites in Bohemia and the wars against the Hussites began. The Hussites defended themselves fanatically. The Hussites even invaded the German Empire, reaching as far as Brandenburg and Austria. After the Utraquists gained control of the Hussite movement, the Council of Basel agreed to terms with them in the Compactata (the Treaty of Prague, 1453) (Lohse 12).

At every diet of the German Empire, the *Gravamina nationis Germanicae*, the list of abuses that the diet was asked to correct in the church in the German Empire, was always presented. Although this term was not officially used as an official statement until 1456, such a list of abuses was presented at the Council of Constance in 1417, and was still being presented into the early years of the Reformation. The papacy began to be seen as the real enemy, robbing the German nation of its wealth, its freedom, and its dignity (Lohse 10). In the sixteenth century the German Empire still remembered the horrors of the Hussite

Wars. In some areas, secret groups still practiced the Hussite teachings. While other, older heresies had almost disappeared by 1500, the influence of the Hussites remained strong. People were still impressed by the Hussite criticism of the many abuses in the church. Church leaders flagrantly violated the church's celibacy requirements and many appeared to be more interested in obtaining wealth than serving the church. Whether Huss had been unjustly condemned was still frequently discussed. Most importantly, the Hussites provided the West with an example of successful resistance (Lohse 12).

Martin Luther

Perhaps the most important figure to the modern Christian church was Luther. Luther became an Augustinian monk in 1505. This disappointed his father who wanted him to be a lawyer. He earned a doctorate in theology from the University of Wittenberg. Instead of settling down to a placid life of a scholarly monk or an uneventful career as a university lecturer, Luther began to develop his own personal theology, which quickly brought him conflict with the church (Hooker 1). The first great controversy that was focused on Luther was that of indulgences. In two sermons, one of which was delivered on October 31, 1516, Luther warned of the dangers of indulgences. He did not reject them in principle, but rather examined the apparent conflict between true contrition and the desire to receive an indulgence (Lohse 42).

The practice of indulgences needs to be understood in the context of the sacrament of penance. Penance begins with the sinner experiencing contrition. The sinner then confesses his or her sin to the priest and receives absolution

from the priest. Finally the priest requires the penitent to perform some kind of satisfaction. This satisfaction is required of penitents as a way by which they can experience the punishment of their sins that has not been removed by absolution. This understanding of satisfaction was based upon the presupposition that a sinful act not only results in guilt but also incurs a temporal punishment that must be endured either here on earth or in purgatory (Lohse 42).

When the practice of indulgences first began in the eleventh century they were originally understood as affecting only the temporal punishments imposed by the church itself. Then indulgences released penitents from the temporal punishments of purgatory. Later, an indulgence released the recipient from punishment and all guilt. Finally, indulgences were granted on behalf of members of the recipient's family who had already died, releasing them from the punishments of purgatory. Theologians disagreed amongst themselves about this practice and at the time of Luther there was no official teaching on the subject, leaving the door wide open for excess and abuse (Aland 59).

In the late Middle Ages the use of indulgences greatly increased when, in 1517, Pope Leo X offered indulgences for those who gave alms to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. This promoted the creation of professional pardoners who sold indulgences without restriction. One of these pardoners, Johann Wetzel, particularly provoked Luther to write (in 1517) his 95 theses against the practices of the church. In thesis 28 Luther objected to a saying attributed to Wetzel: "As soon as a coin in the coffer rings a soul from purgatory springs." Luther condemned what he saw as the purchase and sale of salvation. The 95

theses not only denounced practices such as this as worldly, but denied the pope's authority to grant pardons on God's behalf. Luther said that the only thing that indulgences guaranteed was an increase in power and greed (Bainton 60).

The news of Luther's 95 theses spread across Europe with amazing speed. This rapid spread and the widespread discussion about them was only possible because the art of printing had already been developed a few decades. Printing provided the unique opportunity for the very large response to Luther's criticism. The powerful effect that Luther's work had on public opinion made it impossible for Luther to be done away with as simply and as quickly as Huss had been (Lohse 45).

Scholasticism was both a method and system of philosophy dominant in the Middle Ages. It aimed to reconcile the Christian theology of the church fathers with Greek philosophers such as Aristotle. Scholasticism had passed its peak shortly before the Reformation began, but Humanism, which came to Germany from Italy, achieved its highest development in the sixteenth century. Of course, there were differences between Humanism of the variety taught in Italy and that taught in Germany. The secularism that so often resulted from Humanism in Italy appeared far less frequently in Germany. On the contrary, German Humanism was quite religious. Some princes, including Maximilian I, encouraged the Humanists. Since the emperor gave his personal support to the humanists, Germany became more of a center of Humanism than almost anywhere else in Europe. At the same time, the nationalistic element was

becoming stronger in German Humanism. People hoped to develop German law, German grammar, and even, perhaps, a German form of the church. When Luther's difficulties with the church began, the Northern Humanists supported Luther (Lohse 15).

In 1518, Luther was hauled into court to defend his arguments against Cardinal Cajetan. When the argument began to focus on the spiritual value of good works, that is, the actions that people do in this world to benefit others and to pay off the debts they've incurred against God by sinning, Cajetan lost his temper and demanded that Luther recant. Luther ran and his steady irreparable separation from the church began. Luther's next writing was the "The Sermon on Good Works," in which he argues that good works do not benefit the soul, only faith could do that. In response Pope Leo declared 41 articles of Luther's teachings as heretical teachings, and Luther's books were burned in Rome. In response, Luther became even more passionate in his efforts to reform the church (Hooker 2).

In 1521, the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, demanded that Luther appear before the diet of the Holy Roman Empire at Worms. Luther was asked to explain his views and Charles ordered him to recant. Luther's famous response was, "Here I Stand, I cannot do otherwise." While the leaders at Worms were deliberating, Luther made his escape and was hidden away in a castle at Wartburg. Luther's works are truly voluminous, but the foundations of all his

works are in two principles. They are “justification by faith” and “the priesthood of all believers” (Hooker 2).

In Christian theology, justification is God’s act of declaring or making a sinner righteous before God. Luther seized upon the “by your faith alone are you justified” references in Romans. His “priesthood of all believers” is his belief that all Christians have a duty to read and study the Bible and determine what it means for themselves. They are to develop their own personal relationship with God. It was during his stay at Wartburg that he translated the Bible into German, so that every German Christian could do just that (Lohse 42).

In a conciliatory effort, Luther wrote to Pope Leo explaining the substance of his ideas. In his “On the Freedom of the Christian,” Luther introduces his concept of “Freiheit,” meaning “freedom” or “liberty.” This is not the same as our interpretation of freedom but in time it gives rise to the idea of “individual freedom,” and later “political freedom,” and later still “economic freedom.” Most of the European Enlightenment revolves around freedom and the project of “liberating”; liberating people from false beliefs, false religion and arbitrary authority. This concept of “liberating” people, which is so common to the international politics of today, came out of Luther’s idea of “freedom” (Hooker 2).

Eventually Protestantism gained such a solid footing in the Holy Roman Empire that the Emperor could not protect Catholics in the Protestant areas. Lutherans had gained their freedom in 1555 with the Peace of Augsburg. This treaty was somewhat successful in relieving tension in the Holy Roman Empire. It established the policy of *cuius region, eius religio* meaning “in the princes land,

the prince's religion." The region's ruler determined the religion of the land. The treaty established a grace period, during which families could move to another region that practiced their religion (either Roman Catholicism or Lutheranism). But for other groups such as Anabaptists and Calvinists there were no protections at all. Members of these groups were open to the charge of heresy. Article 17 of the treaty stated: "However, all such as do not belong to the two above named religions shall not be included in the present peace but be totally excluded from it." It was not until 1648, with the Treaty of Westphalia that Christians living in an area where the established religion was not their own were allowed to practice their own religion (Lohse 177).

Ulrich Zwingli

While Germany struggled under the political and religious consequences of Luther's reform movement, the movement itself quickly crossed the German borders into neighboring Switzerland. At this time Switzerland was not so much a country but a confederacy of city states called cantons. When Luther's ideas began to flow over the border, several of the cantons broke from the Catholic Church and became Protestant while others remained firmly Catholic. Of the cantons that adopted Luther's new movement, the most important and powerful of these was the city-state of Zurich, under the leadership of Ulrich Zwingli (1484-1531) (Gabler 1-4).

Zwingli brought to Luther's revolution an education rich in Northern Humanism. Many of the Reformers, although Martin Luther was not one of them, were decisively influenced by Humanism. The Humanist's renewal of a cultural

ideal influenced more and more universities and schools. The poor education of priests was a familiar target of ridicule and satires were written on the morality of the higher clergy (Lohse 15). Zwingli was enormously popular in Zurich because of his opposition to Swiss mercenary service in foreign wars and for his attacks on indulgences. Zwingli was as critical of indulgences as was Luther himself (Potter 15).

Zwingli had risen through the ranks of the Catholic Church until, in 1519, he was appointed "People's Priest." This position was the most powerful ecclesiastical position in the city. However, by the later portion of that same year Zwingli had grown to fully appreciate Luther's program of reform and began to shift the city over to the practices of the new Protestant church. In 1523, Zurich officially adopted Zwingli's central reforms, and became the first Protestant state outside of Germany. From here the Protestant revolution would sweep across Switzerland (Potter 15).

Zwingli's theology and morality was based on a simple, single principle. If the Old or New Testament did not say something explicitly and literally, then, no Christian should believe or practice it. This was the basis of his critique of indulgences. In 1522, for instance, Zwingli mounted a protest against fasting at Lent, a standard Catholic practice. His argument was that the New Testament says absolutely nothing about fasting so the practice is unchristian (Locher 81).

Two important shifts in Western Christian experience result from Zwingli's position. The first is the literal reading of the Old and New Testaments. No longer would texts be dark and mysterious, full of difficult and allegorical meanings.

Instead, the words meant what they said. Any difficulty, contradiction or obscure meaning was the fault of the reader and not the text. This literal meaning of Christian scriptures meant that it was possible to have one, and only one, meaning of the text. From this profound shift in the reading of Christian scripture developed one of the most strict and severe applications of these writings to social life. Not only were practices not contained in Scriptures to be shunned, but practices, beliefs, and rules that were contained in the literal meaning of the Old and New Testaments were to be adhered to absolutely and uncritically. This became the underpinning of the social theories and organization of radical Protestant and Puritan societies, and later the foundational social organization of the English colonies in America (Gabler 49-52).

As Zwingli started building his strict Protestant society, he soon parted company with Martin Luther. Luther was always a Catholic at heart. His mission had always been to reform the Catholic Church, not start a new church. Luther was not willing to give up many Catholic ceremonies, and he certainly was not willing to accept Zwingli's doctrine of reading Christian scriptures with unwavering literalness. The most important doctrinal issue that they disagreed on, was the nature of the Eucharist. Luther, like the Catholics, believed that the bread and the wine of the Eucharist was spiritually transformed into the body and blood of Christ. Zwingli believed that the Eucharist only symbolized the body and blood of Christ (Bainton 62).

At the heart of this dispute was the very nature of Christ himself. For Luther, what made the spiritual transformation of the Eucharist into the physical

body and blood of Christ was the dual nature of Christ. As both God and human, Christ was both spiritual and physical, God and human being. Zwingli's Protestantism, as well as his spiritual inheritors (the majority of Protestant churches), overwhelmingly stressed the divine nature of Christ. For Zwingli, Jesus Christ was the divine. The Catholic insistence on the human nature of Christ was an incorrect and dangerous reading and must be rejected (Bainton 62).

Normally when theologians disagree they just agree to disagree. Denominational differences today only rarely cause serious concern. This disagreement between Zwingli and Luther was viewed as a political crisis of the utmost importance. The leaders of both the Swiss and the Germans understood the importance of a political alliance between the two countries. This disagreement threatened such an alliance. These Protestant states were, after all, trying to survive beneath the threat of Catholic Europe. These leaders understood their precarious positions since they were both surrounded on all sides by hostile countries (Bainton 62).

In order for these two Protestant states to ally themselves, the two churches had to agree on basic theology, particularly the nature of Christ. In October 1529, Philip of Hesse invited both Luther and Zwingli to his castle in Marburg to try to come to some agreement. By this time the two had little in common and the discussions ended in complete failure. Luther thought Zwingli to be mad, a religious fanatic who had lost touch with common sense and spirituality. Zwingli thought Luther to be hopelessly enmeshed in unsupportable

Catholic doctrine. After this meeting unification of the various Protestant movements became impossible. In just a few decades, the new church that Luther believed would become another, more pure universal church, fragmented into a thousand separate, quarreling pieces (Hooker 2).

John Calvin

The spirit of Zwingli's thought reached its fullest development in the theology, political theories and ecclesiastic thought of John Calvin (1509-1564). Calvin, perhaps even more so than Luther, created the patterns and thought that would dominate Western culture throughout the modern period. American culture, in particular, has been thoroughly influenced by Calvinism. Calvin was originally a lawyer, but like Zwingli, he was saturated with the ideas of Northern Renaissance Humanism. Calvin was dedicated to reforming the church, and he got his chance when the citizens of Geneva revolted against their rulers (Barth 32).

Unlike the citizens of Zurich, Bern, Basel, and other cities that became Protestant in the 1520's, the citizens of Geneva were not German speakers but primarily French speakers. Because of this they did not have close cultural ties with the reformed churches in Germany and Switzerland. The Protestant canton of Bern, however, was determined to see Geneva become Protestant and to see Protestantism spread throughout Switzerland. In 1533, Bern sent reformers to convert Geneva into a Protestant city. After considerable conflict, Geneva officially became Protestant in 1535. Calvin, who by then was a successful lawyer, was invited to Geneva to build the new Reformed church (Hooker 2).

Calvin's efforts at reforming the church radically changed Protestantism because he directly addressed issues that other early reformers didn't know how to or didn't want to answer. Calvin's most important work involved the organization of church governance and the social organization of the church and the city. He was the first political thinker to model social organization entirely on biblical principles. At first his reforms did not go over well. He addressed the issue of church governance by creating leaders within the new church. He also developed a catechism to impose on all the members of the church. He imposed a strict moral code on the citizens of Geneva. This moral code was derived from a literal reading of Christian scriptures. The people of Geneva started to believe that they had thrown away one church only to see it replaced by an identical twin (Hooker 2).

In early 1538, the Genevans tossed him out and Calvin moved to Strasbourg where he began work on his almost endless commentaries, "The Institutes of the Christian Church." The purpose of commentaries in Western literary tradition is to explain both the literary technique and the difficult passages in literary and historical works. Calvin, like most theologians, wrote his commentaries to argue for his own theology. His commentaries are less an explanation of the Bible than a piece-by-piece construction of his theological, social, and political philosophy (Hooker 2).

In 1540 a new group of city officials in Geneva invited John Calvin back into the city. As soon as he arrived he set about revolutionizing Genevan society. His most important innovation was the incorporation of the church into city

government. He immediately helped to restructure municipal government so that clergy would be involved in city decisions, most particularly the populace. He imposed a hierarchy on the Genevan church and began a series of statute reforms to impose a strict and uncompromising moral code on the city (Hooker 2).

Geneva became the most important Protestant center in Europe in the sixteenth-century, and a haven for Protestants who had been driven out of their home countries. By the middle of the sixteenth century, between one-third and one-half of the city was made up of foreign Protestants. In Geneva, these foreign born reformers adopted the more radical Calvinist doctrines. Most of them had arrived as moderate reformers and had left as thorough going Calvinists. Perhaps it is because of this that Calvin's brand of reform eventually became the dominant branch of Protestantism from the seventeenth century onwards (Hooker 2).

The core of Calvinism is the Zwinglian insistence on the literal reading of Christian scriptures. Anything not contained in these scriptures was to be rejected. Anything that was contained explicitly and literally in these scriptures was to be followed unwaveringly. It is this latter point that Calvin developed beyond Zwingli's model. Calvin's view was that not only should all religious belief be founded on the literal reading of Scripture, but church organization, political organization, and society itself should be founded on this literal reading (Hooker 2).

The most important theological position that Calvin took was that of predestination. The early church had struggled with this issue. Since God knew the future, did that not mean that salvation was predestined? The early church, and the moderate Protestant churches, had decided that God had not predestined salvation for individuals. Salvation was in part the product of human choice. Calvin, on the other hand, built his reformed church on the concept that salvation was not a choice, but pre-decided by God from the beginning of time. This meant that individuals were “elected” for salvation by God. Those “elected” would form the population of the Calvinist church (Hooker 2).

This view of human salvation is called “the doctrine of the elect”, or “the doctrine of living saints”, or “the doctrine of visible saints.” In Catholic theology a “saint” is a human being that the church is certain has gained salvation. In Calvinist theology, a “saint” or “living saint,” or “visible saint,” is a living, breathing human being who is guaranteed to gain salvation no matter what he or she does here on earth, although the elect obviously don’t engage in flagrant sin. Not all good people were among the elect, but people with bad behavior were certainly not among the elect. It was incumbent on churches filled with living saints to only admit other living saints. This principle was called voluntary association. Voluntary associations are predicated on the idea that a community or association chooses its own members and those members, of their own free will, choose to be a member of that community or association. In time, the concept of

voluntary associations would become the basis of civil society and later political society in Europe (Hooker 2).

John Knox

John Knox (c. 1510-1572) was a Scottish clergyman, and leader of the Protestant Reformation, who is considered the founder of the Presbyterian denomination. Knox was influenced by George Wishart. Wishart was a reformer who fled Scotland to escape punishment for heresy. He fled to England and later to Germany and Switzerland. Wishart returned to Scotland in 1544. The timing of his return was unfortunate. In December 1543, the Parliament of Scotland passed an act for the summary dealing of heretics. Wishart traveled Scotland preaching in favor of the Reformation. When he arrived in East Lothian, Knox became his bodyguard and one of his closest associates. Wishart was arrested on the orders of Cardinal Beaton. Knox was prepared to follow Wishart into captivity but Wishart persuaded him against this course. Wishart was subsequently prosecuted, and was burned at the stake in the presence of Cardinal Beaton (Percy 49-50)

When Wishart was taken prisoner, Knox became a fugitive. In May of 1546 while Knox remained a fugitive, Cardinal Beaton was murdered in his castle by a gang of five men in revenge for Wishart's execution. The assassins seized the castle and eventually their families and friends took refuge with them, about one hundred and fifty men in all. Knox, who had been tutoring students whose father was sympathetic to the Reformation, received word to bring them to the castle. The murder of Cardinal Beaton had provoked the regent, James

Hamilton, to request French assistance to bring the castle under his control. In June, 1547, twenty-one French galleys besieged the castle and forced their surrender. The Protestant nobles and others, including Knox, were taken prisoner and forced to row in the French galleys. In February, 1549, after spending a total of nineteen months in the galley-prison, Knox was released. It is not known how he obtained his release (Percy 49-50).

On his release from the French galley-prison, Knox took refuge in England. The Reformation in England was a less radical movement than its counterparts on the European continent, though there was a definite breach with Rome. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, and the regent of King Edward VI, Edward Seymour, 1st Duke of Somerset, were decidedly Protestant minded. However, much work needed to be done to bring reformed ideas to the clergy and to the people. On April 7, 1549, Knox was licensed to work in the Church of England. He was obliged to use the recently released *Book of Common Prayer*, which was mainly a translation of the Latin Mass into English and was largely left intact and unreformed. He therefore modified its use along Protestant lines. In the pulpit he was very effective preaching Protestant doctrines and his congregation grew (MacGregor 50-54).

Knox was asked to come to London to preach before the Court. In his first sermon, he advocated a change for the second edition of the *Book of Common Prayer*. The liturgy required worshippers to kneel during communion. Knox and the other chaplains considered this to be idolatry. It triggered a debate where Thomas Cranmer was called upon to defend the practice. The end result was a

compromise. The compromise declared that no adoration was intended while kneeling, and it was included in the second edition (Percy 120-126).

Knox was invited back to preach in London many more times. He gave his last sermon before King Edward VI on April 12, 1553. In July of 1553, the young king died. Edward's successor, Mary Tudor, reestablished Roman Catholicism in England and restored Mass in all the churches. Protestants such as Cranmer, were imprisoned in the Tower of London. With the country no longer safe for Protestant preachers, Knox left for the continent in January 1554 (Brown 144).

Knox headed to Geneva where John Calvin had established his authority. When Knox arrived Calvin was in a difficult position. He had recently authorized the execution of the scholar Michael Servetus for heresy, a ruling which had discredited Calvin among his peers and all of the cities in Switzerland were against him. Knox asked Calvin four difficult political questions. They were: whether a minor could rule by divine right, whether a female could rule and transfer sovereignty to her husband, whether people should obey ungodly or idolatrous rulers and what party godly persons should follow if they resisted an idolatrous ruler. Calvin gave cautious replies and referred him to the Swiss reformer Heinrich Bullinger in Zurich. Bullinger's responses were equally cautious, but Knox had already made up his mind. On July 20, 1554, Knox published a pamphlet, *The Professor's of God's Truth in England*, attacking Mary Tudor and the bishops who had brought her to power (Percy 148-157).

In the summer of 1558, Knox published his best known pamphlet, *The First Blast of The Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*. In calling

the “regiment” or rule of women “monstrous,” he meant that it was “unnatural.” Knox states that his purpose was to demonstrate “how abominable before God is the Empire or Rule of a wicked woman, yea, of a traiteresse and bastard.” The women rulers he had in mind were Mary Tudor, Queen of England and Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland. The impact of the document was complicated later that year when Elizabeth Tudor became queen of England. Although Knox had not targeted Elizabeth, he deeply offended her and she never forgave him. With a Protestant on the throne, the English refugees in Geneva prepared to return home. Knox left Geneva for Scotland in January 1559, but he did not arrive in Scotland until May 1559 because Elizabeth refused to issue him a passport through England (MacGregor 175-179).

Just two days after Knox arrived in Edinburgh, he proceeded to Dundee where a large number of Protestant sympathizers had gathered. Knox was declared an outlaw and Mary of Guise, the queen regent for the young Mary Stuart, summoned the Protestants to Sterling. Fearing the possibility of summary trial and execution, the Protestants proceeded to Perth, a fortress-like town with high walls that made it much easier to defend in case of a siege. Knox preached a sermon that precipitated a riot and the church was gutted. Mary gathered nobles loyal to her and a small French army. She dispatched Archibald Campbell, 5th Earl of Argyll, and James Stewart, to offer terms and avert a war. Mary promised not to send any French troops into Perth if the Protestants evacuated the town. The Protestants agreed, but when the queen regent entered Perth, she garrisoned it with Scottish troops on the French payroll. This was seen

as treacherous by Campbell and Stewart, who switched sides and joined Knox, who now was based in St. Andrews (MacGregor 185-189).

When Knox next preached in St. Andrews the effect was the same as in Perth. While the people engaged in vandalism and looting, Mary received word that Protestant reinforcements were arriving from neighboring counties and she retreated to Dunbar. By now the mob fury had spilled over to central Scotland. Mary's own troops were on the verge of mutiny. In October 1559, The Scottish nobility deposed Mary of Guise from the regency. Her minister William Maitland of Lethington, defected to the Protestant side, bringing his considerable administrative skills. From then on, Maitland took over the political tasks, freeing Knox for the role of religious leader. For the final stage of Knox's Scottish Revolution, Maitland appealed to Scottish patriotism to fight French domination. A significant English army joined the Scottish Protestant forces. The sudden death of Mary of Guise in June 1560 paved the way for an end to hostilities. In July 1560, the Treaty of Edinburgh was signed and both the English and French troops withdrew (MacGregor 185-189).

On August 1, 1560, the Scottish Parliament met to discuss religious issues. Knox and five other ministers were called upon to draw up a new confession of faith. Within four days, the Scots Confession was presented to Parliament and approved. A week later, the Parliament passed three acts in one day. The first abolished the jurisdiction of the pope in Scotland. The second condemned all doctrine and practice contrary to the reformed faith. The third forbade the celebration of Mass in Scotland. Before Parliament recessed, Knox

and the other ministers were given the task of organizing the newly reformed Scottish church. They worked for seven months creating the *Book of Discipline*, the document describing the organization of the new church. Parliament met in 1561 to consider the Book of Discipline but delayed their decision because of the impending return of Mary Stuart, the Queen of Scotland (MacGregor 185-189).

Knox had many disagreements with the new queen. Most of these involved confrontations over the Catholic Mary's priests conducting Mass illegally in Scotland. By this time Mary's Catholicism was in the distinct minority in Scotland. She once asked Knox to use his influence to promote religious toleration. He flatly refused. For Knox, it wasn't just a religious matter he considered it a patriotic matter as well. Any other religion other than the Scottish Reformed religion was a foreign one, and not in the interests of Scotland. Mary had other serious difficulties as well. She ran into problems with Scottish nobles who eventually forced her to abdicate. Knox preached at the coronation of the young King James VI. During this period Knox thundered against Mary in his sermons, even to the point of calling for her death. The king was not pleased with Knox over this but at the time could not move against him. He would, however, never forget the incident. Mary escaped to England where she was imprisoned by her cousin Elizabeth Tudor, the Queen of England and eventually executed (Percy 331-333).

Knox has been compared to other great reformers, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin. He is considered an important figure in Europe, because of the five years he spent in England making the *Book of Common Prayer* a much more

Protestant work. His work in Geneva strongly influenced the Puritan movement. His greatest historical significance is that of his contribution to the Scottish Reformation. The Scottish Revolution of 1560 marked the change from princely authority to individualism (Brown 293-294).

The English Reformation

The Reformation in Germany primarily concerned church reform. The Reformation in Switzerland split Christendom into a 1000 pieces. The Reformation in England was largely about establishing an English church. Henry VIII wanted a divorce and assigned Cardinal Wolsey the task of obtaining it. His wife, Catherine of Aragon was a member of Spain's royal family with close ties to the pope. Wolsey was unable to obtain the divorce so Henry had him arrested. Henry replaced him with Thomas Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell. Both of these men were sympathetic to the ideas of Martin Luther. They advised Henry to have himself named head of the church in England and then grant his own divorce. By 1534 Henry was in complete control of all clergy appointments. The English Parliament had also stopped all contributions to the Roman church by English clergy and lay people (Dickens 119).

Despite this storm of activity, the English church never really changed. In 1539, Henry reaffirmed his commitment to Catholic practice by passing into law the *Six Articles*. These articles affirmed the transubstantiation of the Eucharist (that is, the Eucharist was mystically transformed into the body and blood of Christ), confession, private masses, celibate vows, and the sanctity of the Eucharistic cup. The only substantive change Henry ever made was the head of

the church. The English church would radically change under Henry's successor, Edward VI (Ellis 788).

Edward VI (ruled 1547-1553) was only a teenager when he became king, but he thoroughly sympathized with the Protestant cause. Edward and Thomas Cranmer set about making the Church of England into a thoroughly Protestant church. Edward repealed the *Six Articles*, allowed clergy to marry, and imposed Thomas Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* on all church services. He also ordered any and all images and altars to be removed from churches. Had Edward lived, England would have become a Calvinist country (Dickens 193).

Edward died only six years into his reign and was succeeded by his half sister Mary Tudor, who was Henry's first child by Catherine of Aragon. Mary had been raised in France and was devoutly Catholic. When she assumed the throne of England she declared England to be a Catholic country. She assertively set about converting churches back to Catholic practices. Images and alters returned. The *Book of Common Prayer* was removed and clerical celibacy was re-imposed and Eucharistic practices reaffirmed. She met her opposition with steely-eyed defiance. Because of the sheer numbers of executions of Protestant leaders, the English would eventually call her "Bloody Mary." Mary died only five years into her reign. Had she lived longer, England would have remained a Catholic country for decades (Dickens 203).

Mary was succeeded by her half sister, Elizabeth, Henry's daughter with Ann Boleyn. Elizabeth assumed the throne in 1558 and reigned until 1603. She was perhaps England's greatest monarch and many proclaim her to be the

greatest and most brilliant monarch in the history of Europe. Elizabeth understood that her country was being torn apart by the warring factions. She repealed Mary's Catholic legislation but she did not return England to Edward's more austere Protestantism. Instead, she worked out a compromise church that retained as much as possible from the Catholic church while putting into place most of the foundational ideas of Protestantism (Dickens 203).

Elizabeth's greatest legacy was the spirit of compromise that infused her version of the Church of England. She managed to please Catholics by retaining several important aspects of Catholicism while appeasing moderate Calvinists who wanted all traces of the Roman church to be expunged. She accomplished this by allowing English Calvinists (called "Puritans" because they wanted to purify the church of all Roman influences) to participate in Parliament and set up semi-autonomous congregations that practiced Calvinist doctrine, but still recognized the Queen as the head of the church (Dickens 210).

In March 1603, with the old queen clearly dying, her chief minister Robert Cecil, sent King James VI of Scotland a draft proclamation of his ascension to the English throne. Elizabeth died in the early hours of March 24 and James was proclaimed king in London later that same day. As James made his way from Scotland south to London, his new subjects flocked to see him, relieved above all that the succession had triggered neither unrest nor invasion. Although his succession had gone smoothly, in the first year of his reign James survived two assassination plots against his life. In religious matters James attempted to

continue the example that Elizabeth had set for him, but this would prove difficult for him (Croft 35-37).

James set about ending the long Armada War with Spain. Since he had never been a party to it, and because of the skilled diplomatic efforts of Robert Cecil and Henry Howard, England was able to conclude a peace treaty with Spain. However, freedom of worship for Catholics in England continued to be a major objective of Spanish policy, causing constant dilemmas for James. He was distrusted abroad for his repression of Catholics, and distrusted at home for his tolerance of them. At the opening of James' first parliament in 1605, a soldier was found guarding twenty barrels of gunpowder in the cellars of the Parliament building. These explosives were intended to blow up both parliament and the king. The discovery of the Catholic Gunpowder Plot, as it quickly became known, forced James to take stricter measures with Catholics. In 1606, Parliament passed an act which would require any citizen to take an Oath of Allegiance, incorporating a denial of the pope's authority over the king. In practice James proved lenient to Catholic laymen who took the Oath of Allegiance (Croft 37).

In addition to having difficulties with Catholics, James began to have problems with the more radical Calvinists as well. In England at this time there was a growing movement within the Church of England. Many believed that reform had not gone far enough. Those in this movement believed that the Church of England still had too many trappings of Roman Catholicism and needed to be purified. Those in this movement became known as Puritans. The Puritans had hoped that, with James (from Calvinist Scotland) becoming the new

king, they could continue to reform the English church. The Puritans presented their new king with their Millenary Petition. The puritans hoped that this petition would rid the Church of England of the last vestiges of Catholicism (Gaustad).

Instead of enacting their petition, James took a hard line against the Puritans. This only aggravated their position in the church. Those who refused to conform to the pressures of the king were referred to as Separatists. Some Separatists left England for the Netherlands, where those with religious differences were granted some semblance of religious toleration. After a decade in the Netherlands, they determined that they no longer wanted to choose between their God and their country. They decided to go to the New World, so that they could bring up their children as English citizens (Gaustad 14).

Other Separatists chose to return to England and, eventually, formed what became the first English Baptist Church. Even though they offered civil obedience to the state, they refused spiritual obedience and they suffered persecution because of it. One of their early leaders, John Murton, declared "it is the foulest of crimes to force peoples' bodies to a worship where into which they cannot bring their spirits" (Gaustad 16).

Aboard the ship, the *Arabella*, on his way to the New World, John Winthrop, the governor of the Massachusetts Bay Company, wrote of his hopes for the new colony. In his *A Model of Christian Charity*, Winthrop called upon his fellow migrants to join together to build a Christian commonwealth in America. He believed that the colonists had a special vocation to love and support one another and obey the Lord's commandments. Winthrop stated that this was

necessary “for we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us...” (Winthrop 10). Winthrop believed that they would forge a Christian commonwealth so ideal that all would know that they were on the right path. These colonists believed that they would take their successful experiment back to England, where they would proceed to purify the English church (Croft 43).

As the era of Christianity in America began, Luther’s concept of “Christian freedom” had ultimately been translated into the concept of winning your religious freedom through armed force (the Treaty of Augsburg) while neglecting (at best) those religious minorities with different views. Even worse, other groups, who just recently experienced persecution themselves, became the persecutors (such as Calvin’s burning Michael Servetus at the stake for heresy). “Freedom” became the right to impose your views on others.

The Development of the Separation of Church and State in America

The American experience of religious toleration and the separation of church and state developed over hundreds of years. This development was helped, and occasionally hindered, by unique conditions in the American colonies. America's unique experiments with religious toleration and separation of church and state are still being fine-tuned today.

In the 16th and early 17th centuries, the prevailing Orthodox Christian attitude toward government was that God instituted governments in order to save depraved men from their own depravity. God then left the details to the particular circumstance. The state was necessary to curb the impulses of men. In addition, there was no idea of equality among men. There were to be definite rankings among men with inferiors obeying superiors. Anything less than strict adherence to the laws of the state and the church would result in tumult and horror (Wilson 26).

During this period, every reputable state in the western world believed that it could allow only one church and every citizen should be compelled to attend. When the Puritans came to New England in 1630, the idea that a government could allow more than one religion had not arrived on the European continent. One reason for this was that some radical elements in the Reformation movement had become associated (mostly mistakenly) with violence. These radical elements were represented in several minority groups referred to today under the generic term of Anabaptists. They probably became associated with violence and disorder because they persistently challenged such notions as the

Christian church should be maintained and supported by the power of the state. These early advocates of the separation of church and state caused alarm across Europe and tended to confirm the majority view that established “state” churches should be the norm (Handy 3).

The Puritans were no different in this regard for they believed that it should be their reformed church that should be the state church. Puritan theorists also believed in a parliamentary conception of society. The government should owe its existence to the compact of the governed (Wilson 29). No doubt the Puritans believed that government originated in the consent of the governed, because that would allow them to chastise the Stuart kings and support their allies in the English Parliament. These colonists fully intended to return one day to England, when the time was right, to purify the English church. Many other Separatists believed that the English church could not be saved, and it was up to them to form a church that would, indeed, be pure. One of those Separatists was Roger Williams, who left for the Massachusetts Bay Colony within a few months of Winthrop’s sailing (Gaustad 19).

Roger Williams

Almost immediately upon his arrival, Roger Williams began to have problems in Massachusetts. He was offered a position as a parish minister but, because he felt that these Separatists continued to be connected to rather than separated from the English church, turned it down. These colonists wanted to remain bound to both nation and church. Only in this way could they purify their national church and reclaim their beloved homeland (Gaustad 25). Many

Puritans, especially those that leaned towards Congregationalism, were particularly insistent that the church, because it was charged with the spiritual welfare of its members, must not become involved in the activities of the state. To them it was paramount that the church not do the work of the state, even at the state's request. To allow this would put the church back on the road to papism (Morgan 66).

Williams was clearly in the same camp in this regard. He felt strongly about separation from the English church, not just because he felt it insufficiently Protestant, but because it was, by definition, a political church. He wanted the church in New England to be a "sparkling manifestation of Christianity which kept conscience undefiled" (Gaustad 31). Williams not only felt strongly about separating from the English church, but also separating the church and the state (Wilson 28). Williams used the metaphor of the church as a garden and the wilderness of the world. He argued that if ever the wall of separation is breached the people should rebuild the wall (Gaustad 33)

Williams spent considerable time among the native people, who were quite hospitable towards him. He learned the Narragansett language and refused to try to convert them to Christianity. Williams believed that the Narragansett were spiritual people and that any attempt to force them to convert would be abhorrent to Christendom. He also felt that this would produce an entirely unacceptable mixing of politics and religion (Gaustad 30).

Williams also objected to the requirement that an oath of loyalty be sworn to the governor by all males sixteen years of age and older. This oath ended with

the words "so help me God." Williams considered requiring this phrase a sacrilege, because someone with no character would not hesitate to swear an oath to God. In 1636, after stays in Boston, Salem and Plymouth, Williams was banished from Massachusetts Bay. After receiving a warning from Winthrop, he left Massachusetts. The colony intended to send him back to England where he would have met with severe persecution. Instead, he managed to leave Massachusetts in time and, after much hardship, made his way south, out of the reach of the Massachusetts Bay colony. There, he founded Rhode Island and lived by his most cherished beliefs (Gaustad 35).

William Penn

Another contributor to American religious pluralism was William Penn. Penn's father was a friend of the Stuart kings and this relationship served young Penn well. He was a Quaker, a religion anathema to most members of the Church of England. Quakers claim what amounts to direct revelation from God. They call it an inner light of the same kind that the apostles had received from Christ himself. To them, the Holy Scriptures were no more than an imperfect record of past revelations of people just like themselves. They also deny that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient in itself to bring redemption. However, they do believe that all men are capable of redemption, if they follow the inner light (Morgan 45).

Penn, after serving a term in Newgate Prison for his beliefs, managed to recover the place that his father had arranged for him at the king's court. This he managed to do without having to sacrifice his religious convictions. In 1681, he

managed to convince the king to give him Pennsylvania as a refuge for Quakers, presumably in payment for a debt owed to his father (Morgan 57). Penn had been raised a Protestant, a gentleman, and an Englishman, and Penn was especially proud to be all three. Unfortunately for Penn, he was forced to spend an inordinate amount of time in England defending his Quaker beliefs (Morgan 49). Up until 1688, when James II was ousted by revolution from the throne of England, William Penn was in daily attendance at Whitehall, advocating for better treatment for Quakers and other religious dissenters (Morgan 57). One of the strongest arguments that Penn made against government interference in religion, and one of the most effective, was the proposition that this interference posed a threat to the individual's right to property. The protection given to property rights in the English Constitution had always been considered paramount (Morgan 64).

The difference between the Puritans and the Quakers could not be more striking. While the Puritans considered themselves warriors in the New World, the Quakers by contrast were pacifists opposed to all wars and capital punishment. The Puritans created a "theocracy," or state church. The Quakers believed in religious toleration and the separation of church and state. It was their conviction in the necessity of the separation of church and state that sent Quakers on no less an urgent and compelling a mission than the Puritan's quest to be a "City on a Hill" (Butler 42).

The Puritans never claimed to be in favor of separating church and state or religious toleration. When Roger Williams was having his problems with the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the colony stood accused by many of being

intolerant. Nathaniel Ward defended his colony against the charge. Not so, said Ward, “all Familists, Antominians, Anabaptists, and other Enthusiasts shall have free Liberty to keep away from us” (Gaustad 43). In 1681, a congregation of Anabaptist’s published an attack upon the government of Massachusetts Bay. In their argument, they used the original settlers as an example. They stated that the government should be tolerant because the original settlers were looking for tolerance. The Massachusetts Bay colonists were not looking for tolerance, they were on a mission to establish a pure Christian church (Wilson 28).

In 1708, in an attempt to deter criticism and to appease England, the Connecticut colony enacted the Dissenter’s Act, which tolerated the presence of Quakers and Anglicans as long as they submitted to be doubly taxed. By 1751, a Congregational congregation had petitioned the Connecticut legislature for relief from the requirement that they support the established church. They believed that there was no natural reason why they should support any religion other than their own (Wilson 38).

By the mid-eighteenth century, it had become apparent to most that the only acceptable solution to the colonial religious situation was toleration (Wilson 37). Perry Miller, in his Errand into the Wilderness, states that the errand “could not have but failed” because the American environment required change. This new American environment coaxed a new way to look at things, a new excitement (Butler 35). Four of the colonies never had an established church. Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware developed without an established church. It is important to note that the examples set by Williams and

Penn, who put their principles into practice, greatly contributed to the notion that a state with no established church could work (Hardy 143).

In the middle of the eighteenth century a religious revival, the Great Awakening occurred. This movement is credited with bringing significant numbers of people into the Christian faith. These revival meetings were so well attended that they greatly exceeded anything in the history of colonial popular assembly. The masses of people attending these meetings influenced the development of a new style of preaching known as camp revival. Itinerant preachers, such as George Whitefield, traveled throughout the colonies, speaking to the masses. Some historians credit this new evangelical style of preaching with creating a radical, democratic, social and political ideology that provided an initial thrust toward American nationalism. This ideology encouraged an impulse toward the creation of a society fundamentally incompatible with traditional notions of order, hierarchy and deference (Stout 92).

The Great Awakening also provided impetus to the cause of religious toleration. The great numbers of people brought to Christianity during this time brought focus to the issue. Before this time, indifference to religion was widespread and, in such an environment, toleration is not an issue. It is when religion becomes more vital that bigotry becomes more pervasive. In some areas, the Great Awakening initially had a detrimental effect on religious liberty. Connecticut, for example, had allowed some measure of toleration to Quakers and Baptists, but the same toleration was refused to Presbyterians and Congregationalists (Wilson 51).

While progress towards religious toleration was slow, it did enjoy many significant victories. James Madison described how in the Virginia legislature in 1779, his friend, Thomas Jefferson, managed to win enactment of the Bill for Religious Toleration. While the idea for this bill had long been Jefferson's quest, it was the able maneuvering of Madison that brought it to fruition. He explained that Jefferson believed this bill to be one of his best efforts in the cause of liberty, to which he was so devoted. Madison said that the bill "is certainly the strongest legal barrier that could be erected against the connection of church and state so fatal to the liberty of both" (Wilson 84).

In order to finally prove successful in enacting Jefferson's Bill for Religious Toleration, Madison first had to defeat Governor Patrick Henry's bill to assess every person, regardless of denomination, to support the Church of England in Virginia. To do this Madison needed to rally Christian support for his cause, which was being branded an antireligious cause. Madison's anonymously penned Memorial and Remonstrance is an important document in that effort. The language of the document was couched to garner Christian support, and it proved enormously effective. In it, Madison argued, that "the right of every citizen to the free exercise of his religion according to the dictates of conscience" is held by the same tenure as all other rights. The support Madison whipped up with his "Remonstrance" was multiplied many times over by the support of the Baptists. This support not only doomed Henry's assessment act, but created a backlash of sympathy for Jefferson's Statute for Establishing Religious Freedom. Seven years after Jefferson first introduced the measure in the Virginia legislature, it

passed quickly (Church 240). Prior to the bill's passage, Jefferson's original document had to survive several attempts to revise it. One particular effort sought to change Jefferson's wording. Jefferson's text read, "the holy author of our religion," by whom he meant "God." Some delegates thought it vital to qualify this by adding "Jesus Christ." As Jefferson recalled in his *Autobiography*, "the insertion was rejected by a great majority, in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Mohometan, the Hindoo, and infidel of every denomination" (Church 241).

While religious liberty was secure in Virginia, these issues would be revisited when the states abandoned the Articles of Confederation and began the adoption of the Constitution. In the Federalist No. 10, Madison argues that "zeal for different opinions concerning religion" cancel each other out and thereby neutralize the danger of religious tyranny. In an early draft to Jefferson, Madison put the matter more bluntly. "Even in the coolest state," he said, "religion has been much oftener a motive to oppression than a restraint from it" (Church 314). In Virginia, several hundred Baptists were standing against ratification of the Constitution, primarily because there were no protections for the rights of conscience. Madison's stated objections to amending the Constitution put his candidacy for the Virginia ratifying convention in jeopardy. Since a Madison defeat would remove from the floor the new Constitution's most knowledgeable advocate, ratification in closely divided Virginia hinged on his election and national ratification depended on the state of Virginia (Church 315).

In order to win over the Baptist's, Madison had to convince them to not amend the Constitution in the convention. This would have required each state to vote on Virginia's amendments, a practical impossibility. In addition he needed to convince Elder John Leland that he would fight for a Bill of Rights to amend the Constitution, even though he had fought so fervently against them. Madison pledged that he would work diligently "for the rights of conscience in the fullest latitude, the freedom of the press, trials by jury, security against general warrants, etc" (Church 318). The Baptists gave their support to Madison and with his election to Congress he began to fashion America's Bill of Rights. It has often been said that without Madison there may not have been a Bill of Rights. More accurately, without several hundred principled Baptists there might be no Bill of Rights.

George Washington

On September 26, 1789, one day after enacting the 1st Amendment to the Constitution, the Congress recommended to President Washington that he proclaim a national day of prayer and thanksgiving. It proved difficult for anyone to oppose it because the most conservative delegate was reluctant to vote against God and the most radical was delighted to press him into service. Washington did proclaim the day, and during George Washington's presidency he firmly attempted to drive the ship of state right down the middle. Washington worried that without a concerted effort our new nation would become hopelessly mired in factionalism. In an early example Presbyterians complained that

Washington's declaration lacked a decidedly Christian flavor. This is because he bent over backwards to accommodate diverse viewpoints (Church 63).

Within months of assuming national command, Washington had established a clear protocol for dealing with the nation's religious constituencies. From his letters to religious bodies we can determine three interlocking imperatives: 1) a national commitment to defend individual freedom of conscience; 2) absolute governmental neutrality with respect to religion; and 3) the obligation of religious bodies to uphold the law by supporting the constitutional powers invested in the government and its representatives (Church 67). While declaring his opposition to any kind of restraint upon religious principles, Washington also had another priority, that of "quiet to the state." He would uphold religious freedom, but religion had no business intruding itself in government affairs (Church 69).

One religious group in particular caused Washington considerable problems. At their peak in the mid-seventeenth century, The Society of Friends (the Quakers) had become the third largest denomination in the colonies. Their self-described "holy experiment" took civic root in America largely due to William Penn. The Quakers felt it their moral duty to attack social conventions when directed to do so by a higher law. On two occasions the Quakers beseeched Washington to support their petition, "promoting the abolition of slavery and discouraging every species of traffic in slaves" (Church 74). Washington believed that these Quaker activists were moral absolutists with no respect for the law and that they were in fact "tyrants." Washington believed that if individuals or self-

sanctioned groups should attempt to impose their moral or political agenda on society at large, the nation would be beset by faction (Church 77).

While Washington slapped at the Quakers for their intrusion into the affairs of state, he stood just as ready to take on the other side as well. American support for the French revolution was widespread as well as for its principles of liberty, equality and fraternity. As the French revolution continued, it grew more blood thirsty and more anti-church. This situation increasingly worried the New England cultural establishment. They viewed the situation in France as a direct threat to their fragile democracy. "Democratic clubs" were spread across the country and New England clerics repeatedly denounced them. These attacks continued and led one Republican spokesman to counterattack, pronouncing religion as detrimental to liberty (Church 98).

As the national issue concerning the democratic clubs continued, one important national figure had yet to be heard. When he did make his position known, Washington came down firmly against the democratic clubs. Washington was such a commanding figure, that even Jefferson chose not to confront the President directly. He complained to Madison that "it is incredible indeed that the President should have permitted himself to be the organ of such an attack on the freedom of discussion, the freedom of writing, printing and publishing (Church 98). While Washington was President he was able by the force of his will to beat back factionalism, but as soon as he retired to Mt. Vernon, factionalism surged. This was to be no trifling matter, for the sides themselves would frame their battles as the fight of sacred order versus sacred liberty.

John Adams

Washington's successor, John Adams, was a much different animal. Adams was a life long church-goer. Drawing on New England puritan heritage, Adams codified his beliefs in religion and Christian governance when he drafted a document for the Massachusetts State Constitution in 1780. In it Adams sought a Christian requirement for state office and provisions to underwrite the church with direct governmental support. Adams insisted that a belief in God, God's government, and a "future state of rewards and punishments" are "the one true foundation of morality" (Church 119). Until he converted to a strict separationist stance later in life, Adams was doggedly consistent in his views. He believed that the government 1) had no business interfering with people's religious beliefs, and 2) was responsible on a statewide level for supporting the church financially and on a national level for proscribing occasional religious observance as dictated by the common good. It is somewhat interesting that the apparent conflict of these two positions and the likelihood that they could ultimately collide appears not to have been apparent to Adams. Adams' failure to recognize this would have serious implications for his political career (Church 12)).

At the beginning of Washington's first term as President, Adams led a campaign that would have placed lofty titles on the new president. His campaign was met with catcalls and mockery, but it clearly showed Adams' sympathies. Adams fondly touted a limited monarchy, and believed that not only was

aristocracy essential and inevitable but that social inequality was not a problem, but rather the only possible solution for a stable state (Church 144). Finding himself cast as the new country's comical, self-appointed protocol officer and the butt of jokes, Adams was spurred into literary combat. In his multi-volume, *Discourses on Davila*, Adams dismissed reason, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as bromides. Unfortunately for Adams, he got a little carried away in one passage and stated "Every man should know his place and be made to keep it." Few people had actually read *Davila* but savvy Republican operatives dug through it, and when Adams ran for re-election, this was widely disseminated by Jefferson's Democratic-Republicans (Church 193).

Yet another Adams mistake was re-appointing Washington's cabinet under his presidency. Few of these men had any loyalty to him. In February 1798, Alexander Hamilton secretly convinced Secretary of War James McHenry to pitch the idea of declaring another day of National Day of Prayer and Thanksgiving. Hamilton remembered how well Washington's prayer day had worked to suppress the democratic clubs and his purpose here was purely political. The first group to call for another prayer day was the Presbyterian Church. Adams supported the proposal but Adams was no George Washington and he lacked the same universal acclaim of Washington (Church 161).

The national day of fasting, humiliation and prayer proved a catastrophe for Adams. It ended up embarrassing the Federalists as much as it chastened the Republicans. While it proved a unifying force for his Federalists, it raised populist concerns for any hint of collusion between the old church and the new

state and found few friends in some of America's spiritual realms. His fast day alienated untold numbers of American Baptists and Methodists, whose churches were not languishing as New England preachers claimed theirs to be, but were instead flourishing and multiplying "lifted on the wings of religious liberty" (Church 166-167). Episcopal Bishop James Madison (the uncle of the future president) called on every Episcopal parish in Virginia to boycott the fast day to protest the government's abandonment of Christian liberty (Church 168).

One particular incident in Adams' presidency proved to be most particularly unexpected. Ironically, under Adam's Christian watch the executive branch would issue its most explicit rejection of any formal entanglement between Christianity and the federal government. Adams submitted to the United States Senate a disclaimer in the Treaty of Tripoli which stated "As the Government of the United States of America is not in any sense founded on the Christian Religion-as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility of Musselmen – and as the said States never have entered into any act of war of hostility against any Mohometan nation, it is declared by the parties that no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries" (Church 208). Taken at face value it is quite astonishing but it is generally believed that in signing the treaty Adams either glossed over this article as being of no portent or read its meaning narrowly (Church 208).

During Adams' campaign for re-election against Jefferson, the Baptists, Methodists and other religious minorities, such as the Quakers, supported

Jefferson. Adams' campaign was seriously hampered by fears that he was flirting with imposing a state religion. These fears neutralized the Federalists efforts to turn the nation's "true" Christians against Jefferson and those Federalist efforts were considerable. Theodore Dwight, the editor of the Connecticut Current, wrote during the 1800 campaign that "should Jefferson prove victorious, there is scarcely a possibility that we shall escape a Civil War." "Murder, robbery, rape, adultery, and incest will be openly taught and practiced, the air will be rent with the cries of distress, the soil will be soaked with blood, the nation black with crimes" (Church 188).

Thomas Jefferson

Jefferson was victorious in the election of 1800, and soon after several townships in Massachusetts and New Hampshire began to speak of secession. However, not only did the election of Jefferson not bring about havoc in society, religion thrived under his administration. For Jefferson, his emphasis on liberty, far from compromising faith, "perfected faith by ceding it full range" (Church 236). Federalist detractors had been proved wrong. Liberty had served the church, not crippled it. With the election of Jefferson, America's first great battle between church and state had been decided.

The Federalists had been soundly defeated. John Adams was the last Federalist ever elected president. Adams had extensive differences with Alexander Hamilton, the acknowledged leader of the party. Hamilton's death in 1804 also hastened the party's decline depriving it of perhaps its ablest leader. The Federalists also became identified with notions that are now considered to

be anti-American, namely pro-aristocracy, and anti-democratic. His supporters were even critical of the red, white and blue colors of the American flag, considering them sacrilegious. In addition, the next ten presidents are considered by most historians to have been not particularly religious and therefore much less likely to agree with the positions of the New England church (Church 236).

The final nail in the coffin of the Federalists came shortly after the War of 1812, with the split of the Unitarians from the traditional Congregationalists of New England. The leading Puritan churches of New York had long since adopted Presbyterianism and this latest split of Unitarianism from Congregationalism brought about considerable sniping and outright hatred among the parties (Church 144). With New England church unity in disarray, many in the religious community turned their attentions away from the political in favor of the establishment of voluntary associations. This trend only increased the sort of religious democracy that the New England church had for so long disdained (Church 289).

As the nation approached the era of the civil war, religious arguments began to rage over slavery but, in general, issues between religion and the state were relatively quiet. For the most part issues involving the separation of church and state would not be revisited until the twentieth century.

The Separation of Church and State in America Today

In the early 1950's, in response to the spread of communism around the world, and specifically in the Soviet Union and China, the U.S. Congress passed several measures intended to recognize the special nature of religion to the national identity. The Congress also passed a measure designed to sharpen the distinction in the separation of church and state.

In early 1951 the Knights of Columbus (a Catholic fraternal organization) in New York City felt that the Pledge of Allegiance was incomplete without a reference to the deity, so they adopted the now familiar "under God" to the pledge recited by the Knights at their meetings. Soon all Knights nationwide had adopted the revised pledge. The Knights repeatedly sought to have the Pledge changed officially by having legislation introduced in Congress. All of these attempts were unsuccessful, until President Dwight Eisenhower attended services at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church on "Lincoln Sunday" February 7, 1954. The minister, George Docherty, a native of Scotland, knew that Eisenhower would be in attendance and took the opportunity to preach on a special topic. He believed that what made the United States unique and strong was her sense of being the nation that Lincoln described in the Gettysburg Address as a nation "under God." Docherty maintained that, without the mention of the deity, the pledge could refer to almost any nation. Eisenhower was convinced and threw his support behind adopting the change.

In the same year, 1954, the U.S. congress adopted changes in the tax law that restricts campaign activity by nonprofit organizations. Under the Internal Revenue Code, all IRC Section 501(c)(3) organizations, including churches and religious organizations, are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office. Contributions to political campaign funds or public statements of position (verbal or written) made by or on behalf of the organization in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office clearly violate the prohibition against political campaign activity. Violation of this prohibition may result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes. For decades after the adoption of these restrictions there were few violations, but, in the past decade complaints of noncompliance have significantly increased. Recently, a group of 32 pastors from around the country banded together on Sunday September 29, 2008 to openly break the federal campaign laws in order to provoke a national court case designed to prompt the federal courts to throw out the 54-year-old ban (Slevin 3A).

Since the earliest days of our country, the motto, E Pluribus Unum, was widely considered to be our nation's national motto, but by 1956 it had never been established by legislation. The Congressional Record of 1956 reads: "At the present time the United States has no national motto. The committee deems it most appropriate that 'In God We Trust' be so designated as U.S. national motto." One possible origin of 'In God We Trust' is believed to be from the final

stanza of the “The Star Spangled Banner.” The song contains an early reference to a variation of the phrase: “ ...And this be our motto: ‘In God is our Trust.’”

In the 1970’s and 80’s many of the churches that had been considered mainstream, such as Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist and Catholic, began to experience significant losses in membership. At approximately the same time many evangelical churches reported significant gains in membership. These churches had adopted strong programs designed to bring people in to their churches. The mainstream churches had enjoyed so much popularity over such a prolonged period that when their populations began to dwindle they were unprepared. In addition, the mainstream churches seemed comfortable with the established separation of church and state as it has long been known. More conservative Christians, as their numbers have steadily increased, have become more and more vocal in their discontent with the status quo. They are devoted to living their faith thoroughly including in their everyday lives and see many current manifestations of current popular culture as an assault on their values. For them, a secular popular culture is invading their culture, making it difficult to practice their faith, thereby preventing their members exercising their right of freedom of religion.

Our inheritance from the earliest days of our republic is, essentially, that a considerable part of our population is distrustful of religious involvement in government. They are fearful that some religious denomination or set of principles contrary to their own beliefs will somehow be imposed upon them, and that these principles will be used to influence policy and enact legislation to which

they are adamantly opposed. Because of this many are attracted to the Democratic Party which has favored a strong separation of church and state since the founding of the party by Thomas Jefferson. This situation often puts liberal Democrats in the unenviable position of appearing to advocate a godless society. Liberal Democrats feel they are under continuous assault from the religious right, which is trying to gain a foothold from which to expand conservative Christianity's influence on American government. As a result, Democratic groups feel compelled to guard against every instance of even remotely religious activity in government, even when many times these activities are not politically popular (such as opposing faith based initiatives).

Democrats complain that Republicans seem to never miss a chance to inject religion into government issues for political purposes. Democrats also note that Republicans today are of the political lineage of Alexander Hamilton and the Federalist Party. Alexander Hamilton, though not particularly religious himself, repeatedly attempted to persuade President John Adams to proclaim official national prayer days for political purposes.

The main arguments made by conservative Christian leaders today are 1) that the U.S. is a "Christian nation" 2) that the founding fathers never intended the U.S. to be a secular nation and 3) that Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" was only intended to be a one-way wall that prevents the government from interfering in religion, but not preventing religion from interfering in government. Conservative Christians believe that the systematic removal of God from our governmental activities dangerously turns our attention away from the

very ideals upon which our country was founded. They believe that many of the problems in our society today are caused by the secularism in society today.

Much of the scholarly work in the area of the separation of church and state in America has centered on such lofty goals as examining the Constitution of the United States and voluminous court documents. Others meticulously scrutinize every word ever uttered by the founding fathers on the subject. During the last two decades, there has been a considerable increase in the debate concerning the separation of church and state. The religious right has become determined to infuse our governmental institutions with a decidedly more religious tone, while the religious left prefers the separation of church and state as it is. But how does the average American feel about the separation of church and state?

Shortly after the start of surveying respondents, it became apparent that most people, regardless of their educational levels or income levels, knew little about the subject. Many would immediately set the survey down and explain that they could not answer the questions. The respondents were then encouraged to read the question carefully and then just pick the answer that they felt was correct. This aspect of the surveying actually ended up being the portion of the project that proved to be the most revealing because, in many instances, when respondents answered a question incorrectly, they were often joined by many others in their same political party.

In fashioning the questions and being familiar with the arguments of both sides in the current battle over the separation of church and state, it was

expected that certain groups would answer certain questions a certain way. To some extent this proved to be true, however many answers proved to be strikingly opposite of what was expected. Some of the expectations were: 1) that Republicans/Conservatives would answer that Congress had declared the U.S. a Christian nation 2) Republicans/Conservatives would have a nostalgic view of the “good old days” of the founding fathers and that there was much more religious activity at that time 3) Republican/Conservatives would believe that the U.S. is not very religious today 4) Republican/Conservatives would be more knowledgeable than Liberal/Democrats regarding the separation of church and state because it is a more pressing issue for them and 5) Republican/Conservatives would not agree that the architects of the First Amendment to the Constitution intended to grant freedom from religion as well as freedom of religion.

Republicans/Conservatives often will invoke the founding fathers in their arguments regarding the separation of church and state. Several questions were fashioned deliberately to see if it could be determined to which specific individuals they were referring. One of the statements in the George Washington Survey the stated “the Puritans believed that freedom of religion was for everyone.” 80% of Republicans and Conservatives (Appendix A Page 1) answered false to this statement, while Democrat/Liberals answered false 91%. One of the statements in the John Adams Survey stated, “from the first settlers in Massachusetts Bay Colony until today we have enjoyed freedom of religion.” (Appendix A Page 2) 72% of Conservative/Republicans answered false to the

statement while Democrat/Liberals answered false 89%. Also in the John Adams Survey, one statement concerned the beliefs of Roger Williams. 97% of Republican/Conservatives answered “true” to Roger Williams’ belief that the religion of Native Americans is an honorable faith (Appendix A Page 3.) The last statement designed to determine what these two groups thought about the founding fathers, was again from the Adams Survey where respondents were asked if they considered it true or false that “13 of the first 14 U.S. Presidents were considered to be not particularly religious. (Appendix A Page 4) 65% of Democrat/Liberals answered “false,” while 60% of Republican/Conservatives answered “true.” This was most definitely not what was expected. It was expected that Republican/Conservatives would consider at least the first several presidents to be among “the founders,” and that they would have been somewhat religious. When asked about this, many Republican/Conservatives answered that the first 14 presidents were “politicians, after all.”

In the Washington Survey the respondents were asked if it was true or false that, “The word God is not mentioned anywhere in the U.S. Constitution.” (Appendix A Page 5) 90% of Republican/Conservatives answered “false” while 79% of Democrat/Liberals answered “true.” In the Adams Survey the respondents were asked, “The designers of the 1st Amendment to the Constitution considered it to grant us the freedom from religion as well as the freedom of religion.” (Appendix A Page 6) 72% of Republican/Conservatives answered “false” while 92% of Democrat/Liberals answered “true.”

Another area of questioning concerned actual occurrences during the early days of our republic. Republican/Conservatives, in arguing their case against a strict separation of church and state, claim that the U.S. is a Christian nation. In the John Adams Survey the respondents were asked if it was true or false that, "Early in the Presidency of John Adams, and at his urging, the U.S. Congress passed legislation declaring the U.S. a Christian nation." (Appendix A Page 7) 75% of Republican/Conservatives answered "false" while 73% of Democrat/Liberals answered "true." The results from this question again were exactly the opposite of what was expected.

Three questions were asked that concern individual states having "established" church which required that everyone support them. In the John Adams Survey, respondents were asked, "Early in the history of the U.S., many of the states had "Established Churches" which required everyone in that state to support them regardless of their personal religious affiliation". (Appendix A Page 8) 77% of Republican/Conservatives answered "false" to this question while 71% of Democrat/Liberals answered "true." Also in the John Adams Survey, respondents were asked, "Many American Patriots such as Patrick Henry believed that everyone should pay taxes to support an established church." (Appendix A Page 9) 86% of Republican/Conservatives answered "false" to this question while 81% of Democrat/Liberals answered "true." In the Washington Survey the respondents were asked, "Establishment Churches existed in the U.S. until 1961." (Appendix A Page 10) 78% of Republican/Conservatives

answered “false” while 74% of Democrats also answered “false.” The correct answer to these last three questions is “true” for all three.

The Democrat/Liberals answering “true” to the first two and false to the last one shows a pattern that continued throughout the survey.

Democrat/Liberals consistently answered in a way that showed that they believed that the country was much more religious during the time of the founders.

Unexpectedly, Republican/Conservatives consistently did not view the country in the founder’s era as more religious than now. Some questions seemed to bother Republican/Conservatives so much so that perhaps they could not believe the

answers to be “true.” In the George Washington Survey respondents were asked if, “After the Revolutionary War and the founding of the U.S. as a country, the state of Massachusetts regularly beat and executed persons found to have beliefs different from the official religion of Massachusetts.” (Appendix A Page

11) 78% of Republican/Conservatives answered “false” while 81% of

Democrat/Liberals answered “true.” Also in the Washington Survey, the

respondents were asked if, “Early in the history of the U.S. nearly all states had religious tests that candidates were required to pass before they could serve in

public office.” (Appendix A Page 12) 94% of Republican/Conservatives answered “false” while 81% of Democrat/Liberals answered “true.” In the Adams Survey the

respondents were asked, “Madison believed that established religions were a horror that helped usher in slavery.” (Appendix A Page 13) 62% of

Republican/Conservatives answered “false” while 78% of Democrat/Liberals answered “true.” The correct answer to these last three questions is “true.”

Three questions that were asked focused on getting the respondents to compare the U.S. today with the era of the founders. In the John Adams Survey the respondents were asked to respond to the statement, "The U.S. consumption of hard alcohol is 3 times what it was under President George Washington." (Appendix A Page 14) 72% of Republican/Conservatives answered "false" while 59% of Democrat/Liberals answered "true." In the Washington Survey respondents were asked, "The number of people per capita that are members of a Christian church today is only a fraction of what it was when George Washington was president." (Appendix A Page 15) 60% of Republican/Conservatives answered "true" while 72% of Democrat/Liberals answered "false. The correct answers to these last two questions are false.

Perhaps the most telling question and answer in the survey is found in the Washington Survey. The respondents were asked, "The U.S. today is by all standards the most religious country in the world." Admittedly the phrasing of this question is loaded. The addition of "by all standards" and "most religious" was designed to leave no room for equivocation. (Appendix A Page 16) 100% of Republican/Conservatives answered "false" while 53% of Democrat/Liberals answered "true." In a recent study by the University of Michigan, the U.S. is ranked in the top five of the most religious countries in the world. Numerous other studies have been conducted and the U.S. is consistently in the top five. In addition, the other countries with which the U.S. shares the top five spots changes often.

In many countries, religious activity spikes when there are problems with the economy or social unrest. In the University of Michigan study, Nigeria had recently been added to the list of the most religious countries. Conflict between Nigerian Christians and Muslims has dramatically increased. In heavily Muslim areas officials have implemented strict sharia laws. Persecution of Nigerian Christians by their own country has caused an increase in religious practice. Interestingly enough, the study found that the world's least religious country was Sweden, which until the late 20th century had an established Lutheran state church.

Respondents were asked if they believed that the Constitution should be changed to reflect Christian principles. Overwhelmingly the results were consistently "no." Democrat/Liberals feel that the separation of church and state that we have today is the result of gradual improvements over the last two hundred years. These improvements allow them to develop their own personal relationship with God, as they see fit, without pressure from religious groups. Many feel that, even though they do not attend church regularly, they are "spiritual people" who feel more comfortable outside of any formal denomination.

Republican/Conservatives would like the country to be more openly religious, invoking God's name more often. When quizzed about how they would make the government more religious, they couldn't answer and often stated that changing the government would not work because "you can't legislate morality." The consensus of their opinion seemed to be that they preferred our leaders be reminded to make decisions that are in agreement with God's principles.

Republican/Conservatives, unexpectedly, did not want to change the Constitution or enact specific legislation. They just want God to be a bigger part of our national identity.

In one respect, the positions of both groups could be considered identical. Both groups want to be able to worship in the fashion that they see fit without pressure from the government or others. For Republican/Conservatives this means that the government and elected officials are not hostile to religion. For Democrat/Liberals this means that government stay out of religious matters and that no religion become so influential as to be able to encroach upon their right to worship as they wish. Both groups felt that the laws and traditions of our separation of church and state have served the country well and that no changes should be made.

The more extreme leaders of both groups seem unwilling to accept the status quo and undoubtedly we will see a long continuation of this battle. It will be interesting to see where it leads us. Hopefully our laws and traditions regarding the separation of church and state remain in place to continue to serve us in the future. Our national system of separating church and state as served us remarkable well. Most other industrialized nations in the world have suffered extensive losses in membership and church attendance. Some nations that formerly had institutionalized religious denominations (such as the Lutheran church in Sweden) now have some of the lowest rates of religious activity in the world. Our national system of church and state should be protected from those

who wish to improve it in the name of religion, not for the benefit of having a secular nation, but rather of having a more religious one.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Statement Regarding the Founding Fathers

True or False? The Puritans believed that freedom of religion was for everyone.

	FALSE
Republicans/Conservatives	80%
Democrat/Liberals	91%

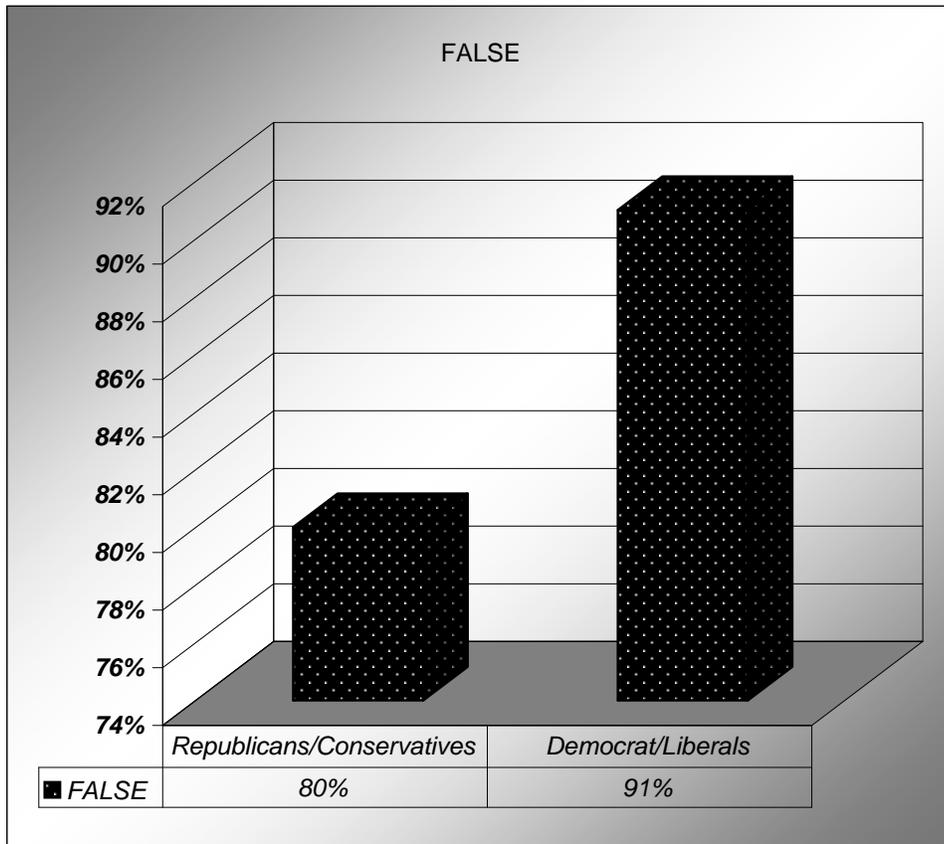


Figure 1

Appendix A: (Coninued)

Statement regarding the Founding Fathers

True or False? From the first settlers in Massachusetts Bay until today we have enjoyed freedom of religion.

	FALSE
Republican/Conservatives	72%
Democrat/Liberals	89%

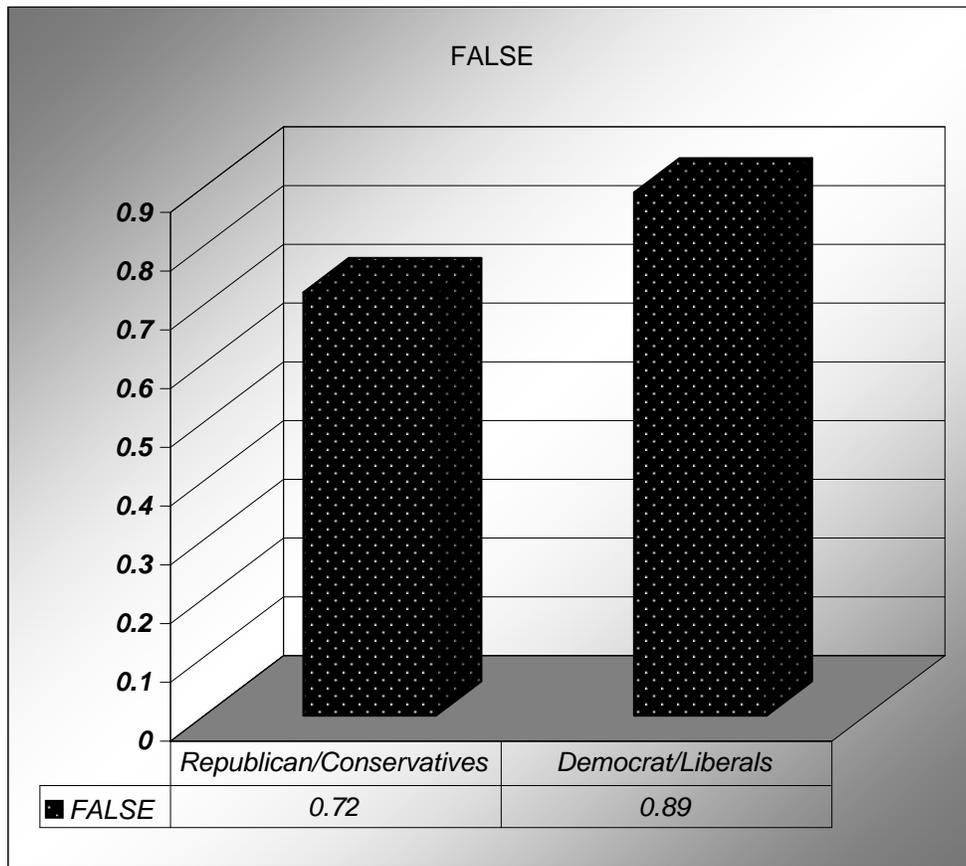


Figure 2

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement Regarding the Founding Fathers

True or False? Roger Williams, the founder of Rhode Island, believed that the religion of Native Americans was an honorable faith, that they should not be converted to Christianity and that no one should be forced to swear oaths to God.

	TRUE
Republican/Conservatives	97%
Democrat/Liberals	78%

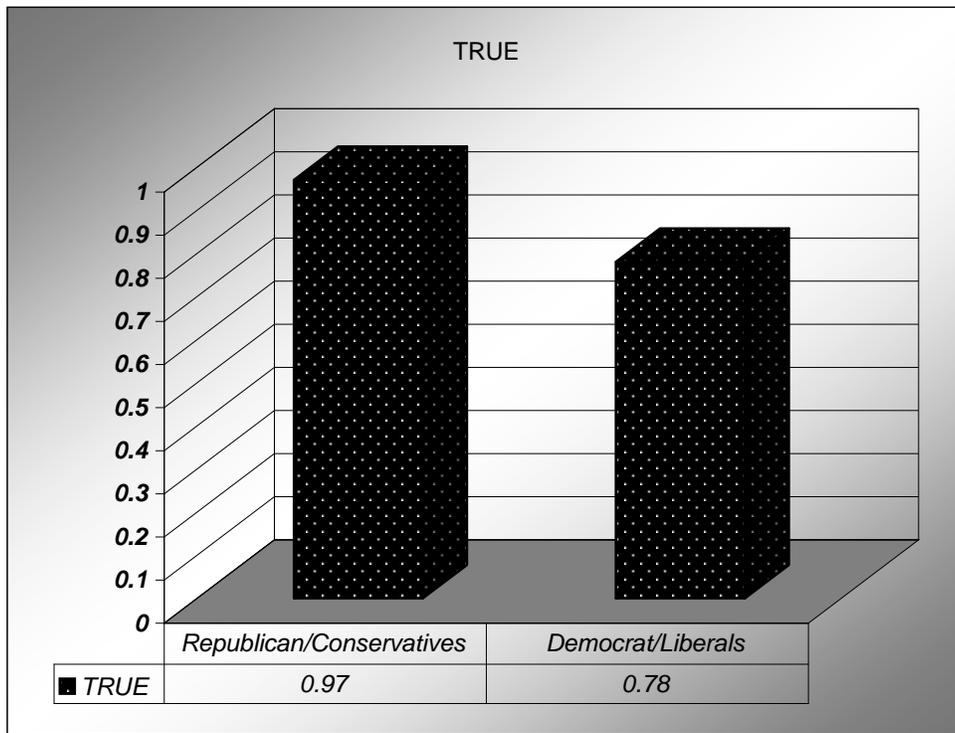


Figure 3

Appendix A: (Continued)

Statement regarding the Founding Fathers

True or False? 13 of the first 14 U.S. Presidents were considered to be not particularly religious.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	60%	40%
Democrat/Liberal	35%	65%

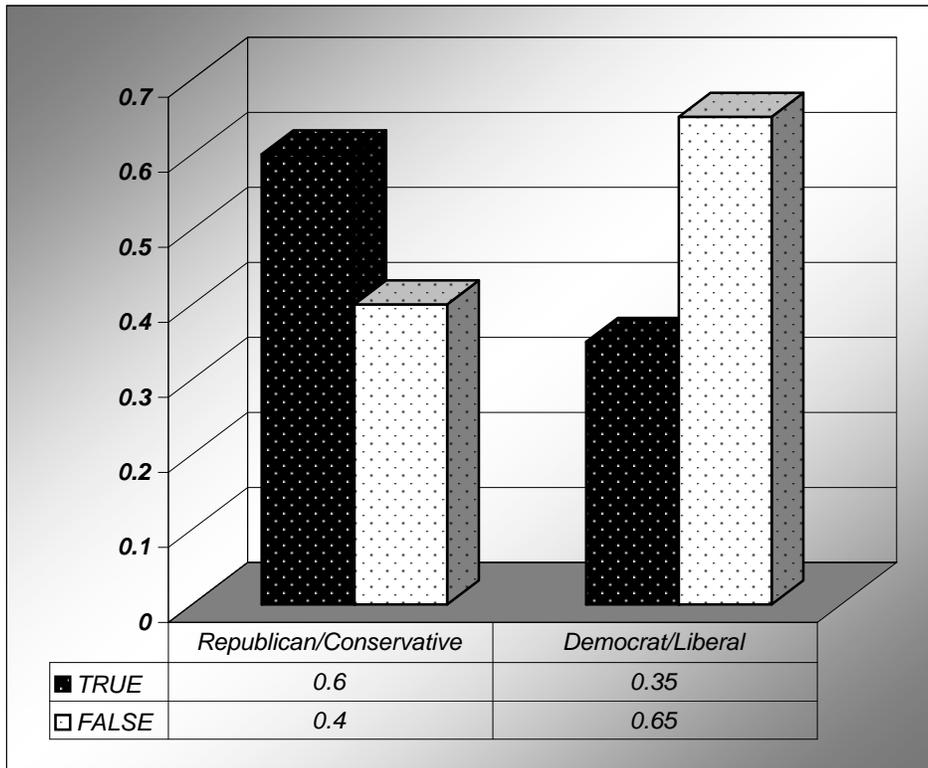


Figure 4

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statements regarding general knowledge

True or False? The word "God" is not mentioned anywhere in the U.S. Constitution

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservatives	10%	90%
Democrat/Liberals	79%	21%

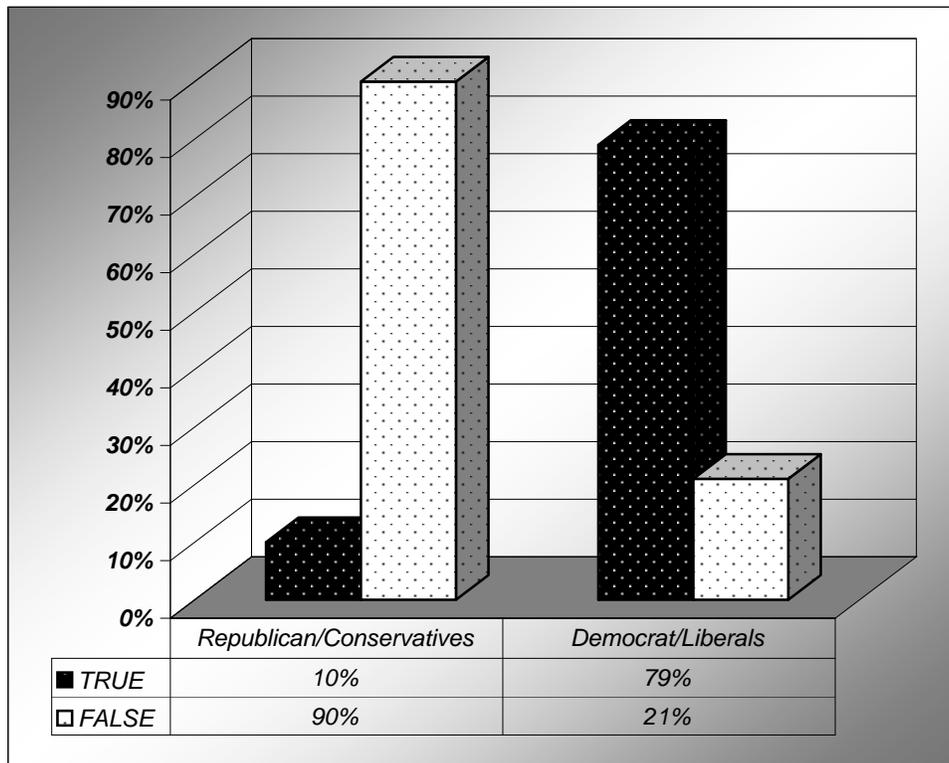


Figure 5

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding general knowledge

True or False? The designers of the 1st Amendment to the Constitution considered it to grant us freedom from religion as well as freedom from religion

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	28%	72%
Democrat/Liberal	92%	8%

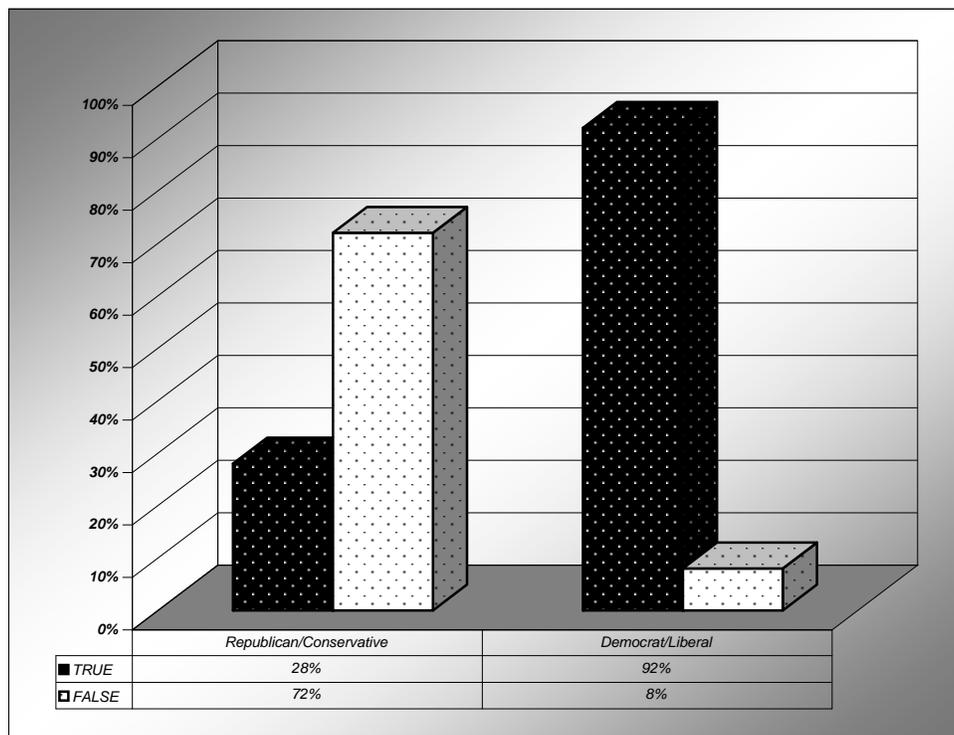


Figure 6

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding general knowledge

True or False? Early in the Presidency of John Adams and at his urging, the U.S. Congress passed legislation declaring the Christian nation.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	25%	75%
Democrat/Liberal	73%	27%

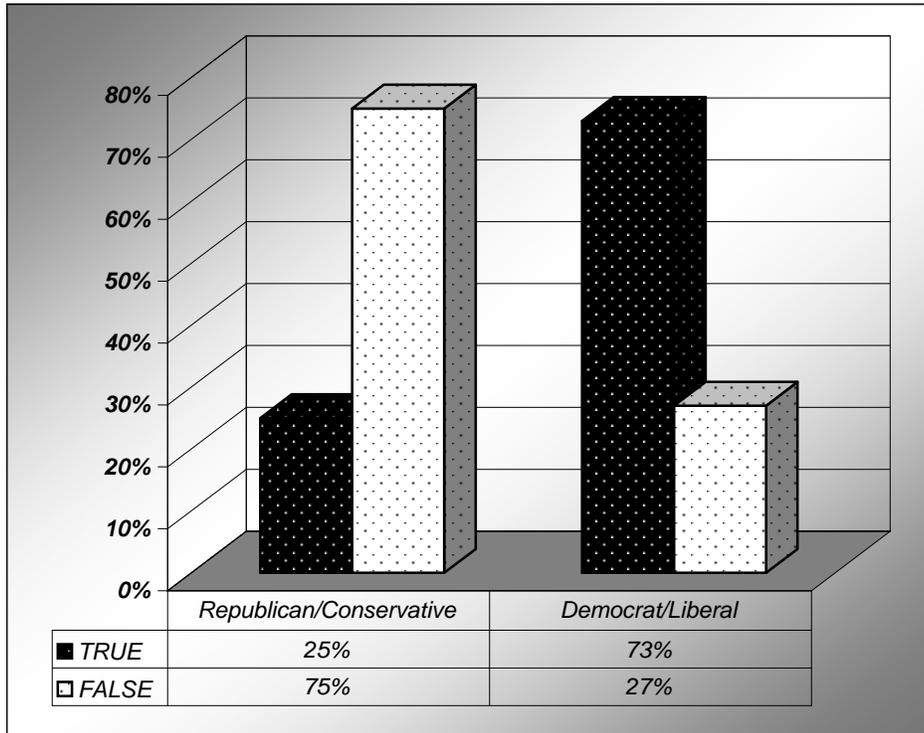


Figure 7

Appendix A:(Coninued)

Statement concerning "establishment churches."

True or False? Early in the hstory of the U.S., many states had "Established Churches" that required everyone to support them regardless of their personal religious affiliation.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	23%	77%
Democrat/Liberal	71%	29%

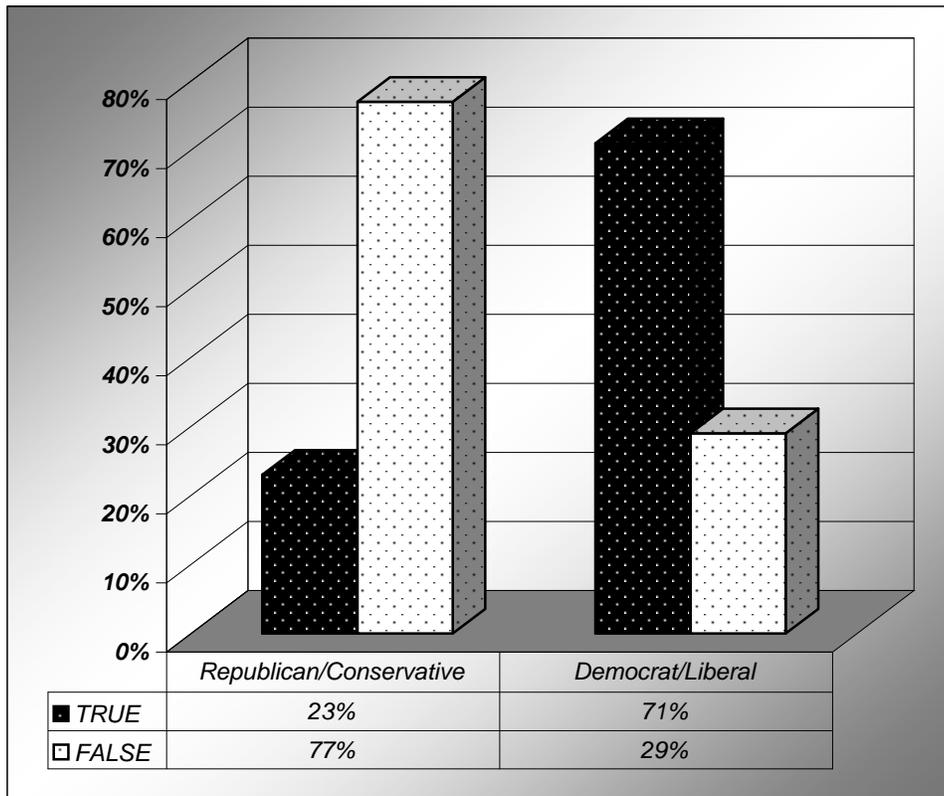


Figure 8

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding American Patriots

True or False? Many American Patriots, such as Patrick Henry, believed that everyone should pay taxes to support an established church.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	14%	86%
Democrat/Liberal	81%	19%

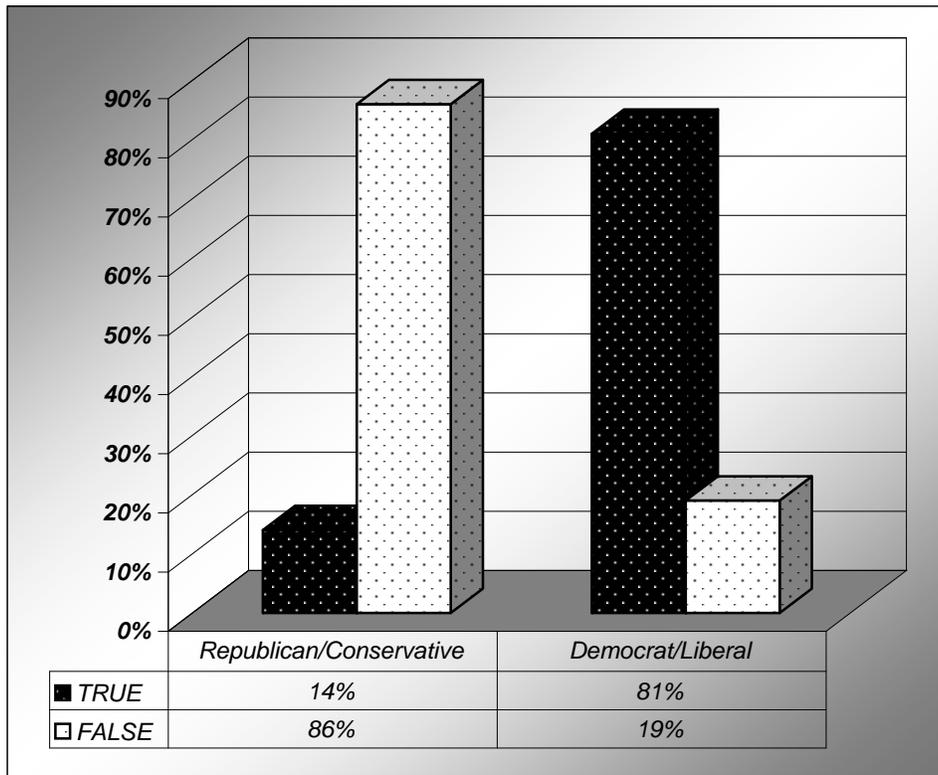


Figure 9

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding American Patriots

True or False? Establishment Churches existed in the U.S. until 1961.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	22%	78%
Democrat/Liberal	26%	76%

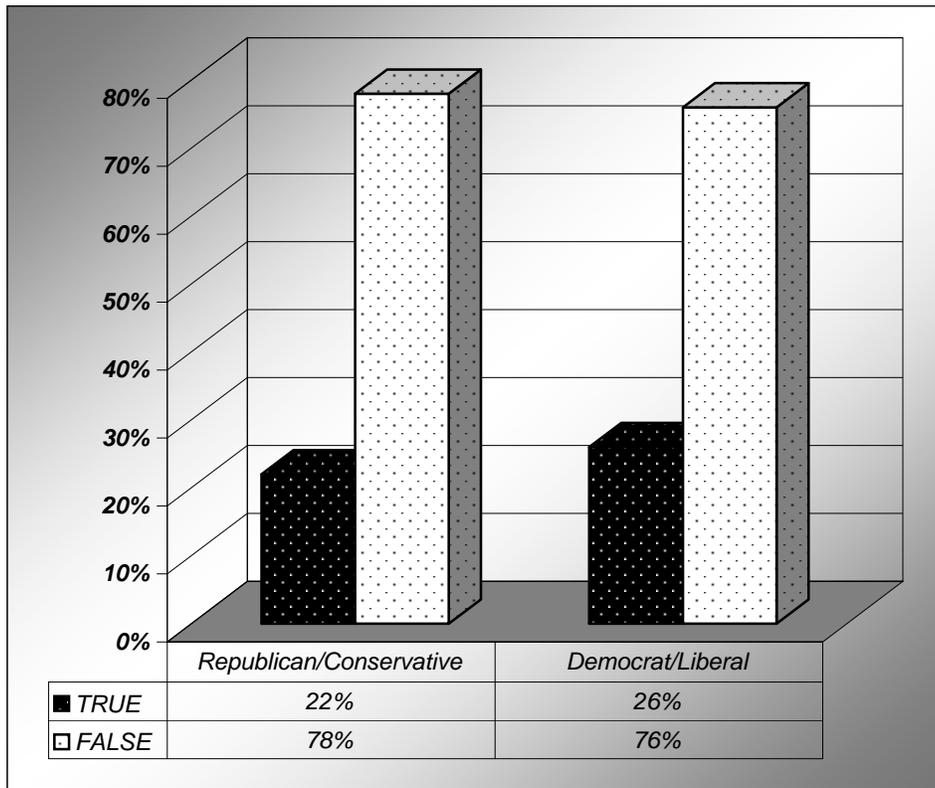


Figure 10

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statements concerning the nation's early history.

True or False? After the Revolutionary War and the founding of the U.S. as a nation, the State of Massachusetts regularly beat and executed persons found to have held beliefs different from the official religion of Massachusetts.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	22%	78%
Democrat/Liberal	81%	19%

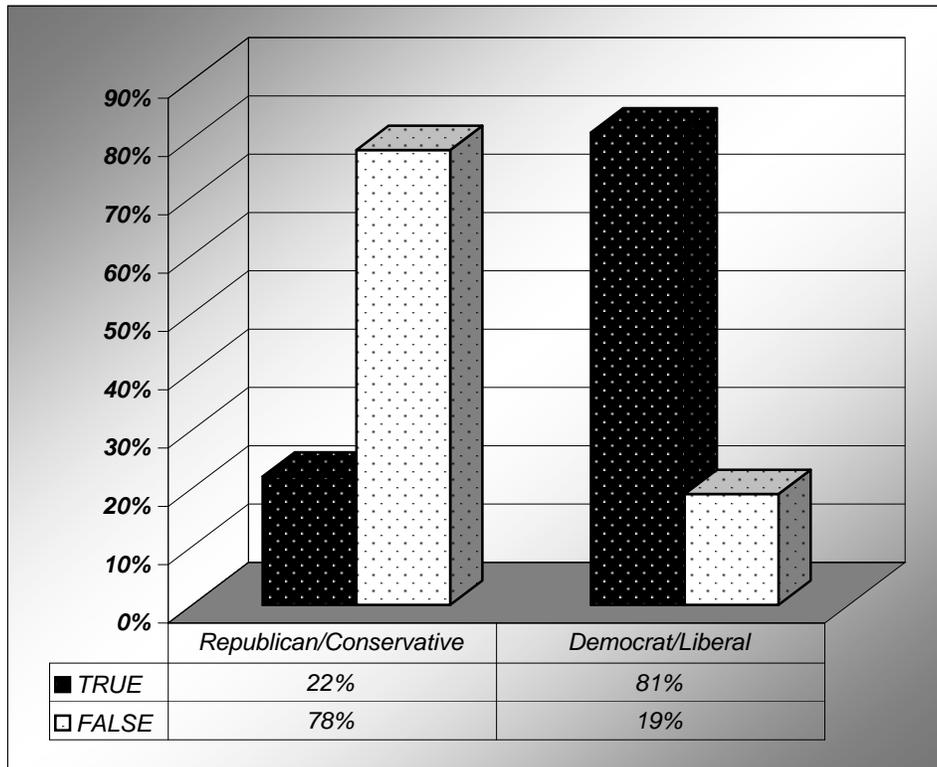


Figure 11

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding the nation's early history

True or False? Early in the history of the U.S. nearly all states had religious tests that candidates had to pass before they could serve in public office.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	6%	94%
Democrat/Liberal	81%	19%

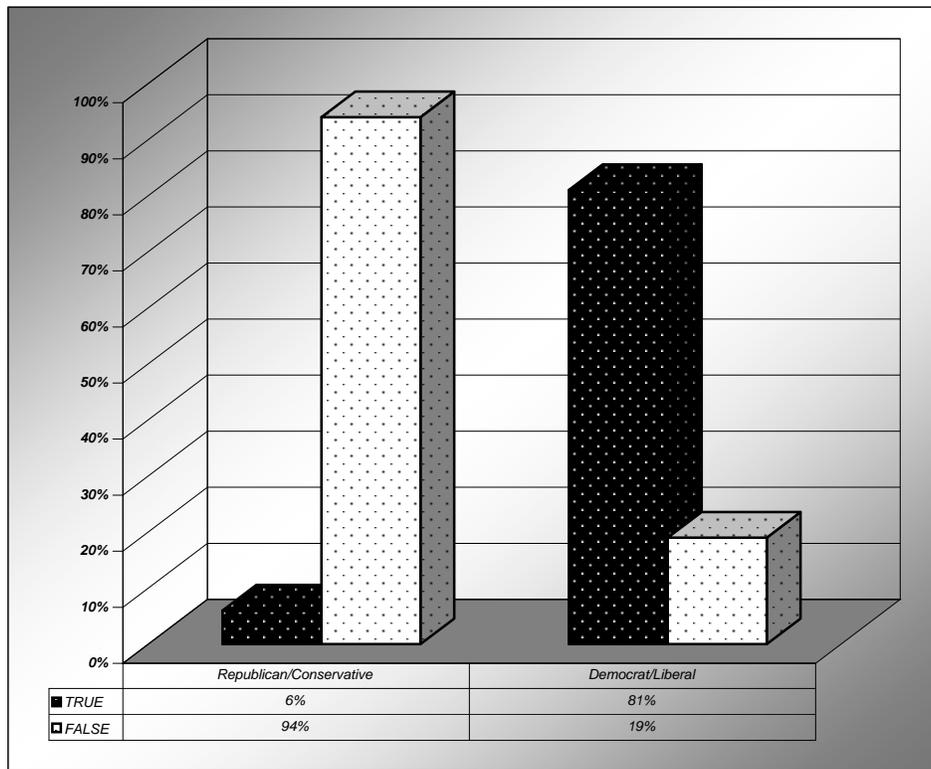


Figure 12

Appendix A:(Continued)

True or False? Madison believed that slavery was a horror that helped usher in slavery.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	38%	62%
Democrat/Liberal	78%	22%

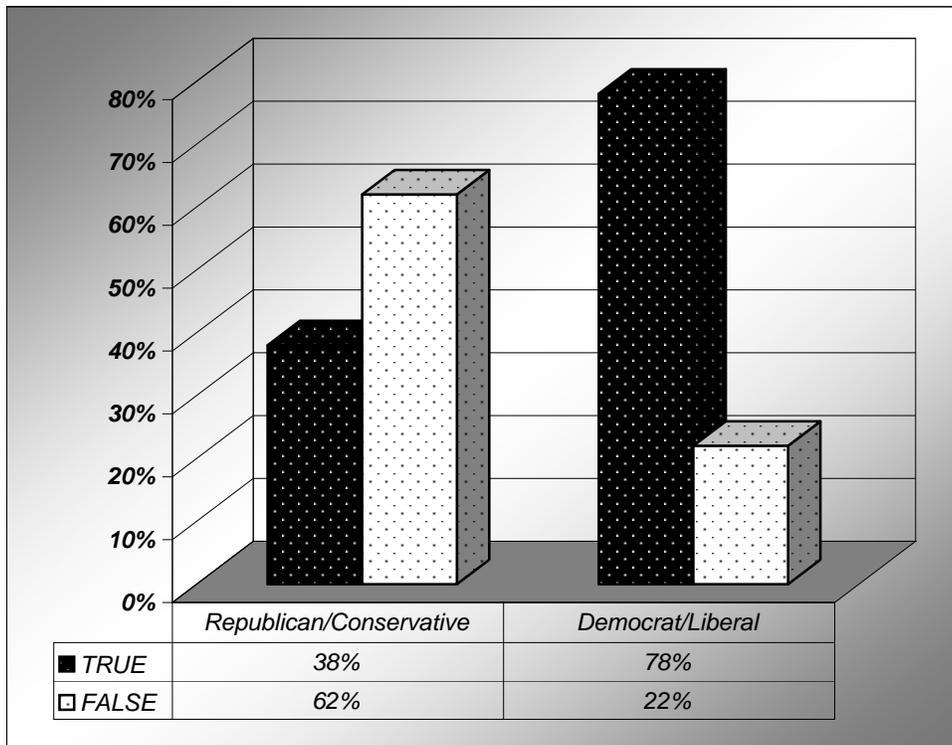


Figure 13

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding the nations's early history

True or False? The U.S. consumption of hard alcohol is 3 times what is was under President George Washington.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	28%	72%
Democrat/Liberal	59%	41%

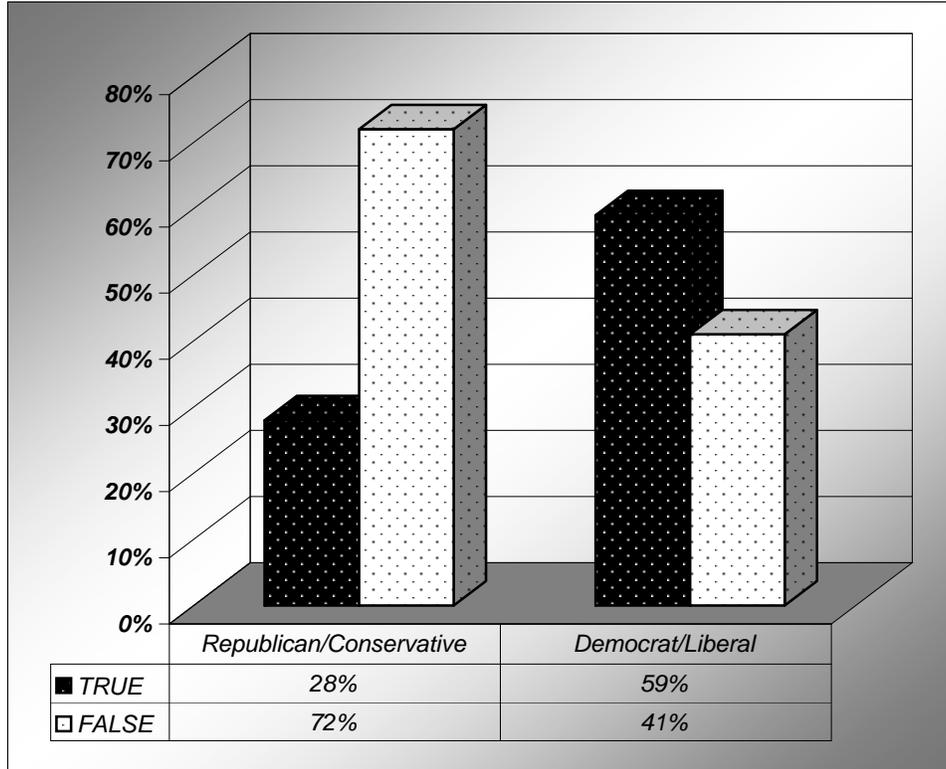


Figure 14

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding the nation's early history

True or False? The number of people per capita that are members of a Christian church today is only a fraction of what it was when George Washington was President.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	60%	40%
Democrat/Liberal	28%	72%

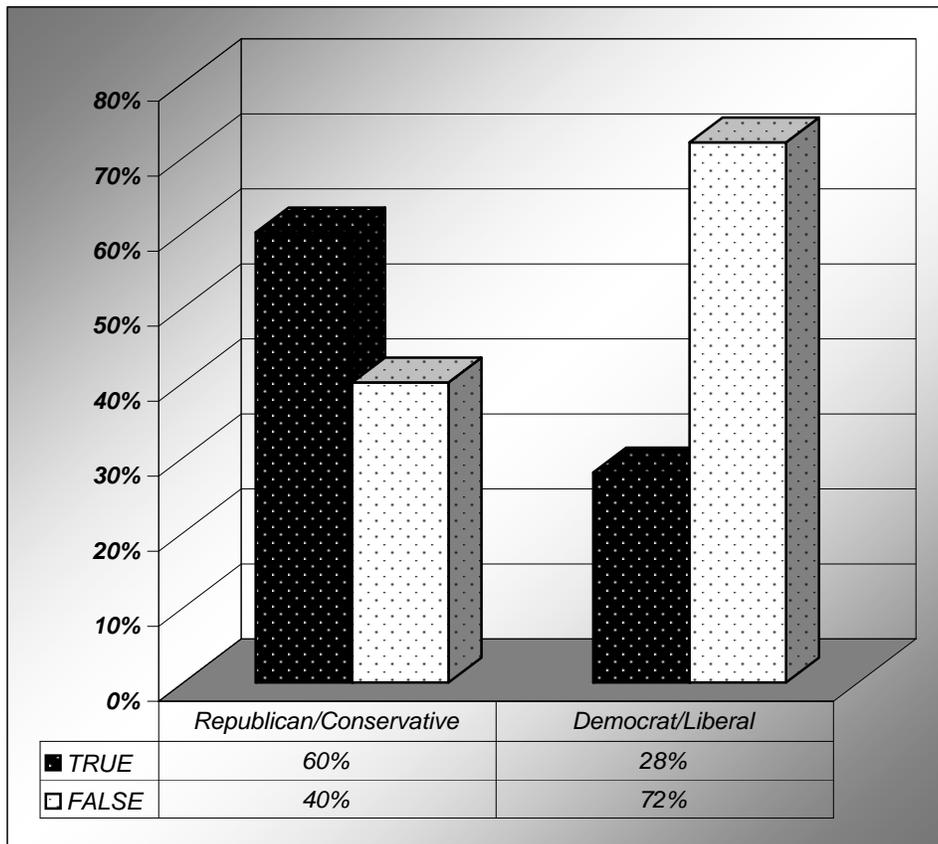


Figure 15

Appendix A:(Continued)

Statement regarding the nation today

True or False? The U.S. today is by all standards the most religious country in the world.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	0%	100%
Democrat/Liberal	53%	47%

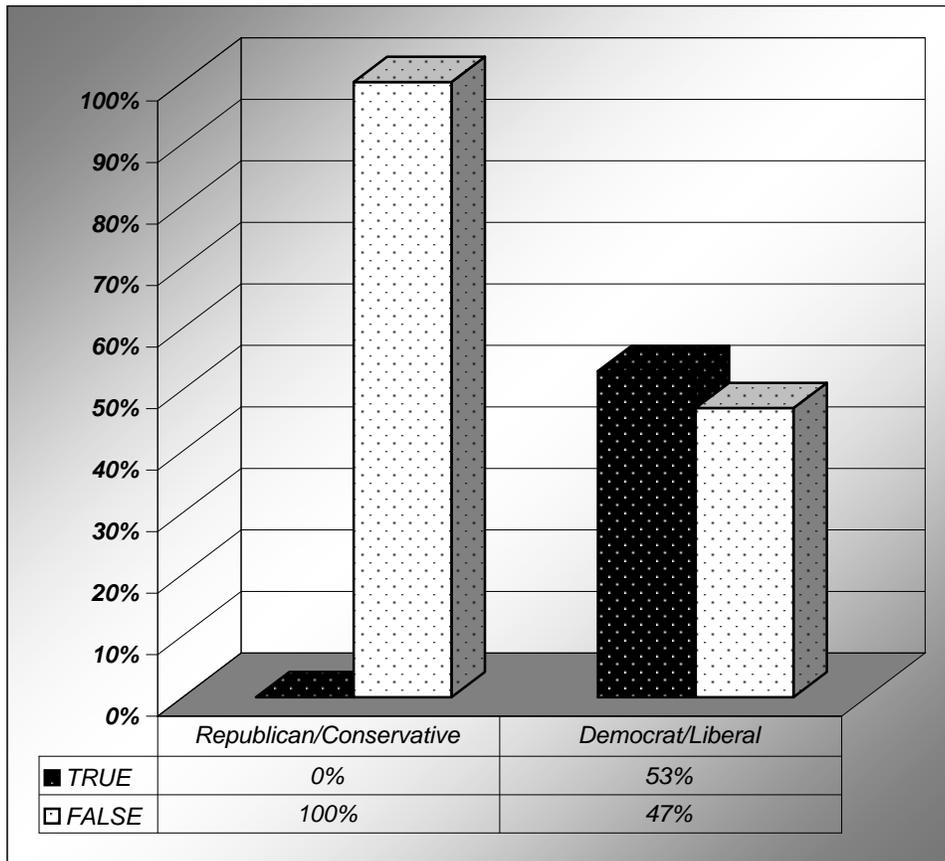


Figure 16

Appendix A: (Continued)

Statement regarding George Washington's faith.

True or False? George Washington never once publicly stated a belief in God.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	35%	65%
Democrat/Liberal	79%	21%

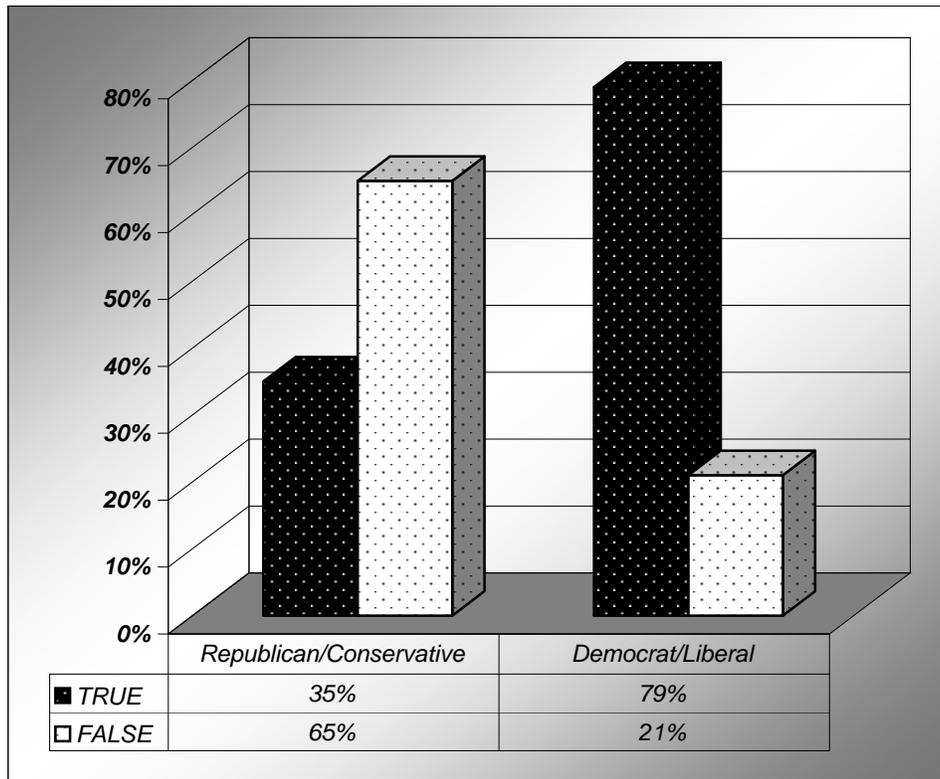


Figure 17

Appendix A:(Continued)

True or False? The U.S. has never declared a national day of prayer.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	4%	96%
Democrat/Liberal	20%	80%

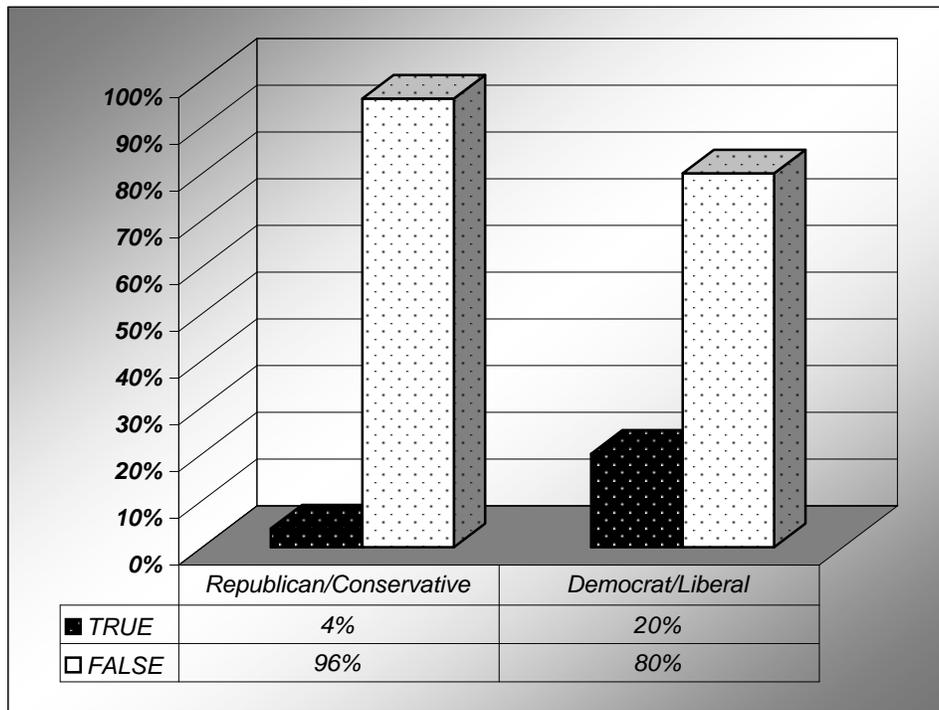


Figure 18

Appendix A: (Continued)

Statement regarding our first 3 presidents and the trinity.

True or False? Only 1 of our first three presidents believed in the Christian doctrine of the trinity that Jesus was the son of God.

	TRUE	FALSE
Republican/Conservative	28%	72%
Democrat/Liberal	42%	58%

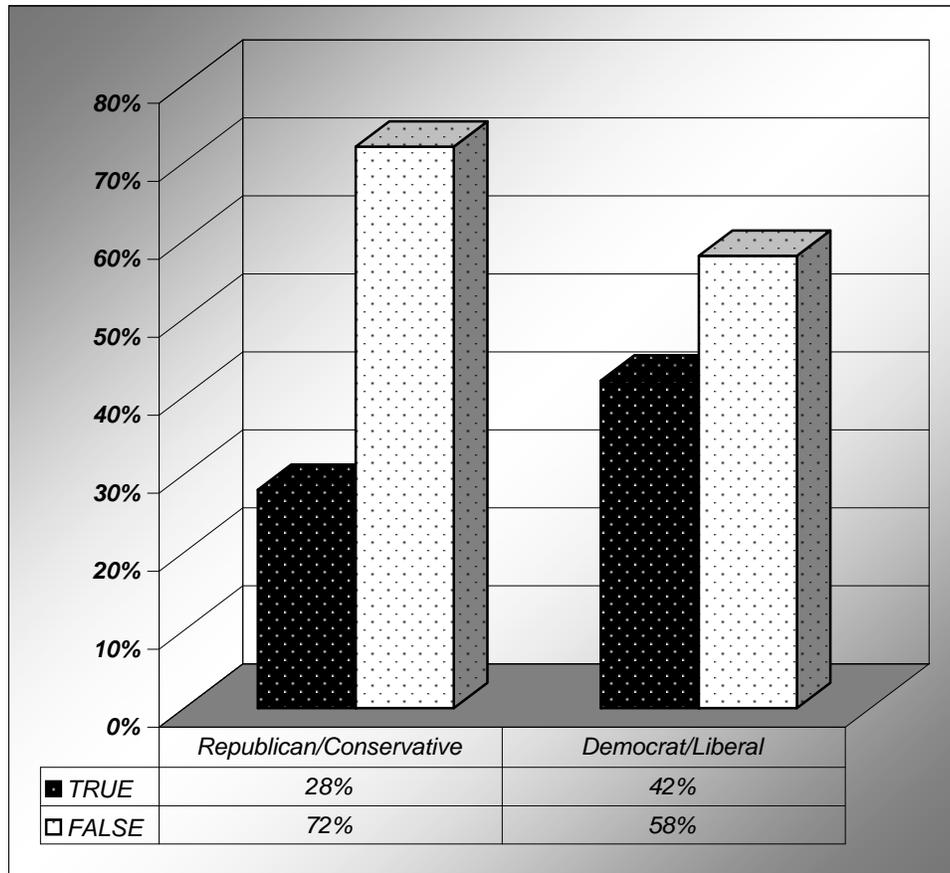


Figure 19