

Peoples' Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Researches
Hamma Lakhdar University of El-Oued
Faculty of Arts and Languages
Department of Arts and English Language



The Role of Religion in American Polarization

**Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
Master's Degree in Literature and Civilization**

Submitted by:

Abdessalam KHALDI
Mourad HAMIDATOU

Supervised by:

Dr. Mouna HEZBRI

Board of Examiners:

Dr. Ahmed ZELLOUMA	President	University of El-Oued
Dr. Mouna HEZBRI	Supervisor	University of El-Oued
Dr. Mouna FETHIZA TEDJANI	Examiner	University of El-Oued

Academic Year: 2023/2024

Dedication

We dedicate this work to our beloved parents who sacrificed their time, energy and youth for our success and well-being.

Acknowledgments

First and for most, all praise to Allah for blessing us with strength and resilience to withstand the intellectual, emotional and motivational challenges as well as time restrictions faced in this journey through harnessing financial, human and psychological resources . Those combined, eventually, granted us an opportunity for growth academically, professionally and personally.

Secondly, we would like to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Mouna HEZBRI for contributing to the accomplishment of this work through her guidance and recommendations that constantly lead the way for meeting the objectives of this research conduct. Also, our appreciation shall be extended to the board examiners for taking the time to assess and evaluate contents of this dissertation.

Notwithstanding the above contributions, any inadequacies and shortcomings in this dissertation are solely our own.

Abstract

This dissertation explores the complex relationship between religion and politics in the United States by investigating how religion shapes the American political landscape and affects societal dynamics. Firstly, it inspects the ways religious beliefs contribute to social and political divisions in the US. Respectively, it focuses on the evolving religious diversity in the U.S, amidst increasing secularization, and the enduring influence of religion on political narratives and voting behaviors. Methodologically, the research combines historical analysis with contemporary case studies using qualitative and quantitative methods that examine factors fueling modern political disagreements including technology, cultural conflicts, and party polarization along religious lines. These findings highlight the complex interplay between religion and politics, illustrating how religious identities are able to deepen partisan divides or unify for social justice, as seen in the civil rights movement. Subsequently, The study emphasizes the importance of understanding the historical, social, and political factors shaping the intersection of religion and politics in America.

Keywords: Identities, Party, Polarization, Political division, Religion, United States of America.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

A PA	The American Political Association
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CNN	Cable News Network
E.C.W	English Civil War
JSTOR	JSTOR Journal Storage
N.A	N.A North America
Pn	Pn Pennsylvania
U.K	U.K United Kingdom
U.S	U.S United States
U.S.C	U.S.C United States Constitution
U.S.S.C	U.S.S.C United States Supreme Court
n.d	n.d no date

List of Figures

Figure 1.1.2. George whitfield	08
Figure 1.2. Religion and the State Governments - Religion and the Founding of the American Republic / Exhibitions (Library of Congress)	11
Figure 1.7.3. Party identification of white voters in the southern US from 1952 to 2004.....	26
Figure 2.2.1. Party Polarization in Congress 1879 – 2009.....	34
Figure 2.2.2. “Man Corporate” Man’s world owner, powerful individual	35

Table of Contents

Dedication..... I

Acknowledgements.....II

Abstract.....III

List of Abbreviations and AcronymsIV

List of Figures.....V

Table of ContentsVI

General Introduction.....1

**Chapter One: America's Religious-Political Evolution: Colonial Conflicts to
Denominational Divides**

Introduction.....4

1.1. Tracing Governance Foundations through Time.....4

1.1.1. Religious plurality and early conflicts in colonial America.....5

1.1.2. Setting the Stage for Enduring Religious Divisions8

1.1.3. The development and impact of slavery in colonial America10

1.2. The Constitution And The Governing System Foundation..... 11

1.3. Founding principles and faith in governance..... 13

1.3.1. The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Founding Fathers.....13

1.3.1. Founding Fathers' Role in Religious Division16

1.4. Denominational Dynamics in The 19th Century16

1.4.1. Religious Factions' Role in Historical Division.....	17
1.5. Socio-religious aspects of United states.....	17
1.6. Religious Diversity and Pluralism.....	18
1.6.1. Christianity in the United States.....	19
1.6.2. Judaism	20
1.6.3. Islam in the United States.....	21
1.6.4. Asian Religions in the United States.....	22
1.6.4.1 Hinduism.....	22
1.6.4.2 Buddhism.....	23
1.7. Religious political aspects of America	24
1.7.1 Religious Identity and Partisan Alignment.....	24
1.7.2. Historical Religious-Political Relationships.....	25
1.7.3. Religious Influence on Voting and Policy.....	26
1.8. The Role of Moral and Social Issues in Political Discourse.....	27
Conclusion.....	28

Chapter two: Exploring America's Political Polarization: Tracing Socio-Political Evolution

- Introduction.....29
- 2.1. Evolution of America's Socio-Political Landscape 29
- 2.2. Tech-Social Trends Amid Polarization: Current Analysis.32
 - 2.2.1. American Political Landscape and Governance Challenges.....32
 - 2.2.2. Technological Utopianism's Impact on American Polarization.....34
 - 2.2.2.1.Origins of Technological Utopianism in America and Europe36
 - 2.2.2.2. Understanding Political Polarization in Modern Society.....36
- 2.3. Contemporary American polarization impacts society and democracy.37
 - 2.3.1...Exploring Polarization: Consequences and Solutions.....38
 - 2.3.1.1. Positive Consequences.....38
 - 2.3.1.2. Negative Consequences.....39
 - 2.3.1.3 Solutions to Polarization.....39
- 2.4. Socioeconomic Influences on Polarization.....40
 - 2.4.1. Income inequality fuels political polarization in the US.40
 - 2.4.2. Wealth disparity fuels economic polarization in the US.41
 - 2.4.2.1. Inequality correlates with affective polarization in the US.41

- 2.5.The role of Mass Media in American polarization 42
 - 2.5.1. Partisan Signaling and Polarization.....42
 - 2.5.1.1. Affective polarization.....43
 - 2.5.1.2. Ideological segregation.....44
- 2.6. The Role of Religion in American Polarization.....45
- 2.7. Examining Religious Rhetoric's Impact on Sociopolitical Division: A Speech Analysis.....46
 - 2.7.1. American president Kennedy's extract47
 - 2.7.2. American president Biden's extract48
 - 2.7.3. American president Trump's extract48
 - 2.7.4. The Rise of Political Polarization Goldman Stories: Henry Brady's extract49
- Conclusion.....50
- General conclusion.....51
- Appendixes.....53
- References.....60

Introduction

1. Background of the Study

American democracy, founded on protecting individual rights and freedoms, enshrines religious liberty and the separation of church and state. However, this dissertation will demonstrate a stark contrast between democratic ideals and practical realities. While the constitution aims to ensure equal rights regardless of religious affiliation, the U.S. political landscape suggests otherwise. This study examines the complex interplay between religion and politics, analyzing the religious affiliations of key political figures to uncover discrepancies between the theory of religious neutrality and the reality of religious influence. Through historical records, political discourse, and case studies, the research will provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges and implications of this dynamic. Additionally, this research explores polarization along religious lines, evident in American voting patterns, policy preferences, and public discourse. Religious identity frequently determines political allegiance, yet the specific mechanisms by which religion influences political division remain poorly understood. The complete extent of religious figures, institutions, and ideologies' contribution to polarization is not fully explored. Addressing these knowledge gaps is crucial for developing strategies to alleviate polarization and promote greater social cohesion..

2. Statement of the Problem

American democracy is built on individual rights, religious freedom, and the separation of church and state. However, the current political landscape shows a significant gap between these ideals and reality, despite the constitutional commitment to equal rights. This study explores the complex relationship between religion and politics, analysing the religious affiliations of key figures to uncover discrepancies between religious neutrality and actual influence. It also investigates polarization along religious lines in voting trends, policy preferences, and public discussions. The research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the interplay between religion and politics in

the U.S. by using historical records, political discourse, and case studies. Addressing these knowledge gaps is crucial for developing strategies to reduce polarization and enhance social unity in the American political sphere..

3. Research Questions

On the above premises, the following questions are risen:

- How influential is religion on American political polarization?
- How does religion influence political division in America?
- What role do religious leaders and institutions play in increasing or decreasing political polarization?

4. Aims of the Study

The overall purpose of this study aims primarily at examining the underlying relationships of religion and American polarization . And this is through investigating the impact of religious ideologies on U.S. politics.

- Exposing the prominent correlation between religion and state in secular America.
- Examining the mechanisms through which religion influences political attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes.
- Investigating the role of religious leaders, institutions, and ideologies in shaping political polarization.

5. Significance of the Study

This study has significant implications for understanding the complex relationship between religion and political division in America. It sheds light on how religious leaders and institutions influence political attitudes and behaviours, and provides insights for addressing political polarization and promoting social cohesion. The study also offers practical recommendations for

policymakers, religious leaders, and civil society actors to mitigate religious polarization and foster political moderation.

6. Research Methodology

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of survey data with qualitative examination of religious texts, media narratives, and political discourse. Surveys are conducted to assess the relationship between religious affiliation, beliefs, and political attitudes. In-depth interviews and content analysis will be used to explore the role of religious leaders and institutions in shaping political division. Additionally, case studies and comparative analysis are employed to contextualize findings within broader historical and sociocultural dynamics.

7. The Structure of Research

This research is divided into two chapters. The opening one is about general concepts of religion where definition, roots, origins and socio-religious aspects are presented. The chapter is present the relation between polarization and religion, role of Mass media and culture. Then, ending the chapter with an analysis of some videos of American presidents.

CHAPTER ONE

America's Religious-Political Evolution: Colonial Conflicts to Denominational Divides

Chapter One: America's Religious-Political Evolution: Colonial Conflicts to Denominational Divides

Introduction.....	4
1.1. Tracing Governance Foundations through Time.....	4
1.1.1. Religious plurality and early conflicts in colonial America.....	5
1.1.2. Setting the Stage for Enduring Religious Divisions	8
1.1.3. The development and impact of slavery in colonial America	10
1.2. The Constitution And The Governing System Foundation.....	11
1.3. Founding principles and faith in governance.....	13
1.3.1.The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Founding Fathers.....	13
1.3.1. Founding Fathers' Role in Religious Division	16
1.4. Denominational Dynamics in The 19th Century	16
1.4.1. Religious Factions' Role in Historical Division.....	17
1.5. Socio-religious aspects of United states.....	17
1.6. Religious Diversity and Pluralism.....	18
1.6.1. Christianity in the United States.....	19
1.6.2. Judaism	20
1.6.3. Islam in the United States.....	21
1.6.4. Asian Religions in the United States.....	22

1.6.4.1 Hinduism.....	22
1.6.4.2 Buddhism.....	23
1.7. Religious political aspects of America	24
1.7.1 Religious Identity and Partisan Alignment.....	24
1.7.2. Historical Religious-Political Relationships.....	25
1.7.3. Religious Influence on Voting and Policy.....	26
1.8. The Role of Moral and Social Issues in Political Discourse.....	27
Conclusion.....	28

Introduction

The fundamental structure of colonial America's government and its rich religious diversity provide insight into the nation's historical development. Colonies showcased a spectrum of religious beliefs, ranging from Protestantism to Judaism and Catholicism, reflecting a vibrant spiritual milieu steeped in diverse cultural traditions. However, this religious pluralism also fostered underlying tensions, leading to enduring disputes and transformative movements such as the Great Awakening. Against this backdrop, the Founding Fathers grappled with the intricate relationship between faith and governance, shaping core concepts that would define America's evolving religious landscape and the complex dynamics between church and state. This historical narrative illustrates how societal attitudes and beliefs can become polarized, reflecting distinct and opposing viewpoints within the population as defined by social scientists.

1.1. Tracing Governance Foundations Through Time

The religious origins in America can be traced back to the indigenous cultures before Columbus' arrival, which coexisted with later European settlers who brought their own religious beliefs. The New World offered a haven for religious dissidents seeking freedom to practice their faiths. Despite initial religious diversity and conflicts, a trend toward religious tolerance emerged gradually in the colonies. Regional differences often reflected varying religious denominations across the nation. With American territorial expansions and waves of immigration, the religious landscape became more diverse. The U.S. Supreme Court played a pivotal role in defining and safeguarding religious freedoms. Despite occasional incidents of intolerance, the United States largely exemplifies religious tolerance accommodating a multitude of beliefs. Presently, America hosts a wide spectrum of religious denominations including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam makes significant contributions. In contemporary American society, religious expressions have become more visible

through radio, television, and other media platforms influencing religious discourse and practice (William , 1999)

1.1.1. Religious Plurality and Early Conflicts in Colonial America

The narrative of religion in colonial America highlights its diverse development. While Protestantism dominated early society, including Puritans and Anglicans, other faiths like Indigenous beliefs, African traditions, Catholicism, Judaism, and Islam also influenced religious practices. Some colonies enforced Protestantism, but Rhode Island and Pennsylvania stood out for promoting religious tolerance. The 'Great Awakening' in the mid-18th century fueled evangelicalism and increased diversity, fostering Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian communities. Enslaved Africans brought Christianity, Islam, and animism, shaping Black Protestant congregations. Islam was notably present among enslaved Africans in South Carolina, while Sephardic Jews settled across colonies, with Newport, Rhode Island, hosting the oldest surviving synagogue. By the American Revolution, no single Protestant denomination held a majority, highlighting colonial America's religious diversity (University of north Georgia, n.d.).

According to the University of North Georgia, after the English Civil War and Oliver Cromwell's period of republican governance, Charles II was crowned king in 1660, thereby reinstating the monarchy and the Anglican Church. Charles faced various challenges concerning religious factions, parliamentary relations, and the issue of succession. The enactment of the Test Act in 1673 restricted the rights of Catholics, reflecting Parliament's distrust. Charles's discreet Treaty of Dover with France exacerbated tensions, exacerbated by his lack of legitimate heirs. Following Charles's passing in 1685, his Catholic brother James II ascended the throne, leading to unrest due to his attempts to expand Catholic influence. The Glorious Revolution of 1688, characterized by William of Orange's invasion and the removal of James II, resulted in joint rule by William and Mary, accompanied by parliamentary reforms. This revolution brought about a Bill of

Rights and limited Catholic liberties, thereby consolidating Protestant governance and shaping the English political structure until the early 18th century.

The Carolinas' development was characterized by a notable dedication to religious acceptance, a quality uncommon among colonial settlements during that era. The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina, crafted by the Earl of Shaftesbury and John Locke, established the foundation for this value, permitting the cohabitation of diverse faiths alongside Anglicanism, the official religion. This provision attracted religious dissidents, such as Protestants and Jews escaping persecution, along with French Huguenots seeking sanctuary from France in 1685. Their settlement in Charleston and the founding of Bath introduced a variety of religious beliefs and valuable artisanal expertise to the colony. Despite encountering geopolitical obstacles and pursuing economic endeavors, Carolina maintained its reputation for religious inclusivity, profoundly influencing its social dynamics and cultural milieu (SC's Diverse Religious History, n.d.).

During the seventeenth century, the Middle Colonies in North America burgeoned into a diverse and rapidly expanding region. Initially settled by the Dutch and Swedes along the Hudson and Delaware Rivers, the Middle Colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware became bastions of cultural and religious diversity. The Dutch established New Netherland, promoting tolerance and attracting settlers from various European nations, yet faced conflicts with indigenous tribes and European powers. The English takeover ushered in significant changes, maintaining religious tolerance but shifting governance to English institutions, highlighted by events like Leisler's Rebellion. Religious diversity remained a hallmark, with Quakers seeking refuge and contributing to the region's cultural tapestry. Despite challenges, the Middle Colonies thrived as hubs of commerce, culture, and religious expression, with Quakers like William Penn promoting tolerance and equality (The Middle Colonies, n.d.).

Georgia's colonial period initiated by James Oglethorpe in 1732, was marked by a blend of religious freedom, social experimentation, and strategic defense against Spanish threats. Oglethorpe's vision aimed to create a haven for the needy while safeguarding against Spanish aggression. The Trustees overseeing Georgia's establishment embraced religious tolerance while excluding Catholics and welcoming groups like the Salzburgers. Despite initial ambitions for luxury goods, the colony's economy relied on cattle, timber, and Indian trade due to economic constraints. Parliament's withdrawal of funding in 1751 precipitated the collapse of the Trustee system, ushering Georgia into royal governance. The colony's religious diversity, fostered by Oglethorpe's tolerance, included various congregations, including one of the oldest Jewish communities in the U.S. However, tensions arose over issues such as the slavery ban, lifted in 1750 amidst economic pressures and social dynamics. Georgia's colonial heritage reflects religious pluralism, economic challenges, and evolving societal structures, despite its brief existence (Nichols, 2005).

During the late 17th century, North America saw the establishment of several colonies, most of which were proprietary, stemming from land grants to allies and supporters of the English monarchy. Similar to the early New England colonies, religion held significant sway in these new settlements. For instance, Pennsylvania and the Jerseys provided refuge for Quakers escaping persecution, while Carolina offered freedom of worship to nonconforming Protestant groups and Jews. Georgia, founded in 1732, also served as a sanctuary for the "deserving poor." With the addition of Georgia, the thirteen colonies were fully established. As the 18th century progressed, tensions mounted between the colonies and the mother country, with the colonies asserting greater independence while the British Crown sought tighter control. Ultimately, this friction led to the colonies' eventual break from British rule (University of north Georgia, n.d.).

1.1.2. Setting the Stage for Enduring Religious Divisions

The Great Awakening was a pivotal religious revival in the British American colonies during the 1720s to the 1740s. Led by influential figures like Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Gilbert Tennent, and Samuel Davies, it emerged as a response to increasing secularization and formalism within churches. The movement democratized Calvinist theology, highlighting the accessibility of conversion and the "new birth" experience to all individuals.

The picture below shows one of the greatest American leaders "George Whitefield". People have been greatly impacted by his speech for a very long time, and they are still today.

Figure 1.1.2. George whitfield



Whitefield's powerful and charismatic preaching, coupled with Edwards' intellectual defense of religious fervor, fueled the momentum of the Great Awakening. Despite facing criticisms and causing divisions within conservative Presbyterian circles, figures like Tennent played crucial roles in propagating the revival's message of spiritual renewal and personal transformation. George Whitefield, an Anglican evangelist, emerged as a central figure in the 18th-century Protestant revival across Britain and the American colonies. His tireless efforts to spread the message of spiritual rebirth resonated deeply with audiences, contributing significantly to the Great

Awakening's impact. Samuel Davies, another prominent preacher, led the Southern phase of the Great Awakening, advocating for religious dissent and defending religious freedoms. Educated at Samuel Blair's "log college," Davies' eloquent sermons and commitment to religious liberty left a lasting imprint on Virginia and beyond, including his instrumental role in supporting (Princeton University, 2024).

The article "Jonathan Edwards | Biography, Beliefs, Sermons, Great Awakening, & Facts" (2024) explains that the Second Great Awakening, which occurred from about 1795 to 1835. It was characterized by a significant period of religious revivalism in the United States. During this time, there is an increase in church membership, particularly among Methodist and Baptist congregations. It highlights that Baptists are members of a Christian denomination emphasizing adult baptism by immersion and adhering to principles such as congregational autonomy, individual priesthood, salvation by faith alone, and the authority of the Bible.

The movement also inspired moral and philanthropic reforms including temperance and women's emancipation. The article mentions that the Second Great Awakening was defined by the evangelistic efforts of Charles Grandison Finney and the development of carefully planned revival methods, which promoted a shift in theological focus toward practical Arminianism. Despite declining enthusiasm for revivalism in the 20th century, its impact persisted through the continuation of tent revivals and church-based revivals nationwide.

Revivalism, with its origins deeply entrenched in Protestant traditions such as Anabaptism, Puritanism, German Pietism, and Methodism, aimed to revitalize spiritual enthusiasm and draw in fresh adherents. Major revival movements like the Great Awakening and the Second Great Awakening sparked notable moral and philanthropic changes while leaving a significant impact on Protestantism in both Europe and America. Jonathan Edwards, a prominent figure of the Great Awakening, left a lasting impact with his theological and philosophical writings that defended

Calvinism and delved into the essence of human nature. Despite encountering obstacles, his teachings had a profound and enduring influence on American Protestantism for many generations ("Jonathan Edwards," 2024).

In summary, the Great Awakening and subsequent revival movements had a profound impact on American religious life, leading to the democratization of religious experiences, instigating moral reforms, and influencing theological discussions for generations. This marked a significant shift in religious practices in the New World, particularly in the nascent United States, due to the widespread influence it had on people's religious devotion.

1.1.3. The Development and Impact of Slavery in Colonial America

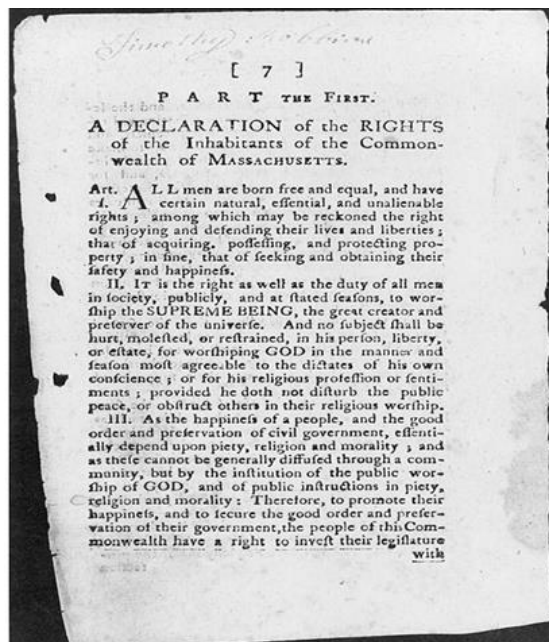
Slavery during the colonial period, There was an intricate institution shaped by economic demands, racial biases and labor needs. Initially, native populations were utilized for labor, but as their numbers decreased, Africans became the primary workforce, especially on plantations. While slavery existed across all European colonies in the Americas, it became most deeply ingrained in the Southern Colonies, where large-scale plantation farming was prevalent. Initially less reliant on slavery, the Northern Colonies eventually embraced and engaged in the slave trade. Despite early abolitionist efforts during the American Revolution, slavery endured and expanded in the South until its official abolition during the Civil War in 1865. Enslaved individuals, especially women, endured exploitation and forced labour influencing family structures. The Quaker petition of 1688 marked the inception of anti-slavery movements, which eventually culminated in the Emancipation Proclamation and the Thirteenth Amendment, formally putting an end to slavery in the United States ("Slavery in Colonial US History," 2024).

1.2. The Constitution And The Governing System Foundation

The Constitution And The Governing System Foundation" explores the genesis and enduring significance of the U.S. Constitution, emphasizing its role in shaping American governance and society. The Constitution's core principles, Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances, prevent the concentration of authority in any single branch. It delineates distinct functions for the legislative, executive, and judicial branches through mechanisms like bicameralism, presidential veto, Senate confirmation, judicial independence, and impeachment.

The U.S. House of Representatives ensures equitable representation, reflecting the Constitution's commitment to voting equality and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Congress holds broad authority to levy taxes and regulate commerce, addressing society's evolving needs. An accompanying image illustrates the historical context of religious freedom and its integration within state governments, highlighting the complex relationship between religion and the founding of the American Republic ("U.S. Constitution," 2016).

Figure 1.2. Religion and the State Governments - Religion and the Founding of the American Republic / Exhibitions (Library of Congress)



Bicameralism is a system of having a national legislature with two distinct chambers, inspired by ancient republics and the British Parliament. It embodies federalism and the separation of powers, ensuring legislative decisions reflect the will of the people and individual states' interests. The House of Representatives is apportioned based on population, while the Senate grants equal representation to states. This dual deliberation process safeguards against potential tyranny of transient majorities and emphasizes thorough debate in lawmaking (Ballotpedia, n.d.).

The War Power is a contentious aspect of American governance, balancing congressional authority and executive action. Rooted in constitutional grants and national sovereignty, it has sparked debates over the President's authority to deploy troops abroad without explicit congressional approval. While the Supreme Court acknowledges Congress's constitutional prerogative to declare war, the issue remains unresolved, leaving Congress and the President to navigate their roles in national defense (Wikipedia contributors (2024, May 9)).

The District of Columbia, created following the Continental Congress's challenges, exemplifies federal governance. With restricted self-government, it operates under Congress's dual role as a local and national legislature. The "Authority Over Places Purchased" clause gives the federal government significant control over essential structures, while states maintain jurisdiction over ceded areas. This arrangement underscores the complex relationship between federal and state authority (District of Columbia; federal property. (n.d.)).

In conclusion, "The Constitution And The Governing System Foundation" illuminates the enduring legacy of the U.S. It shapes American governance and society. From its inception to the present day, the law remains a beacon of democracy guiding the nation through myriad challenges while upholding the principles of liberty, justice and equality for all ("Constitution of the United States," 2016).

1.3. Founding Principles and Faith in Governance

The analysis examines the relationship between founding principles and faith in governance in the digital age, focusing on how core values and religious beliefs influence public perception. It seeks to understand how social media, technology, and religious beliefs interact, aiming to promote a pluralistic and inclusive approach to governance.

1.3.1. The Influence of Religious Beliefs on Founding Fathers

The religious beliefs of the Founding Fathers have been a topic of debate, with some scholars arguing they were rationalists or Unitarians, while others advocate for orthodox Christianity. Most Founders were Protestant, with Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism being predominant. The debate also revolves around whether their private beliefs differed from orthodox teachings. Deism, influenced by figures like Rousseau and Newton, emphasized human experience and rationality over religious dogma. Deists influenced educated males of the Revolutionary generation, leading to varying religious beliefs. Differentiating between Deists and orthodox Christians involves church involvement, sacraments, religious language, and opinions. Deism, with its emphasis on reason, equality, and religious toleration, influenced a majority of the Founders (Holmes, 2006).

According to Holmes (2006), the topic of the religious beliefs of the Founding Fathers has sparked debate with some scholars suggesting they were rationalists or Unitarians, while others advocate for orthodox Christianity. It is noted that most Founders were Protestant, with Anglicanism, Presbyterianism, and Congregationalism being predominant. The discussion also revolves around whether their personal beliefs deviated from orthodox teachings. Deism, influenced by figures such as Rousseau and Newton, emphasized human experience and rationality over religious dogma. Deists had an impact on educated males of the Revolutionary generation, leading to diverse religious beliefs. Distinguishing between Deists and orthodox Christians involves factors

such as church participation, sacraments, religious terminology, and viewpoints. The majority of the Founders were influenced by Deism, with its emphasis on reason, equality, and religious tolerance.

The argument against the notion that America's founding fathers established the country under Christian doctrine branding it a "Christian nation." They argue that Christianity can stand on its own without legal endorsements and that the founders including Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, Madison and Monroe, practiced Deism, a faith in human reason. The author presents historical evidence including quotes from James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and a treaty negotiated by Joel Barlow to counter the argument that the United States was founded as a Christian nation. The author concludes by emphasizing the founders' clear intentions not to establish the country based on Christian doctrines and expressing gratitude for a government that allows religious and political freedom (Bonitatibus, 2023).

The discussion surrounding America's association with religion is deeply divided, with some highlighting its Christian origins while others promote secularism. Alexis de Tocqueville's observations underscore America's distinct role in democracy contrasting it with Europe's historical strife. Despite America's profound religious heritage. It upholds the separation of church and state to protect religious freedom, although this principle hasn't always been apparent in American society. Religious resistance played a crucial part in America's inception originating from Queen Elizabeth I's endeavors to establish the Church of England in the New World. Protestant dissidents sought sanctuary in the New World to counter Catholic Spain's dominance intertwining religion with geopolitical aspirations. Nonetheless, the convergence of religious and political domains resulted in strict religious compliance fostering bias and intolerance. The importance of religion in America's formation. Particularly during the establishment of the federal government which remains a subject of contention. Migration, the Great Awakening, tensions among black communities and Enlightenment ideals influenced religious dynamics, challenging conventional beliefs and

encouraging dissent. The Founding Fathers prioritized personal freedom instituting a secular government to safeguard religious liberty and embedding religious impartiality in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Their dedication to liberty led to a transformative constitution guaranteeing religious freedom and separating religion from state affairs. Throughout American history, religion acted as a catalyst for freedom defining the Revolution and national identity. The Founders' commitment to secular governance and religious liberty endures as their enduring legacy, as evidenced by treaties such as the Treaty of Peace and Friendship (Salton, 2013).

1.3.2. Founding Fathers' Role in Religious Division

In the early nineteenth century, Unitarians emerged as a departure from tradition gaining popularity among the educated and middle classes. Centered in Boston. They highlighted God's unity and the brotherhood of humanity seeing Jesus Christ as a moral exemplar separate from God. They understood the Holy Spirit as God's historical influence and advocated for education and moral advancement rejecting the idea of original sin. They left its mark on New England inspiring figures like Thoreau and reformers like Dix. Concurrently, Freemasonry provided an alternative religious avenue drawing on ancient rituals and a logical conception of God as the universe's designer. Dissatisfaction with conventional Christianity led some, like Thomas Jefferson, to distance themselves, while others blended Christianity with various beliefs. By the mid-1800s, new denominations like Baptists and Methodists emerged, challenging established religious paradigms (“Religion in nineteenth century America,” n.d.).

1.4. Denominational Dynamics in the 19th Century

In the early 1800s, Unitarians emerged as advocates against traditionalism, primarily garnering support from the educated and middle class, particularly in Boston. They championed the concept of God's fatherhood, the unity of humanity, and the belief in a unified God. Unitarians regarded Jesus

Christ as a moral figure distinct from God, and they interpreted the Holy Spirit as representing God's historical influence. With a focus on education and moral advancement. They significantly affected New England and influenced prominent figures like Thoreau and Emerson. Concurrently, Freemasonry surfaced as an alternative route to spiritual enlightenment, tracing its origins to ancient Egypt and emphasizing rituals and camaraderie, with a view of God as the master architect of the universe. Despite maintaining Christian ties, many Americans explored alternative spiritual avenues giving rise to new denominations such as Baptists, Methodists, and Disciples of Christ, which posed challenges to established religious conventions by the era of the Civil War (“Religion in Nineteenthcentury America,” n.d.).

1.4.1. Religious Factions' Role in Historical Division

Throughout its history, the United States has maintained a dual identity serving as both a nation of immigrants and a stronghold of religious diversity. While global scenarios often witness significant religious conflicts arising from such diversity. America's religious narrative has largely avoided such turmoil. This examination delves into the various forms of religious conflict in American history drawing a distinction between religious intolerance and outright persecution or violence. The Revolutionary War period, typically recognized as a quest for political sovereignty, also witnessed a struggle for religious liberty against the Church of England's efforts to impose Anglicanism. Following the Revolution, internal religious disputes emerged, notably in Virginia, where Baptists and Presbyterians faced severe persecution. The 19th century witnessed tensions between Catholics and Protestants, alongside the Mormon and Utah Wars reflecting religious discord in the western frontier. These historical episodes highlight the intricate nature of religious divisions in the United States, which have profoundly influenced its societal, political, and cultural landscape over time (Erik Wong, 2002).

1.5. Socio-Religious Aspects of United

Since its spreading in American society and during the colonial era, Christianity has become the dominant religion, with the majority of Americans practicing it. Despite the growing number of non-Christian religious groups, they still make up less than 6% of the population. It is important to recognize the diversity within American Christianity. The 70.6% of Americans are Christian, 46.6% are Protestant, 20.8% are Catholic and 1.6% are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 0.8% are Jehovah's Witnesses, 0.5% are Orthodox, and 0.4% are part of another Christian denomination. Among Christians, there are those who follow an "Evangelical" tradition (25.4%), a "Mainline" tradition (14.7%), or an "African-American" tradition.

Even though America has a wide range of religions, Christianity is often linked to the country's sense of national pride and patriotism. Expressions like "God Bless America" and "In God We Trust" found on currency are examples of this. Events like Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July are important holidays in America where this combination of religion and patriotism is observed (Omer & Springs, 2013).

Despite the nation's extreme religious diversity, Christianity is frequently associated with the American sense of national identity and patriotism. The religious slogans "God Bless America" and "In God We Trust" that appear on banknotes are a couple of instances. Thanksgiving and Fourth of July celebrations are two significant American holidays when this fusion of religion and patriotism is practiced (Omer & Springs, 2013).

In the US census, there are no questions about religious affiliation. However, various organizations have surveyed the nation's religious population. According to the Pew Research Center in 2014, Christianity is the most commonly reported religious affiliation, with 70.6% of the population. Additionally, 5.9% of individuals practice non-Christian religions, with 1.9% identifying as Jewish and 0.9% affiliated with other non-Christian faiths (Pew Research Center, 2014)

1.6. Religious Diversity and Pluralism

Native American religious traditions have contributed significantly to the religious variety of America from precolonial times. Despite the adoption of official state churches by a few states, there was no national or state religion created throughout the colonial period. Various Christian groups, communities, and movements were able to grow during the nation's colonial era thanks to this freedom of religion. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, usually referred to as Mormonism, is one of the many Christian faiths and sects that originated in the United States (O'Brien, 2020).

The diverse religious landscape of America can be attributed in part to the influx of immigrants who arrived after the persecution of Jews in the nineteenth century. Many new immigrants came to the country once national quotas were removed adding to the variety of religions practiced in the United States. The presence of the religiously unaffiliated including atheists and agnostics, has also played a significant role in shaping the religious culture of America. Since the early 1990s, the number of religiously unaffiliated individuals has tripled, now accounting for nearly a quarter of the population at 22.8%. According to a study by the Public Religion Research Institute, the "New Atheism" movement originated in America through the work of prominent atheist authors such as Sam Harris and Richard Dawkins. The majority of American atheists, especially those associated with the New Atheism movement, can be found actively participating in popular online forums. One of the largest communities of atheists is highlighted in a study by Collier (2012).

1.6.1 Christianity in the United States

During the colonial era, Christianity has been the predominant and important religion in American society. Despite the growth of non-Christian religious groups, which currently make up less than 6% of the population, it is important to acknowledge the wide range of Christian beliefs

and practices in the United States. According to a study by Harris in 2007, out of the 70.6% of Americans who identify as Christian, 46.6% are from Protestant denominations, 20.8% are Catholic, 1.6% are Latter-day Saints, 0.8% are Jehovah's Witnesses, 0.5% are Orthodox Christians, and 0.4% belong to other branches of Christianity. Within the Protestant denominations, 25.4% identify with the "Evangelical" tradition, 14.7% with the "Mainline" tradition, and 6.5% with the "African-American" tradition (Harris, 2007).

Different Christian beliefs also create subcategories that often align with specific cultural groups (such as Korean Presbyterians, Nigerian Catholics, etc.). The blending of religion and ethnicity has enriched the variety of Christian customs and beliefs, continuously transforming the religious makeup of America. For instance, in 2016, 45% of those identifying as Catholic were Hispanic or non-white, a significant increase from just 13% in 1991.

In the United States, there are significant pockets of Christian traditions. Take Utah, for instance, where 55% of people consider themselves Mormon. On the other side, in states like Oklahoma (47%), Arkansas (46%), Alabama (49%), Kentucky (49%), and Tennessee (52%), less than half of the population aligns with the Evangelical Protestant tradition (Harris, 2007).

In America, Christians tend to participate more actively in religious practices compared to other Western countries. A survey revealed that 70% of self-identified Protestants and 58% of self-identified Catholics considered religion very important in their lives. According to a study, around 39% of Catholics and 48% of Protestants attend at least one religious service every week. The diversity within American Christianity adds to its liveliness and richness. Research indicates that individuals who decide to leave a particular congregation are more inclined to join or start a new one rather than completely abandoning their faith. This information is sourced from "The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Religion" in 2008.

1.6.2 Judaism

In the United States, the Jewish population has deep roots dating back to pre- and post-World War II immigration waves. They constitute a significant non-Christian religious group, with a concentration in states like New York and New Jersey, particularly in cities such as New York City. Overall, Jews comprise 1.9% of the US population, highlighting the enduring history of Judaism in the nation. Within the American Jewish community, diversity is evident through various streams of Judaism. According to the Pew Research Center, the Reform movement has the largest following (35%), followed by Conservative (18%) and Orthodox (10%) traditions, with smaller percentages in other streams and non-affiliated categories. While many American Jews maintain a cultural and ancestral connection to Judaism (62%), differing perspectives exist regarding the religious aspect of their identity. Some prioritize Judaism in their lives, while others see it as a smaller component of their overall identity (Azria, 2000).

1.6.3 Islam in the United States

The United States is home to one of the most diverse Muslim populations globally, with members hailing from various nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Estimates suggest the Muslim population in the US ranges from 3 to 6 million, accounting for approximately 1.3% of the total population. This community is composed of around one-third African Americans, one-third South Asians, one-quarter Arabs, as well as Latinos and individuals from across the world.

The majority of Muslims have immigrated to the United States seeking democratic freedoms, educational opportunities, and a better life. They are generally well-integrated into American society, belonging to the middle class and working in diverse professions, including medicine, law, academia, media, entertainment, and sports.

The presence of Islam in the US is not a recent phenomenon. During the colonial era, Muslim Africans were brought to the country through the slave trade. In the late 19th century, Muslims from Lebanon and Syria also arrived, primarily settling in the American Midwest. However, the changes in immigration laws in 1965 led to an influx of immigrants from the Middle East and South Asia, such as Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh (Deroo, 2021)

The Muslim community in the US has maintained its religious practices, including fasting during Ramadan, using prayer beads, veiling, and avoiding pork and alcohol. Muslim names have been prevalent in states like South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana, reflecting the historical presence of the community.

In the last two decades, the number of mosques in the United States has grown significantly, from 1,209 in 2000 to 2,769 in 2020, indicating a welcoming environment for the Muslim population. Mosques serve as places of worship, religious education, and community gathering, symbolizing the reinterpretation of Islamic traditions and the community's strong presence in America (Smith, 2002).

1.6.4 Asian Religions in the United States

Buddhism and Hinduism are prominent spiritual traditions in the US, promoting mindfulness, meditation, and ethical living. They contribute to religious diversity and interfaith dialogue, attracting immigrants and spiritual seekers.

1.6.4.1. Hinduism

The initial Hindu community in the United States was established through the introduction of Hinduism by missionaries, travelers, and the translations of Sanskrit texts by European orientalist during the late 18th century. These translated texts served to familiarize Americans with Hindu culture. As the 20th century unfolded, the first waves of Hindu immigrants arrived in the United

States from various regions, bringing their religious beliefs and practices, with many of these immigrants being Gurus and religious leaders. These Gurus found an interested audience in the United States for their religious teachings, influencing those who were receptive. By the 1960s, changes in American political policies provided opportunities for Hindu immigrants to form their own communities and thrive in the United States. The curiosity of Americans also facilitated their integration into society (Hindu American Foundation, 2022).

1.6.4.2. Buddhism

Approximately 0.7% of individuals in the United States identify as Buddhists indicating a relatively small Buddhist population in America. These Buddhist communities in the US encompass individuals from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Within these communities, 44% are white, 33% are Asian, 11% are Latino, 8% belong to other or mixed races, and 3% are African American. It is common to observe that Buddhist temples and meditation groups predominantly consist of members from the same ethnic background.

In the United States, diverse Buddhist traditions thrive, reflecting the backgrounds of their followers. Immigrants and descendants from countries like Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos often follow Theravada Buddhism. Contrastingly, the Vipassana movement, or insight meditation, appeals to many white practitioners. Mahayana Buddhism, especially the Chan/Zen tradition, is widespread, encompassing Chinese Chan, Korean Son, Asian American Vietnamese Thien, and Japanese Zen Buddhism embraced by non-Asian Americans since the 1950s. Variances between Asian and White American Buddhists stem from variations in meditation focus and organizational structures.

1.7. Religious political Aspects of America

The religious-political relationship in America is complex, with religious affiliations aligning with political ideologies. Historical movements, such as abolitionism and Civil Rights, have shaped societal norms, and religious convictions influence voting and policy decisions.

1.7.1. Religious Identity and Partisan Alignment

Hunter's contention regarding the fracturing of the American populace prompted extensive investigation into burgeoning ideological schisms. DiMaggio et al. (1996) undertook a seminal inquiry into polarization, unveiling that while assertions of heightened polarization were largely unsubstantiated, societal attitudes were coalescing around partisan affiliations. Despite this trend. They observed a convergence between religious conservatives and liberals on most topics, barring prayer and Bible-reading in public schools. Davis & Robinson (1996) contested the idea of a "culture war" binary illustrating a trend towards moderate stances on numerous issues. Hoffmann & Miller (1997, 1998) illustrated that religious factions were aligning on women's roles but diverging on public school prayer. Subsequent studies affirmed the escalating segregation among religious demographics, impacting voting patterns and political involvement. Hout & Fischer (2002, 2014) delineated that the surge in the unaffiliated was primarily propelled by political discord. Partisanship and political ideology have assumed pivotal roles in shaping religious conduct. Mason (2015, 2016, 2018) delineated that the stratification along partisan lines fosters bias within groups. Rhodes (2011) noted that evangelical Democrats exhibited lower church attendance bolstering their secular Democratic identity. Mason & Wronski (2018) highlighted that religious affiliations exacerbate partisanship. Despite the strong correlation between religious elements and partisanship, they are not always the focal point in studies on polarization, which frequently prioritize political ideology, ethnic-racial dynamics, or socioeconomic class. This diverse theoretical approach holds promise for understanding religion's impact on America's societal rifts (Perry, 2022).

1.7.2. Historical Religious-Political Relationships

The intricate relationship between religion and politics defines two distinct yet interconnected components of society. According to Peter Berger's widely accepted definition, religion serves to unite individuals with a community and a purpose beyond the ordinary, while politics involves the authoritative management of collective decisions, resource allocation, and societal issues. During the early modern secularization processes, the dynamic between religion and politics underwent significant transformations, giving rise to modern secular states. Secularization denotes the separation of secular domains from religious norms and institutions, although interpretations of this process vary. Despite some perceiving secularization as a decline in religious relevance, religion has experienced a global resurgence. Secularism, the division between religious and political realms, stands in contrast to secularization and often advocates for the marginalization of religion from various aspects of life (Künkler & Leininger, 2011).

According to Künkler and Leininger (2011), contemporary states exhibit diverse relationships between religion and politics, which range from strict separation to significant state regulation of religion. It is observed that many countries allow for complex interactions between religion and politics, such as the inclusion of religious education in schools, financial support for religious institutions, and recognition of religious holidays. In some nations, there is even the designation of an official state religion. In modern states, religion influences politics through formal institutions such as religious law and religious political parties. The authors note that religious law, particularly in personal matters, reflects the tension between liberal citizenship and religious principles. Additionally, religious political parties, representing various religious traditions, engage in representation and advocacy within democratic systems.

The intersection of religion and democracy is complex. While democracy draws on secular values, religion can contribute to a society's moral fabric. The compatibility of democracy with

different religions sparks scholarly debates, with evidence suggesting that religious beliefs can evolve within democratic frameworks. Recent political science research on religion and politics delves into understanding religion's impact on regime stability, development, and rights standards. Scholars also explore religion's transnational dimension and its role in peace and conflict studies. The resurgence of religious interest has elevated religious minorities, despite ongoing discrimination in some contexts. Religious fragmentation has led to the emergence of new religions and internal divisions within major religious groups, posing both challenges and opportunities for religious communities worldwide (Künkler & Leininger, 2011).

1.7.3. Religious Influence on Voting and Policy

In the late-nineteenth century, American politics were deeply intertwined with ethno religious conflict shaping the dominant party system and prompting intense competition for control over key governmental institutions. The era was characterized by robust partisanship driven by the alignment of ethnoreligious values with party affiliations fostering widespread adherence to strong party norms among voters and establishing a distinctly partisan environment. Parties not only secured the allegiance of the majority of voters but also oversaw electoral processes and controlled the dissemination of political information, shaping a unique political landscape. However, by the 20th century, the relationship between religion and politics underwent significant attenuation due to shifts in the party system and the resolution of integration disputes. This transformation redirected the policy agenda away from grassroots ethnoreligious conflicts toward issues concerning economic distribution and capitalist values. While the essence of party competition remained unchanged, the specific themes of partisan discourse underwent considerable alteration diminishing the influence of religion on voting patterns and policymaking processes. Moreover, the interplay among religion, politics, and the American polity has evolved over time, driven by transformations in-group subcultures influenced by social, economic, and political changes. These shifts have redefined the

composition and dynamics of social groups, thereby reshaping their political orientations, priorities, values, and affiliations. Consequently, the evolving nature of group subcultures has contributed to the adaptable and dynamic character of American politics, mirroring broader societal transformation (Paul Kleppner, 2015).

In this revealing image, the shifting party identification trends among white voters in the southern United States from 1952 to 2004 are graphically illustrated, providing insight into the evolving political landscape of this region over the decades.

Figure 1.7.3. Party identification of white voters in southern US from 1952 to 2004



1.8.The Role of Moral and Social Issues in Political Discourse

The interconnectedness of politics and morality is a foundational concept underscoring the vital role of ethical considerations in governing and decision-making processes within representative democracies. In this intricate landscape, political candidates often encounter four prominent ethical dilemmas: the utilitarian quandary, transparency and accountability challenges, instances of corruption, and violations of human rights. It becomes imperative to prioritize moral principles over personal interests highlighting the need for principled leadership to navigate these ethical

complexities effectively. Moreover, the significance of truth and morality emerges as pivotal in counteracting emotional rhetoric advocating for authentic dialogue, and promoting ethical decision-making to shape public perceptions positively. Thus, embracing a framework rooted in ethics and integrity becomes essential for fostering trust and accountability within democratic systems. G. (2023, Oct 18)

Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of history, governance, and religious dynamics in colonial America and beyond unveils a rich complex of beliefs, practices, and social interactions that have profoundly influenced the United States. From the colonial era's diverse religious landscape to the Founding Fathers' vision of religious freedom and neutrality, America's religious history is marked by tensions, growth, and pluralism. Despite religious divisions, America's commitment to liberty and tolerance has mitigated conflicts, fostering a resilient and diverse society. As Christianity remains dominant, the nation's identity is deeply intertwined with religious expressions, yet its landscape encompasses a mosaic of beliefs, reflecting historical migration and cultural assimilation. The freedom of religion, enshrined in America's founding principles, has nurtured diverse faith traditions, enabling adaptation while preserving core values. Moreover, the interplay between religion and politics underscores faith's enduring influence on public discourse and policymaking, emphasizing the need for mutual respect and dialogue across religious lines to uphold America's commitment to religious freedom and pluralism

CHAPTER TWO

Exploring America's Political Polarization: Tracing Socio-Political Evolution

Chapter two: Exploring America's Political Polarization: Tracing Socio-Political Evolution

Introduction.....	29
2.1. Evolution of America's Socio-Political Landscape	29
12.2. Tech-Social Trends Amid Polarization: Current Analysis.	32
2.2.1. American Political Landscape and Governance Challenges.....	32
2.2.2. Technological Utopianism's Impact on American Polarization.....	34
2.2.2.1.Origins of Technological Utopianism in America and Europe	36
2.2.2.2. Understanding Political Polarization in Modern Society.....	36
2.3. Contemporary American polarization impacts society and democracy.	37
2.3.1...Exploring Polarization: Consequences and Solutions.....	38
2.3.1.1. Positive Consequences.....	38
2.3.1.2. Negative Consequences.....	39
2.3.1.3 Solutions to Polarization.....	39
2.4. Socioeconomic Influences on Polarization.....	40
2.4.1. Income inequality fuels political polarization in the US.	40
2.4.2. Wealth disparity fuels economic polarization in the US.	41
2.4.2.1. Inequality correlates with affective polarization in the US.	41

2.5.The role of Mass Media in American polarization42

2.5.1. Partisan Signaling and Polarization.....42

2.5.1.1. Affective polarization.....43

2.5.1.2. Ideological segregation.....44

2.6. The Role of Religion in American Polarization.....45

2.8. Examining Religious Rhetoric's Impact on Sociopolitical Division: A Speech Analysis.....46

2.7.1. American president Kennedy's extract47

2.7.2. American president Biden's extract48

2.7.3. American president Trump's extract48

2.7.4. The Rise of Political Polarization Goldman Stories: Henry Brady's extract49

Conclusion.....50

General conclusion.....51

Appendixes.....53

References.....60

Introduction

This chapter explores the history and consequences of political polarization in American democracy, defining polarization as the division into two sharply distinct opposites. It examines the causes and implications of ideological differences through an interdisciplinary approach, starting with key events like Adlai Stevenson's 1952 defeat, and analyzes how these historical moments have shaped contemporary political divisions. The chapter delves into interactions between liberal and conservative groups, grassroots movements, and the intersection of technical utopianism and societal polarization, highlighting the role of technology in exacerbating or mitigating these divisions. It assesses the impact of polarization on governance, civic engagement, and institutional integrity, evaluating both the advantages and disadvantages, and noting how extreme polarization can undermine democratic processes. Finally, it proposes remedies to polarization, emphasizing the need for consensus-building and multidisciplinary approaches to foster a more inclusive and robust democracy, and suggesting specific strategies for mitigating division and enhancing cooperative political discourse.

2.1. Evolution of America's Socio-Political Landscape

Political polarization has become a defining aspect of America's political landscape, influencing policy, elections, and public debate. Understanding this history, from its historical, social, and economic roots to its present expressions in the digital era, is critical for comprehending the complexities of American politics. This introduction lays the groundwork for an examination of the varied nature of political polarization, from its historical roots to probable future walkways, exposing the causes driving differences and their consequences for the nation's democratic structure. Utopia (2024, April 23).

Wikipedia contributors (2024, April 29) present the viewpoint of psychology professors Gordon Heltzel and Kristin Laurin, who propose that political polarization arises as subsets of a population gradually develop more distinct attitudes toward parties and party members (i.e., affective polarization), as well as ideologies and policies (ideological polarization). Political

polarization reflects a significant societal shift. Political polarization, characterized by the widening ideological gap between liberals and conservatives, Republicans and Democrats, stands as a defining characteristic of contemporary American politics. Campbell, J. E. (2018)

According to "Utopia" (2024, April 23), the narrative following Adlai Stevenson's 1952 presidential defeat reflects the evolution of American politics, characterized by efforts to establish cohesive party systems and ideological clarity. E. E. Schattschneider advocated for a liberal competition party promoting programmatic parties based on clear policy positions. Despite challenges to harmony, attempts to realign party politics persisted leading to conflicts within the labor movement and Eisenhower's "Modern Republicanism." This period also witnessed the revival of the doctrine of responsible party government, aiming to modernize party structures and promote programmatic parties. The American Political Science Association proposed reforms to centralize national power within parties, sparking debates on party organization.

During the period from 1952 to 1960, liberal Democrats advocated for a more disciplined party, with figures like Adlai Stevenson and Paul Butler contributing to this vision. Butler aimed to reform the party towards a more issue-focused approach, leading initiatives like the Democratic Advisory Council. Despite resistance, the Democratic Advisory Council challenged policy statements and promoted a coherent Democratic agenda. Conflicts within the Democratic Party, particularly regarding civil rights, laid the groundwork for ideological realignment. Concurrently, during Eisenhower's presidency, conflicts between conservative Republicans and his "Modern Republicanism" spurred the rise of the postwar conservative movement. Barry Goldwater's conservative stance highlighted the ideological divide within the party. The Sixties witnessed the emergence of the New Left and the postwar conservative movement, fueled by grassroots activism. Bipartisan cooperation in policymaking emerged in the mid-1960s, but ideological zeal challenged consensus-driven politics (Rosenfeld, 2018).

In his book "Polarized: Understanding Divided America" Campbell, J. E. (2018) discusses how in the 1960s, America witnessed significant polarization as a result of movements like the counterculture, anti-war activism, and civil rights struggles. These movements were notable for challenging mainstream American values, leading to increased social and political tensions. The rejection of these values exacerbated pre-existing conflicts and had a lasting impact on contemporary American politics. Moving into the 1970s, political parties experienced a decline, followed by a resurgence in power and coherence, particularly with Democrats initiating major reforms. Republican attempts at realignment were unsuccessful, resulting in a more ideologically polarized landscape. The Republican Party saw significant reshaping by conservative activists, including the Christian Right, which redefined its identity and electoral strategies. Similarly, liberal activists within the Democratic Party formed alliances with labor and social movements, establishing a distinct coalition. However, ongoing conflicts within the labor movement and the enduring influence of the postwar conservative movement continued to shape the dynamics of both political parties, highlighting the intricate and evolving nature of American politics during this period.

The 1980 presidential campaign marked a shift towards ideological appeals showcasing the energy of the liberal coalition within the Democratic Party. From 1980 to 2000, Ronald Reagan and the Republican Party solidified partisan divisions, with Newt Gingrich advocating for a more aggressive approach. The rise of the "New Democrats" challenged the narrative of liberal decline, promoting centrist positions within the Democratic Party. However, liberalism remained influential, contradicting the belief in liberal decline. From 2000 to 2016, heightened political polarization, partisan conflicts, and ideological shifts characterized American politics. The rise of factions within parties and the success of outsider candidates like Donald Trump reflected potential shifts within the party system. The path out of polarization remained uncertain, with the postwar conservative movement and grassroots activism continuing to influence party dynamics (Campbell, J. E. 2018).

In conclusion, the pivotal function of intentional actors in shaping the evolution of political polarization within the United States is underscored, especially by redefining the interplay between ideology and partisanship. By focusing on the transformative efforts of ideological activists and birthday party elites, it illuminates the critical effect of birthday celebration dynamics on postwar US politics. Moreover, it demands traditional narratives dominated by means of quantitative political technological know-how, advocating for an extra-nuanced expertise of present-day polarization. Ultimately, those insights provide precious instructions for future studies on events and the continued improvement of American politics. (Rosenfeld, 2018)

2.2. Tech-Social Trends Amid Polarization: Current Analysis

The analysis explores the relationship between technology and societal trends, particularly the spread of social media platforms and algorithmic bias, in the face of growing political and social division. It uses data-driven insights and case studies to understand the intricate interactions between polarization and technology, suggesting ways to promote harmony and understanding in a world increasingly divided.

2.2.1. American Political Landscape and Governance Challenges

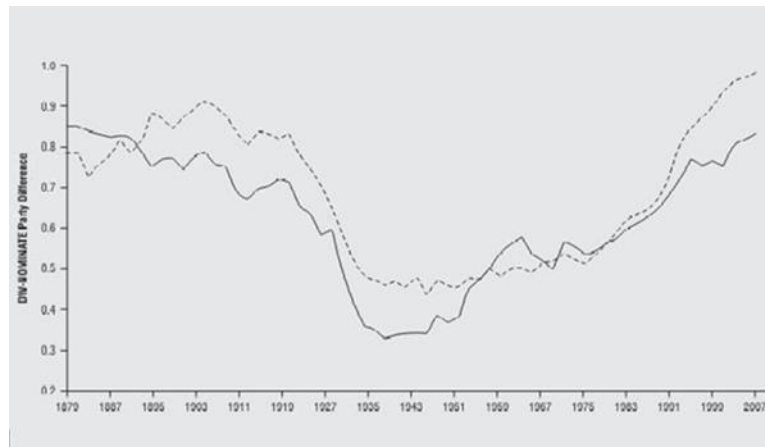
American politics, influenced by various socio-political factors, has transitioned from sectionalism to nationalization and suburbanization. Religion, individuality, and individualism have disrupted traditional party lines. California represents decentralized politics with weak party discipline. The rise of conservatism has increased ideological division. The presidency embodies power within a decentralized system, shaped by media and immigration. Core principles continue to guide responses to domestic and international issues (Vile, 1970).

Vile, M. J. C. (1970), explores the dynamic nature of the American political landscape, highlighting the complex interplay of various socio-political factors that have shaped governance systems over time. Historically, sectionalism played a significant role in delineating political

allegiances along regional lines. However, the aftermath of the Great Depression marked a gradual shift towards nationalization, epitomized by the emergence of the New Deal coalition led by figures like Franklin D. Roosevelt, which effectively bridged sectional and class divides. Socio-economic changes, including suburbanization, further complicated the political terrain, altering voting patterns and behaviors. Concurrently, religion has been a crucial determinant, from the influence of early settlers to the rise of movements like the Moral Majority, aligning religious conservatism with the Republican Party. This intersection of religion and politics intersects with the increasing tide of individualism, challenging traditional party loyalties and emphasizing the importance of personal appeal in electoral dynamics. California serves as a microcosm of American politics' decentralized nature, characterized by a diverse demographic mosaic and significant local governance autonomy. However, weak party discipline and participatory democracy mechanisms introduce complexities, compounded by the dominance of a two-party system amidst occasional third-party movements. Despite consensus-driven pragmatism, recent years have witnessed heightened ideological polarization, particularly with the rise of conservatism. The presidency occupies a unique position within this intricate landscape, embodying both symbolic authority and operational constraints amid decentralized governance structures. Media, leadership, judiciary, immigration, and foreign policy constitute crucial dimensions of American politics, continually shaped by historical legacies, contemporary events, and enduring principles. Recent shifts, such as increased partisanship and critiques of neoconservative foreign policy, underscore the ongoing evolution of the American political system, while its core principles continue to guide responses to domestic and international challenges.

In this insightful chart, the trajectory of party polarization within the United States Congress from 1879 to 2009 is visually depicted, offering a comprehensive overview of the increasing ideological divide between political parties over the course of more than a century.

Figure 2.2.1. Party Polarization in Congress 1879 – 2009



In conclusion, American politics has evolved through a dynamic interaction of socio-political factors, shaping governance and elections. From sectionalism to nationalization and religion's influence, the landscape has constantly shifted. California displays decentralized politics despite weak party discipline. The presidency retains significance amid ideological polarization. Key dimensions like media and immigration politics evolve to address modern challenges, showing the ongoing evolution of the American political system (Vile, 1970).

2.2.2. Technological Utopianism's Impact on American Polarization

"Utopia," coined by Sir Thomas More in 1516, depicts an ideal society, often as a fictional island community with highly desirable traits (2024, April 23)., while Utopianism advocates for impossibly flawless societal perfection, reflecting the aspirations of believers (Utopianism: Definition, n.d.)

Segal, H. P. (1985), in his book "Technological Utopianism in American Culture," stated that from 1883 to 1933, portrayals of the United States as a utopia surged, driven by faith in technological progress. Twenty-five individuals linked technology with utopia, highlighting a historical tie between American technology and utopian ideals. These visionaries emphasized technology's role, shaped by the industrial revolution. Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward"

gained fame, while similar works remained obscure, reflecting American hopes and concerns, offering solutions and critiquing predictions, and advocating utopianism for social critique.

In the thought-provoking image below, the concept of the "Man Corporate" is visually represented, portraying the archetype of a powerful individual who exerts control and influence within the corporate world, symbolizing broader dynamics of authority, hierarchy, and dominance.

Figure 2.2.2. Party Polarization in Congress 1879 – 2009



In the article "From Cyber-Utopia to Cyber-War: Normative Change in Cyberspace" on pages 86–88, Matthias Schulze (2018) suggests that technology often fails to align with traditional frameworks in society, highlighting a disagreement on how to address socio-technical challenges, particularly in the American context, where technological divisions are stark. Schulze notes the juxtaposition of techno-utopian ideals and social inquiry within a polarized citizenry, contrasting sharply with alternative perspectives such as technological determinism, actor-network theory, or system theory. According to Schulze, constructionism diverges from other paradigms by viewing technology as both emerging from and causing social changes simultaneously. Proponents of caution emphasize the importance of careful planning during the conception stage and adherence to cultural practices that shape its outcomes, adopting a consequentialist approach. In Schulze's work, it is noted that a significant constructivist outlook emphasizes the relationship between technological design, power relations, and societal

conventions amid increasing polarization. Long-term studies employing stage theories provide insight into this connection, particularly during the mainstreaming phase, where technical innovation intersects with social relations and politics.

2.2.2.1. Origins of Technological Utopianism in America and Europe

The technological Utopians, though not organized, championed technology as the key to an ideal society, reflecting a shared belief in progress through technology. Born mostly in the mid-19th century, they were well-educated white Protestant males with careers in advancing technology and addressing contemporary societal issues in their writings. Their utopian visions, influenced by personal anxieties, viewed technology as a solution despite concerns about misuse, revealing the anxieties and hopes of their era. Meanwhile, European thinkers from Thomas More to Charles Fourier laid the groundwork for technological utopianism, envisioning societies shaped by technology and social progress. Later, figures like Fourier and Marx in 19th-century America highlighted technology's potential for a more equitable future, shaping American attitudes and debates on utopia, rooted in European thought but evolving uniquely in American society (Segal, 1985).

2.2.2.2. Understanding Political Polarization in Modern Society

According to Howard P. Segal's work "Technological Utopianism in American Culture" (1985, p. 98–118), polarization is depicted as a multifaceted phenomenon evident across various societal dimensions, including political, social, and emotional realms. Within the political sphere, polarization arises as populations and ideological factions fracture, resulting in stark divisions among opposing political groups. On the social front, polarization manifests as societal segregation fueled by economic and cultural disparities, exacerbating social stratification and inequality. Additionally, Segal discusses affective polarization, which denotes the growing emotional divide and erosion of trust among partisan entities, leading to animosity and discord. The author suggests that unfavorable elements such as pervasive media bias and political scandals further intensify societal rifts, fostering increased distrust in established institutions.

Moreover, Segal highlights the role of populist movements, driven by critiques of globalization and demands for elite privilege, in exacerbating polarization dynamics, thereby deepening societal divides and heightening tensions within various groups.

2.3. Contemporary American polarization affects Society and Democracy

The latest surge in political polarization within America has sparked concerns about the nation of democracy, as immoderate polarization undermines trust and fosters disrespect among political adversaries. Two possible futures are debated: continued escalation fuelled by misperceptions or reaching a peak and declining. The effect of polarization is evident in news stories depicting political foes disrespecting each other, threatening the stability of American democracy. The current polarization is at an all-time high, marked by an increasing divergence in attitudes toward parties and ideologies. While a few argue polarization stimulates civic engagement, it additionally poses demanding situations by hindering meaningful debates and coverage agreements. Recent psychological studies spotlight unfavorable consequences, consisting of avoidance of opposing views and prioritization of party loyalty over vital assessment. Possible futures suggest both continued escalation and decline driven by growing resentment. Empirical evidence offers mixed findings, with upcoming elections potentially worsening divides. Addressing misperceptions of polarization could disrupt its self-perpetuating cycle and restore common ground between parties (Heltzel & Laurin, 2020).

In 2022, the United States faced developing democratic problems, exacerbated socioeconomic conflicts, and a growing wealth disparity. Despite domestic instability, the United States maintained its global attitude of democratic supremacy, holding the "Summit for Democracy" to establish its ideals throughout the world. This research shines light on the realities of American democracy, highlighting institutional degradation, political division, growing money politics, and restrictions on free expression. American democracy was in crisis of credibility, with party conflicts crippling administration and money increasingly influencing political results. Government meddling and corporate interests appeared to undermine free

expression, increasing worries about media manipulation and truth suppression. The United States' worldwide influence highlighted its hegemonic inclinations, as it maintained power through bloc politics and strategic information management ("The State of Democracy in the United States: 2022, n.d.)

2.3.1. Exploring Polarization: Consequences and Solutions

The impact of polarization on the United States is complex, with no clear positive or negative outcomes. While historical context shows disagreement is common, concerns remain about potential democratic implications. Over decades, polarization has steadily expanded, necessitating ongoing research to comprehend its ramifications and explore institutional reforms. It's crucial to recognize that polarization manifests differently based on party dynamics and governmental authority, warranting nuanced analysis. Further investigation is imperative to grasp both the positive and negative effects of polarization and to tackle significant unresolved issues in this area. Stemming from intensified political ideologies, media fragmentation, demographic shifts, economic inequality, and geographic segregation, polarization fosters gridlock, decreased trust in institutions, social division, policy instability, and democratic erosion. Addressing this intricate dynamic is paramount to ensuring political stability, social unity, and effective governance (Kleinfeld, 2023)..

2.3.1.1. "Positive Consequences"

Polarization in America can have a positive impact by giving voters clear choices through distinct party platforms, potentially increasing civic participation and voter turnout. Clear stances on topics make elected officials more accountable and may improve the conduct of political campaigns by revealing real distinctions between candidates. While vigorous political debate can be divisive, it also has the ability to highlight actual issues and strengthen democracy, especially when combined with appropriate mechanisms for encouraging public participation and resolving disputes. Kleinfeld, R. (2023, Sep 5).

2.3.1.2. “Negative Consequences”

In contrast, polarization in American politics has resulted in increased legislative gridlock, with data indicating that Congress is less productive during polarized eras. The loss of moderate MPs exacerbates the problem, making bipartisan cooperation more difficult. Furthermore, procedural changes caused by party polarization may jeopardize the quality of lawmaking, such as increased reliance on closed procedures for floor votes and the exclusion of minority parties from debates. The negative consequences extend to the federal judiciary, where prolonged judicial nominations and disagreements over ideological nominees may undermine judicial confidence. Polarization in foreign policy undermines united leadership and may harm the country's global status, with significant divides possibly emboldening rivals and discouraging allies. Elite polarization in foreign affairs increasingly divides the public, as evidenced by major disagreements on subjects such as the Iraq War ("Researchers Find Broad Impacts From Political Polarization," n.d.).

2.3.1.3. Solutions to Polarization

Addressing polarization necessitates a holistic approach that includes both political leaders and the general populace. Solutions may seek to reduce polarization or its detrimental effects. The proposed remedies include institutional reforms in Congress as well as broader socioeconomic efforts. Implementing these measures will be difficult, especially given the current polarized political environment. Furthermore, before acting, it is critical to completely comprehend the consequences of polarization as well as potential solutions. This early-stage conversation focuses on key concepts for prospective future undertakings (Persily, 2015).

In conclusion, polarization in the United States is a complex challenge with a variety of outcomes. While it can boost civic engagement and provide clarity for political decisions, it also exacerbates parliamentary gridlock and undermines democratic institutions. Addressing division necessitates a diversified strategy that includes both political elites and the general public. By

enacting institutional reforms, encouraging public participation, and altering media influence, it may be possible to limit the negative impacts of polarization while retaining its potential benefits. However, careful analysis and continued research are required to provide successful solutions that promote a healthy and functioning democracy (Kleinfeld, 2023).

2.4. Socioeconomic Influences on American Polarization

The socioeconomic influences on American polarization are multifaceted, with research highlighting various factors contributing to this phenomenon. Scholars have identified that economic hardship, rising inequality and regional disparities play significant roles in fueling polarization in the United States. Studies have shown a correlation between inequality and affective polarization, which indicates economic challenges, can trigger intragroup conflicts along available social divisions, which leads to increased polarization. Social trust is declining, largely due to perceived polarization, which makes people doubt the existence of shared values and interests. This polarization is fueled by changes in media coverage and the influence of social networks on personal beliefs (Socioeconomic Factors | CDC, 2023).

2.4.1 Income Inequality fuels Political Polarization in The US

Income inequality contributes to political polarization in the United States by exacerbating ideological divisions and shaping party dynamics. Research indicates that rising income inequality has a significant effect on political polarization, leading to a more stratified partisanship based on income levels. The widening wealth gap has influenced the ideological positions of political parties, particularly on economic issues, and has contributed to the development of a more polarized party system in the U.S. Scholars have highlighted that income disparity interacts with political conflict, with trends in economic inequality and political polarization moving almost in tandem over the past decades. This correlation suggests that as it increases; political conflicts intensify, potentially leading to a more divided political landscape

where parties compete on economic policies and value dimensions ("Political Polarization and Income Inequality," n.d.).

2.4.2 Wealth Disparity Fuels Economic Polarization in The US

Since the 1970s, the United States has witnessed a profound deepening of wealth disparity, marking a significant shift in economic dynamics. This period has seen a stark contrast emerge where the rich have grown richer, the poor have become poorer, and the middle class has faced increasing financial pressure. This trend is evident in the rising Gini coefficient, a measure that reflects income inequality, signaling a substantial income gap within the nation. Siripurapu, A. (2022, April 21).

Siripurapu (2022) discusses how economic trends in the United States have led to a widening wealth gap, where the affluent have seen substantial financial gains while those with lower incomes struggle. This divergence is evident in the increasing Gini coefficient, signaling a growing disparity in income distribution among different socioeconomic groups. Additionally, there is a notable discrepancy in income growth among various income brackets, underscoring the challenges faced by the middle class. As wealth accumulates among the rich and financial burdens intensify for the poor, the middle class contends with economic pressures and limited opportunities for upward mobility.

The implications of this wealth disparity and economic polarization are far-reaching, affecting not only individual financial well-being but also societal cohesion and stability. The widening income gap poses challenges to social mobility, exacerbates existing inequalities, and contributes to the overall polarization within American society. Siripurapu, A. (2022, April 21).

2.4.2.1 Inequality Correlates with Affective Polarization in The US

Recent studies have highlighted a significant correlation between inequality and affective polarization across U.S. states. The data indicates that economic hardship can be a driving factor

behind the increase in polarization presenting a challenge in reversing this trend once it becomes firmly established. The research findings underscore the link between economic disparities and the rise of affective polarization within American society. As inequality grows and economic hardships persist, individuals are more likely to experience heightened levels of polarization, leading to a deepening divide between different social groups. This correlation suggests that economic factors play a crucial role in shaping individuals' perceptions and attitudes towards opposing political parties, contributing to the polarization observed across various states in the U.S (Bettarelli & Van Haute, 2022).

Bettarelli and Van Haute (2022) suggest that the data implies that once affective polarization becomes established due to economic challenges, reversing this trend becomes increasingly challenging. They note that the entrenched nature of polarization, fueled by economic disparities, presents a significant obstacle to efforts aimed at promoting unity and cooperation among diverse societal groups. This underscores the intricate relationship between economic conditions, social dynamics, and political polarization, emphasizing the necessity for comprehensive strategies to tackle both economic inequality and the polarization it generates.

2.5. The Role of Mass Media in American Polarization

According to Levendusky (2017), the impact of mass media on American polarization is significant and complex, as indicated by the findings presented. Mass media platforms, such as cable news channels like Fox News and CNN, are instrumental in molding public perceptions, shaping political ideologies, and exacerbating the polarization within American politics.

2.5.1 Partisan Signaling and Polarization

The media's role in reinforcing political polarization in the United States is multifaceted. One significant aspect is the provision of partisan signals in news coverage, which can have a profound impact on the public's beliefs and attitudes. These partisan signals can be defined as the presentation of news and information in a way that is biased towards a particular political

ideology or party. This can be achieved through various means, including the selection of stories, the framing of issues, and the use of language that is more favorable to one side or the other. The provision of partisan signals in news coverage can have several effects on the public (Levendusky, 2017).

Firstly, it can reinforce existing beliefs and attitudes, making individuals more entrenched in their political views. This is particularly true for those who already hold strong political beliefs, as they are more likely to be influenced by information that confirms their existing views ("Political Polarization and Democracy in the United States," PRRI, 2022).

Secondly, partisan signals can contribute to the process of partisan sorting, where individuals are more likely to associate with others who share their political beliefs and attitudes. This can lead to the formation of political echo chambers, where individuals are exposed primarily to information that supports their existing beliefs, further deepening the divide between liberals and conservatives, Democrats and Republicans. The media's role in reinforcing political polarization is not limited to the provision of partisan signals. The media's coverage of political issues can also influence the ideological alignment of the public. For instance, the media's coverage of political issues can shape public opinion on issues like climate change, healthcare and economic policy. This can be particularly significant in the United States, where the media plays a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing political outcomes ("Political Polarization and Democracy in the United States," PRRI, 2022).

2.5.1.1 Affective Polarization

It is characterized by strongly negative attitudes and behaviours towards the opposing political party, is a significant issue in the United States. The media, particularly cable news channels like CNN and Fox News, play a crucial role in shaping public attitudes and contributing to this polarization. The media's tendency to present partisan cues and ideological frames reinforces group identities and animosity, ultimately driving affective polarization. The media's

influence on public opinion is multifaceted. Cable news channels like CNN and Fox News cater to ideologically homogeneous audiences, presenting partisan cues and ideological frames that align with their viewers' political beliefs. This reinforces group identities and animosity, contributing to the development of strongly negative attitudes towards the opposing political party. Furthermore, the media's focus on conflict and sensationalism can amplify extreme or divisive political views, further polarizing the public. The television format, in particular, is conducive to providing "balance" by featuring opposing viewpoints, which can lead to a greater emphasis on climate change skepticism and denial (Yang, 2023).

2.5.1.2 Ideological Segregation

The phenomenon of ideological segregation in media consumption is a significant contributor to political polarization in the United States. Liberals and conservatives tend to inhabit distinct "media bubbles", relying on different news sources that align with their respective political views. This ideological segregation further exacerbates polarization by limiting exposure to opposing perspectives. The concept of ideological segregation is rooted in the tendency of individuals to seek out and consume media content that reinforces their existing beliefs and worldviews. This selective exposure to information creates echo chambers, where individuals are exposed to a narrow range of perspectives that align with their political leanings. As a result, they become increasingly insulated from alternative viewpoints and less likely to engage in meaningful dialogue with those who hold different political beliefs. The impact of ideological segregation on political polarization is significant. By limiting exposure to opposing perspectives, individuals become more entrenched in their own beliefs and less willing to consider alternative viewpoints. This, in turn, leads to a widening of the ideological divide, as individuals become more polarized and less willing to compromise or find common ground. Furthermore, the rise of partisan media outlets, such as Fox News and MSNBC, has exacerbated this problem. These outlets cater to specific ideological audiences, reinforcing their existing

beliefs and further contributing to the ideological segregation of media consumption (Zheng & Scardino, 2021).

2.6. The Role of Religion in American Polarization

The role of religion in American politics and society is intricate and multifaceted. While often depicted as conservative and divisive, it's more nuanced. Religion has historically shaped the American experience, from Puritan influence to religious leaders' involvement in the Revolution. The diversity of religious traditions, including evangelical movements and Islam's introduction by African slaves, has strengthened the nation's dedication to religious freedom.

However, the relationship between religion and politics in the U.S. has evolved over time. The search results suggest that the alignment of religious and partisan identities has contributed to political polarization, with the rise of "Christian nationalism" and the politicization of certain religious beliefs exacerbating cultural and political divides. At the same time, religion has also served as a unifying force, with religious leaders playing a role in social movements like the abolition of slavery. Importantly, the search results indicate that the influence of religion in American society is not static, but rather has been shaped by broader societal changes. The decline in religious affiliation, particularly among younger generations and political moderates, has contributed to a perceived diminishing role of religion in public life. This shift has not been uniform, however, with some regions and demographics maintaining a strong attachment to religion and its influence on politics (Gjelten, 2017).

According to "The Changing Dynamics of Class and Culture in American Politics: A Test of the Polarization Hypothesis" (n.d.), scholars highlight the significant contribution of political elites and party activists to the exacerbation of polarization in the United States, with ordinary citizens frequently finding themselves caught in the crossfire of these identity-based divisions. They describe this phenomenon as involving a deepening of cultural and identity-based divides within American society, extending beyond mere policy discrepancies. Effectively addressing

political polarization entails addressing these underlying cultural and identity-based divisions that have arisen. The role of political elites and party activists in exacerbating polarization is described as multifaceted. They often employ strategies to manipulate participatory mechanisms like elections, weaken institutions, and undermine political opponents, resulting in the segmentation of society into rigid factions. Furthermore, the emergence of populist leaders can intensify polarization by rejecting historical precedents and advocating for extreme ideologies. Ordinary citizens, meanwhile, frequently find themselves ensnared in the midst of these identity-based divisions. They face pressure to align with a particular side or risk being categorized by others into specific groups, potentially exacerbating polarization. This pattern is not confined to the United States, as evidenced by examples such as Brexit in the United Kingdom, the peace referendum in Colombia, and the ascension of populist leaders in France and Austria. Effectively addressing political polarization necessitates transcending mere policy differences and confronting the deeper cultural and identity-based chasms that have surfaced. This requires a comprehensive understanding of the historical and social contexts that have contributed to these divisions, including movements such as the Civil Rights Movement and cultural divisions surrounding social issues.

Addressing polarization necessitates a nuanced approach recognizing American society's complexities and how political elites and party activists shape public opinion ("The Changing Dynamics of Class and Culture in American Politics," JSTOR, n.d.).

2.7. Examining Religious Rhetoric's Impact on Sociopolitical Division: A Speech Analysis

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine speeches by key political and religious leaders in the United States. We carefully select these speeches to cover a wide range of viewpoints, aiming to understand how religion and politics interact. Our method helps us identify common themes, stories, and persuasive tactics that leaders use to either unite or divide people based on religion. We pay special attention to how religious language and symbols influence

political conversations and rally support. The study's variables, like themes and rhetorical strategies, show a strong connection between religion and politics, highlighting how religious elements are consistently used to shape political discourse.

The focus of the study in this section has shifted to a practical approach and self-analysis based mainly on supports and evidences. This approach allows us to deeply analyze the subtle ways religious rhetoric impacts political discussions.

2.7.1. American president Kennedy's extract

The speaker's stress on the need to keep church and state separate and on the opposition to "an established church" hints of trying to prevent the chances of having religious cleavages contribute more to political polarization which is highly pronounced in American politics because in the face of Europe, the high religiosity and special standing of the state make religion a significant reason for this.

Furthermore, the president's statement that they would oppose an official state church even if 99% of the people were Catholic reveals a strong view of the separation of religion and politics. This is consistent with findings from research pointing to "ethno-religious identities, religious demography, and religious institutions" as drivers of a range of tensions within America.

He focused on the fact that various religious groups agree about keeping a distance between church and state, for example Episcopalians, Lutherans, Catholics, Jews, Presbyterians as well as Methodists; hence making it easy to bridge the gap among people. It may help to reduce how much effect religion has on generating political factions if for example according to findings by researchers "religion acts as unifier instead of divider" in some places generally.

The speaker understands how religion and politics are related in a complex manner in America and wishes to manage through it so as to keep faith free and at the same time foster

unity in society, this is the same standpoint that research has taken in similar cases of American polarization on the aspect of religion".

2.7.2 American president Biden's extract

According to Biden's speech, Fasting during Lent and Ramadan underscores similarities in the three major Abrahamic religions. It has been noted by the speaker that even though fasting could be done in privacy; it also promotes communal linkages, besides being crucial to Eid fête and the perseverance of Muslims residing within America.

The speaker liked Ramadan fasting to Lent by stating that Ramadan requires fasting from sunrise to sunset for thirty days; the latter being much easier because all one has to do is not eat sweet things such as ice cream throughout Lent." Another point that has been made here is how both religions observe abstinence during a particular period; however there are differences regarding what must be abstained from or for how long.

The quote also mentions a Quranic verse which reads: "We have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another". This phrase indicates the importance of diversity and mutual understanding among different cultures. In the light of American polarization, this line posits that diversity acceptance and connection can close gaps.

The speaker asserts that Muslims in America who fast during Ramadan and celebrate Eid Al-Fitr are contributing to the fabric of this country by recognizing their culture's place within it. This perspective aligns with Studies suggest that religious beliefs can sometimes be unifying forces in society rather than sources of division.

2.7.3.American president Trump's extract

The extract talks about how religion affects American polarization in a few important ways. It starts by showing how religious customs, like saying "so help me God" during official ceremonies, are deeply rooted in American traditions, even though they're not required by the

Constitution. This shows how religion and politics have been mixed together over time. Also, it talks about how the idea of religious freedom and keeping religion separate from government is crucial. It says forcing officials to use religious practices could go against the Constitution. This is a big topic in discussions about how religion should fit into government, which is really important when we think about why Americans are so divided.

The extract also mentions the different beliefs of America's founders, showing how diverse the country has always been. But it doesn't ignore the fact that not everyone has had the same freedom to practice their religion. It talks about how groups like enslaved people and Native Americans were treated unfairly when it came to religious freedom. This shows that America's history with religion is complicated and not always fair.

It also brings up how religious language is used in public things like the Pledge of Allegiance, saying "One Nation under God." This shows how religion has been tied to America's identity, which affects how laws are made and how people talk about politics. Lastly, it warns about the dangers of mixing government and religion, pointing out how it can lead to discrimination against certain groups based on their beliefs.

Overall, the extract gives us a lot to think about when it comes to how religion and politics mix in America. It shows that it's not a simple issue and that there are many different sides to consider.

2.7.4 . The Rise of Political Polarization Goldman Stories: Henry Brady's extract

According to Henry Brady, the passage talks about how religion has made politics in America more divided. "It says that now, Republicans and Democrats don't want their children to marry someone from the other party", showing how different their beliefs have become. It used to be that the main differences between the parties were about money, but now, religion has become a big deal. This change started when many Democrats from the South joined the Republican Party after the Civil Rights Acts. They teamed up with Christians from the South and

Midwest, making the differences in religious beliefs between parties even bigger. This has made issues like abortion, gay rights, and prayer in schools even more contentious because people have strong beliefs about them and don't want to compromise. The passage also talks about how Democrats and Republicans trust different things.

By stating that "Knowledge and facts are the foundation of science, journalism, and higher education." Values are important to the military, the police, and religion. It appears that Republicans have greater faith in the military and religion, while Democrats have greater faith in fields like science and education. The political rift widens as a result. It implies that critical thinking instruction might facilitate interpersonal harmony. In general, it illustrates how religion has exacerbated political division in America and offers strategies for attempting to heal divisions.

Conclusion

The analysis of American political polarization reveals a complex environment influenced by historical, sociopolitical, and technological factors. This study explores the complex interactions between socioeconomic inequality, technological utopianism, media influence, and religious factors, from their historical roots to their modern manifestations. It emphasizes how these dynamics have a significant impact on issues of governance, social cohesiveness, and democratic ideals. By examining the effects and possible remedies, it is clear that combating polarization requires an all-encompassing strategy that recognizes the complexity of its causes and expressions. Understanding the complex web of variables that lead to polarization can help society work to promote inclusivity, empathy, and discourse all of which are essential for maintaining a strong democratic system and cohesive social fabric.

Conclusions

This study looks closely at how religion influences American society and politics. It shows how religion can make people have different ideas and disagree about important issues. By studying past conflicts and looking at different religious groups, we can learn a lot about why America is so divided today. It explains how religious beliefs affect politics a lot, making people on different sides feel strongly about their ideas. This study also talks about how religion shapes the rules and values of society, as well as the laws we make. It helps us understand better why America is so divided and gives us good ideas for how to deal with these challenges.

The findings of our research have largely met goals and claims we set out from the start. Using a qualitative approach, we applied specific criteria and various methods to gather and analyze data, providing strong evidence to support our conclusions. By employing historical analysis, current case studies, and statistical techniques, we demonstrated that our main goal was achieved. This allowed us to examine how religious beliefs shape society and create political divisions. Our findings also offer insights into how religious identities deepen partisan divides, illuminate the complex relationship between religion and politics, and suggest ways to enhance political unity despite differences. By focusing on the qualitative aspects, our research clearly demonstrates the significant role religion plays in increasing polarization in the U.S, offering a deeper understanding of its impact on the American political divide.

The goal of this study was to look at how religion affects political division in America, and whether religious leaders and institutions make things better or worse. We also wanted to see how people's religious beliefs affect how they vote and what policies they support. We checked out how different religious groups relate to different political parties and ideas, and what happens to the country when people get really divided over religion. What we found is that religion plays

a big role in splitting people apart politically, because everyone has different beliefs. This affects how they vote and what they want from their government. For example, some religious groups tend to support one political party more than others, like conservative Christians often lean towards the Republican Party. This makes it hard for everyone to get along and work together.

Our research shows that religious beliefs play a key role in creating social and political divisions in the U.S. Through historical analysis, case studies, and statistical techniques, we reveal how increasing religious diversity and secularization shape political views and voting patterns. For example, the growing number of Americans without religious affiliation has changed perceptions of political parties, particularly linking the Republican Party with conservative Christianity. Additionally, our findings indicate that religious identities can both deepen partisan divides and unite groups for social justice, as seen in the civil rights movement. Understanding this complex relationship between religion and politics is essential for developing strategies to enhance political unity despite religious and ideological differences, thereby promoting a more cohesive and inclusive political landscape.

Finally, although our dissertation delves deeply into the connection between religion and politics in the United States and how it affects division in the country, there is still a great deal to learn. We invite scholars and readers to explore further the ways in which shifting religious variety and secularization may influence political opinions, leading to polarization. Party division and the development of religious "nones" require further study. It is crucial to comprehend the mechanisms behind the relationship between politics and religion. In order to create a more cohesive and inclusive political environment, we want academics build on our work to discover fresh approaches to fostering political unity in the face of ideological and religious diversity in America.

Appendixes

Appendix A : Future Pres. Kennedy Talks Faith on Face the Nation

“He duties as conscience with of my that was our particular argument with the Nazis that we all have conscience but not I have stated in my judgment that there is no conflict there is no conflict between my responsibilities as a public official carry out my duties and obligations and my faith I am sworn to carry out and serve the public interest and that's what I'm going to do that's what I do in the Senate that's what I'll do if I'm president and there's nothing that can prevent me from doing that the Constitution and my conscience happen to be in very close harmony because I happen to believe it's the uh ideal arrangement for a society I want to see the people free to practice all their various religions we are quite unique in this regard I mean most many of the countries in Europe have a close Union between church and state we don't now m because uh we have had experiences historically where there has been a close Union between some countries which were catholic and the state or between as there now is the Church of England the queen is the head of the Church of England as well as Head of the State or in some of the Scandinavian countries where the Lutheran Church is the official state church but here in the United States Episcopalians Lutherans Catholics Jews Presbyterians Methodists all of us happen to believe that we do not want an official state church I would be opposed to it If This Were 99% of the population were Catholics I would still be opposed to it I do not want civil power combined with religious power now that's my view and I don't if some other VI person holds a different view if some other Catholic in another country holds a different view that's their right but I want to make clear that my am committed as a matter of con personal deep conviction to the separation now what is there left to say what could I say senator why is it that we're going to have we have 35 million Catholics what is there in their record that makes anyone think that they're not as devoted to this idea of these parathion of church and state I don't recall in this campaign that there's any

member of my faith that's ever come out indicated Pro Aon me who happens to be in the clergy I think that we are committed to this and if I'm even if I'm not elected president which is possible I won't be that is where I stand in my judgment that is where the great majority of my co-religionists in this country stand and I think we should be accepted on that basis I think there's without reference to your personal position which I think you certainly expressed yourself on Mr. Potter suggested or mentioned the meeting that you participated in in Houston with the Ministerial Association you made a film of that and question has been raised as to why you continue to show that film in predominantly Catholic areas we don't Mr. Nain the best of my knowledge has only been one case which was accidental where it was shown in an area where this matter had not been brought up as a major discussion point the film and answers this question and every poll has shown that uh there are substantial percentage of the population today's paper indicates that uh in some states that uh some candidates are having difficulty because of my religion this film represents my stand on this question the separation of church and state is the is the most effective way that at least I can give Assurance on this question and I strongly believe that this question should be removed from the decision seems to me in the most critical time in the life of our country for us to be talking about an issue that was admirably settled when this country was founded in the Constitution anything that I can do to contribute to removing that on either side as an issue and getting down to the issues which face our survival I think is in the public interest I wonder if we can get to the economic issue and now uh Mr. Nixon has been quoting from newspaper saying that you have predicted a recession and he's described this I think quoting him as Despicable and ignorant and he naive and rude and uninformed too he's also quoted uh newspapers as saying automobile sales have reached a new high I wonder if you could tell us how you view the economy now and just what your position to the best of my knowledge I've never said we were in a recession I said there's danger of recession I said the winter of 1961 could be difficult I quoted The Wall Street Journal which has said we've been in a recession I don't uh use that term because I do believe we are hanging in a balance and I don't

think that uh would be appropriate yet to give it the official title of recession I don't know what's going to happen in the winter 61 that's my first point so Mr. Nixon I it believe is uninformed in that matter or at least inaccurate secondly on automobile sales the uh the fact is I believe that there are probably going to be more cars unsold by the middle of November than we've ever had in our history I would uh be prepared to uh ask Mr. Nixon or anyone else if that isn't true they're turning out cars greater than we've turned them out in 5 years and yet the sales would not indicate that we're going to we're selling them as fast we're going to produce them anybody can go in any car dealer who's listening here can tell you answer the question whether he thinks that the car sales are at a record high this year they're going to have more cars unsold by the middle of November than we've ever had steel capacity is 50% we're building 30% less homes than we built a year ago the uh third quarter reports uh in the papers this week of the various companies shows that most of them are down so that I would say that uh business is shaky I hope we're not going to have a recession".

Appendix B : Joe Biden Quotes Quran as He Hosts Eid Celebration in White House

“ aid Mubarak Music you know uh, there's a lot of similarities between all the three major religions here but I want you to know you have a slight advantage in Ramadan for lent I got to go 40 days40 days with no sweets and no ice cream I did it 40 it's harder guys you know what i mean anyway throughout the past month Muslims have fasted each day and from dawn to dusk and while you know while exercising the patience of discipline can be a solitary act it also is something that strengthens community bonds it helps communities stick together communities are is essential to the celebration of Ramadan and aid and the resilience of Muslim Americans enriching the fabric of this nation is testament to quorum's teaching we have made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another the last part , you may know one another ”.

Appendix C : Attorney Eboni Williams Discusses Donald Trump’s Stance on Religion

“So help me God. So help me God. So help me God. A lot of Americans don't even know that the phrase, so help me God, is not in the Constitution. It's not part of the official oath. It's just been common practice for so long that we almost don't even hear it. In the United States, we have religious freedom, including separation of religion and government, which would actually make it unconstitutional to force any elected official to swear under God or on a Bible when they're being sworn into office. Those are just colloquial practices and it's not part of our law. Some people think or believe that George Washington said it during the very first presidential oath of office. But the history record's actually really murky on that. So somewhere along the line, it became common practice. Many of our founders, in fact, Adams, John Quincy Adams, Thomas Jefferson, a number of our founders did not use a Bible. They used books of law or no book at all. In more recent times, you have had members of Congress like Representative Keith Ellison, who was the first Muslim member of Congress, and he chose to be sworn in on a Quran that had been owned by Thomas Jefferson. Whether or not an elected official, be that the president of the United States or your local school board member, swears in on a Bible is absolutely a matter of choice. The founders of this country were really deeply committed to religious freedom, to separation of church and state for white people. They didn't provide that same religious freedom to enslaved people who were not entitled to practice their religions, either their native religions or their adopted Christian religions. Our founders did not extend religious freedom to native people who were not only forced off their sacred lands but violently stripped of their native religion. When the phrase One Nation under God was added to the Pledge of Allegiance, it was actually a pastor here in Washington, D.C. that convinced Eisenhower, President Eisenhower, to add that phrase. And at the time, he said, anyone who's not willing to profess a Christian ideal is not an American, is not living by the American ideal. When we start to mix government and religion, the path down the road is what much of what we're seeing today, where many of the laws that we've seen over the last few years that allow foster care agencies to take government money, but then discriminate against Jewish foster parents or

LGBTQ foster parents is this isn't about Christians and atheists. This isn't about atheists wanting there to be no Christians in public life. This is ultimately about saying religious freedom is a shield to protect, not a sword to harm others.”

Appendix D: The Rise of Political Polarization Goldman Stories: Henry Brady

“America is the most polarized it's been in over 150 years, probably. The last time we suspected it was as polarized as it is now was right after the Civil War. We now find that Republicans don't want their children to marry Democrats, and Democrats don't want their children to marry Republicans. That did not used to be so. And that leads to great difficulty in having any kind of compromise because there are such strong feelings that the other party has absolutely the wrong policy prognostications. After the New Deal in the 1930s, the big difference in American politics between the parties was over class. That was your feelings about big business versus unions, about the rich versus the poor. And that led to some polarization between the parties. But it was stuff that could actually be overcome by money that would be given in terms of programs, so that even Republicans supported some of the social welfare programs that came out of the New Deal. And even the Democrats sometimes admitted, as Bill Clinton did, that maybe we had to be careful about not spending too much money. So there were ways to get over those divisions. Starting in the 70s and 80s, religion became an important difference in American politics. That's partly because what happened is the Civil Rights Acts of the 60s caused the South, which had been Democratic, to start going Republican. And then all of the evangelical Christians, mostly Baptists in the South, started to find they had common cause with the evangelical Christians in the Midwest. Who were mostly Methodists? And those groups started to get together, have common cause, and we start finding a difference between the parties in terms of religion and religious values. So abortion was important. Gay rights were important. Prayer in the schools was important. And with that new set of concerns, they were more than just about who gets the money. It was about values and about basic issues of what you think the world should look like. And those kinds of divisions, those are not issues that you sort of can go

halfway. You can't say, well, let's go halfway on gay rights or let's go halfway on abortion. There's really sort of no middle ground. You either believe that gay marriage is a good idea or you don't. You either believe abortion is something that a woman should have the right to do or not. And so there was no area of compromise. And so that led to greater polarization. One of the things that's most disconcerting to me is we look at data over time when people are asked about do they trust the military, religious institutions, science, higher education, police, and so forth, is that we've found there's tremendous polarization now in opinions of those institutions. There wasn't much 30 or 40, 50 years ago in the 1970s. Now we find tremendous polarization where Democrats think that journalists, higher education, and science can be trusted, and Republicans think the military, police, and religious institutions can be trusted, and the other side doesn't. That worries me fundamentally because it's one thing not to trust big business or labor, because that's really sort of an issue about money and who gets the money. Science, journalism and higher education are about knowledge and facts. Religion, the military and police are about values. And if we really disagree on values and facts, there's really not much room for getting together and agreeing on anything. One answer might be, by the way, better civics courses. We do a terrible job in America right now with civics. And we don't teach people about civics. And when we do teach them about civics, we say, memorize a piece of the Constitution. What we should be teaching them is, how do you tell if something's true or false? What news sources might help you figure out what's true or false? How do you figure out if something is really just a vicious attempt on the part of somebody to do something mean and nasty? And we don't teach those skills, I think, enough in our schools. And if we did more of that, we might be able to overcome some of the problems we have. All of us at the Goldman School, we do a variety of different types of research. One of the major ways we do research is we collect data and we go out and we do surveys or we get administrative data or we get Internet data or we get sensor data even. And we put those data together and we often link them across various fields of endeavor and try to then use the data to figure out what's going on with people. We also look for what are

called natural experiments, where in Hilary Hoynes' work, for example, where she was looking at food stamps, she looked for places which were adjoining counties. One county started the food stamp program and the other county waited a few years to do that. And then she compares children who in the one county got food stamps and children in the other county didn't get food stamps, sees what happens 30 years later, finds differences and says, well, what was the difference between those two counties? One got food stamps, one didn't. that must be the case that the food stamps made the difference so we're trying to look for leverage where we can actually make what we call causal statements the food stamps program caused the children to be healthier which caused them to be healthier as adults which in the long run made them better off so we're thinking very hard about first describing the situation well with data that's representative and second trying to infer what the causes are of public programs that allows us to say to policymakers, we know that if you do more of this program, it will cause these things to happen. We're open to anything that's what we would call empirical. That is, gather data, find out about how the world works, and be very tough-minded about coming to conclusions. Don't let your ideology be your guide. Just because you think this might work, given what your partisan perspective is, is not a good basis. And in fact, we guard very assiduously against that. And our goal is to make sure we have reliable statements about what will make the world a better place.”

References

- Bettarelli, L., & Van Haute, E. (2022, September 22). Regional inequalities as drivers of affective polarization. *Regional Studies, Regional Science*, 9(1), 549–570.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/21681376.2022.2117077>
- Bonitatibus, S. (2023, July 3). The Founding Fathers' Religious Wisdom. Retrieved from <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-founding-fathers-religious-wisdom/>
- Campbell, J. E. (2018). *Polarized*. Princeton University Press. Retrieved from http://books.google.ie/books?id=f1iYDwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=POLARIZED%0D%0AMAKING+SENSE+OF+A%0D%0ADIVIDED+AMERICA&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api
- Collier, C., & Collier, J. L. (2012). *A Century of Immigration: 1820–1924*. Blackstone Publishing.
- Dargo, G. (1995). Religious toleration and its limits in early America. *N. Ill. UL Rev.*, 16, 341.
- DellaPergola, S. (2020). World Jewish Population, 2019. *American Jewish Year Book 2019: The Annual Record of the North American Jewish Communities Since 1899*, 263-353.
- Deroo, M. (2021, December). Seeking truth about Muslims: Critical media literacies in an era of islamophobia. *Journal of Media Literacy Education*, 13(3), 49–61.
<https://doi.org/10.23860/jmle-2021-13-3-4>
- District of Columbia; federal property. (n.d.). Justia Law. Retrieved from <https://law.justia.com/constitution/us/article-1/59-seat-of-the-government.html>
- Divided America: Making Sense of the Polarization of Contemporary U.S. Politics: A View at the Effects of Polarization on the Functioning of the U.S. Political System. (2020) Kristian Korslien Berg. Retrieved from https://www.duo.uio.no/bitstream/handle/10852/80538/Berg_MA_thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
- Ecklund, E. H., & Park, J. Z. (2007). Religious diversity and community volunteerism among Asian Americans. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 46(2), 233-244.
- Erik Wong. (2002, December). THE HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICT IN THE UNITED STATES: REVOLUTION TO SEPTEMBER 11TH. *Ethics of Development in a Global Environment*. Retrieved from <https://web.stanford.edu/class/e297a/The%20History%20of%20Religious%20Conflict.htm>

- From cyber-utopia to cyber-war: normative change in cyberspace. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.22032/dbt.35107>Gjelten, T. (2017, June 28). To Understand How Religion Shapes America, Look To Its Early Days. NPR.
- G. (2023, October 18). Exploring Political Morality. Retrieved from <https://www.gcu.edu/blog/criminal-justice-government-and-public-administration/exploring-olitical-morality>
- Han, C. (2017). Diverse practices and flexible beliefs among young adult Asian American Buddhists. *Journal of Global Buddhism*, 18, 1-24.
- Heltzel, G., & Laurin, K. (2020). Polarization in America: two possible futures. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 34, 179–184. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2020.03.008>
- History of Hinduphobia in the United States - Hindu American Foundation. (2022, September 18). Hindu American Foundation. <https://www.hinduamerican.org/hinduphobia-history>
- Holmes, D. L. (2006, December 21). The Founding Fathers, Deism, and Christianity | Christianity, Enlightenment & Religion. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Founding-Fathers-Deism-and-Christianity-1272214>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utopia>
- https://kujss.iraqjournals.com/pdf_166170_8dd024058ce4abb6c364bec514cecef8.html. (2020, June 30). *Kirkuk University Journal-Scientific Studies*, 15(2), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.32894/kujss.2019.15.2.1>
- <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/Utopianism>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eERY4OT2veg>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uQRjnM9hQDk>
- <https://youtu.be/CFidU9hg48k?si=o7eALt5Wj4ooe8pp>
- <https://youtu.be/IVTgEgUuDGM?si=1CnOnqbdntgMohU5>
- Jonathan Edwards | Biography, Beliefs, Sermons, Great Awakening, & Facts. (2024, January 12). Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jonathan-Edwards/Dismissal-from-Northampton>
- Kleinfeld, R. (2023, September 5). Polarization, Democracy, and Political Violence in the United States: What the Research Says. Retrieved from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/09/05/polarization-democracy-and-political-violence-in-united-states-what-research-says-pub-90457>
- Kleinfeld, R. (2023, September 5). Polarization, Democracy, and Political Violence in the United States: What the Research Says. Retrieved from <https://carnegieendowment.org/2023/09/05/polarization-democracy-and-political-violence-in-united-states-what-research-says-pub-90457>

- Künkler, M., & Leininger, J. (2011, January 1). Religion and politics. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/279060090_Religion_and_politics
- Levendusky, M. (2017, January 25). *Partisan Media and Polarization: Challenges for Future Work*. Oxford University Press eBooks. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228637.013.50>
- Nelson, T. (2006, September). Heartwood: The First Generation of Theravada Buddhism in America. By Wendy Cadge. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005. *American Journal of Sociology*, 112(2), 662–664. <https://doi.org/10.1086/510051>
- Nichols, J. A. (2005). Religious Liberty in the Thirteenth Colony: Church-State Relations in Colonial and Early National Georgia. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.680685>
- Nye, M. (2008). *Religion: the basics*. Routledge.
- Paul Kleppner. (2015, September). Religion, Politics, and the American Polity: A Dynamic View of Relationships.
- Perry, S. L. (2022). American Religion in the Era of Increasing Polarization. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 48(1), 87–107. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-031021-114239>
- Persily, N. (2015). *Solutions to Political Polarization in America*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://books.google.ie/books?id=om0aCAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=Solutions+to+Polarization%0D%0Afrom+Reforming+the+Electoral+System&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api
- Polarization in America: two possible futures. *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 34, 179–184. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cobeha.2020.03.008>
- Political Polarization and Democracy in the United States | PRRI. (2022, September 16). PRRI | at the Intersection of Religion, Values, and Public Life. <https://www.prii.org/spotlight/the-impact-of-deepening-political-polarization-on-american-democracy/>
- Political Polarization and Income Inequality. (n.d.). RSF. <https://www.russellsage.org/research/reports/mccarthy-dance-of-ideolog/>
- Political polarization in the United States. (2024, April 3). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_polarization_in_the_United_States
- Political polarization in the United States. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_polarization_in_the_United_States#:~:text=According%20to%20psychology%20professors%20Gordon,policies%20\(ideological%20polarization\)%22](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_polarization_in_the_United_States#:~:text=According%20to%20psychology%20professors%20Gordon,policies%20(ideological%20polarization)%22)
- Protestant, M. Religion and ethnicity.
- RELIGION IN NINETEENTHCENTURY AMERICA. (n.d.). In *RELIGION IN AMERICAN LIFE* (2nd ed., Vol. 167,168,169).

Retrieved from <https://www.uwyo.edu/news/2021/02/researchers-find-broad-impacts-from-political-polarization.html>

Rosenfeld, S. (2018). *The Polarizers*. University of Chicago Press.

http://books.google.ie/books?id=bUNEDwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=THE+POLARIZERS%0D%0APostwar+Architects+of+Our+Partisan+Era%0D%0ASAM+ROSENFELD&hl=&cd=1&source=gbs_api

Salton, H. T. (2013, April 24). *A Stroke of Genius? Religion, the Founding Fathers and the Creation of the American Polity*. <https://doi.org/10.5539/par.v2n1p67>

SC's Diverse Religious History – Interfaith Partners of South Carolina. (n.d.). <https://interfaithpartnersofsc.org/about/scs-diverse-religious-history/>

Siripurapu, A. (2022, April 21). The U.S. inequality debate. *Council on Foreign Relations*. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-inequality-debate>

Slavery in the colonial history of the United States. (2024, February 11). Retrieved from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slavery_in_the_colonial_history_of_the_United_State

Smith, T. W. (2002). The Muslim population of the United States: The methodology of estimates. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 66(3), 404-417.

Socioeconomic Factors | CDC. (2023, September 1). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/health_equity/socioeconomic.htm

Springs, J. A., & Omer, A. (2013). *Religious Nationalism: A Reference Handbook*.

Technological Utopianism in American Culture. Retrieved from

http://books.google.ie/books?id=ZquEQgAACAAJ&dq=Technological+Utopianism+in+American+Culture+by+Howard+P.+Segal+1985+p:+98/128&hl=&cd=3&source=gbs_api

The Changing Dynamics of Class and Culture in American Politics: A Test of the Polarization Hypothesis on JSTOR. (n.d.). www.jstor.org. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24541907>.

THE CONSTITUTION of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. (2016). Retrieved February 13, 2024, from <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/GPO-CONAN-REV-2016/pdf/GPO-CONAN-REV-2016.pdf>

The Middle Colonies. (n.d.). <https://www.exploros.com/summary/The-Middle-Colonies>

The State of Democracy in the United States: 2022. (n.d.).

https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/wjdt_665385/2649_665393/202303/t20230320_11044481.html

United States House of Representatives - Ballotpedia. (n.d.). Ballotpedia. https://ballotpedia.org/United_States_House_of_Representatives

University of north georgia. (n.d.). chapter Five: english colonization After 1660 . Retrieved February 16, 2024, from https://ung.edu/university-press/_uploads/files/us-history/US-History-I-Chapter-5.pdf.

- Vile, M. J. C. (1970). *Politics in the U.S.A.* Retrieved from http://books.google.ie/books?id=3CoaAQAAMAAJ&q=Politics+in+the+USA%0D%0ASixth+edition%0D%0AM.J.C.+Vile&dq=Politics+in+the+USA%0D%0ASixth+edition%0D%0AM.J.C.+Vile&hl=&cd=2&source=gbs_api
- Wikipedia contributors. (2024, May 9). War powers resolution. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_Powers_Resolution
- Yang, J. (2023). How Mass Media Influences U.S. Political Polarization— A Comparison Study of CNN and Fox News. *SHS Web of Conferences*, 178, 02005. <https://doi.org/10.1051/shsconf/202317802005>
- Zheng, J., & Scardino, F. (2021, March 31). News Media Coverage of Mass Shootings: How the Political Stance of News Media Influences the Coverage of Mass Shooters. *Journal of Student Research*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.47611/jsrhs.v10i1.1332>

الملخص

يدرس هذا المبحث كيفية نشأة الاستقطاب و التحزب في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية و الدور الذي لعبه الدين في تكوينه و صقله و صياغته على مختلف الفوارق و الاختلافات التي تمتلكها الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية خاصة دينيا و عرقيا ، و التي تأسست و تطورت في سياق تاريخي متشعب و معقد، متأثرة بعوامل أخرى كالعامل الاجتماعي و الاقتصادي و السياسي و الأخلاقي ... الخ. و عليه فقد لعب المستوطنون الأوائل الذين فروا من الاضطهاد الديني في أوروبا دورًا رئيسيًا في تشكيل الهوية الدينية والسياسية للمستعمرات الأمريكية، بحيث شهدت المستعمرات الاستعمارية تنوعًا دينيًا كبيرًا، حيث كان هناك تنافس بين الفصائل المسيحية المختلفة مثل البروتستانت والكاثوليك وغيرها. و على الرغم من فصل الدين عن الدولة دستوريًا، إلا أن الدين لا يزال يلعب دورًا مهمًا في الحياة السياسية الأمريكية. ففي القرن الثامن عشر، كان الدين جزءًا لا يتجزأ من الثقافة الأمريكية، فشكّلت الفصائل الدينية قوى مؤثرة و فاعلة في الساحة السياسية على غرار سابقتها من الفصائل في الحقب الفارطة. وخلال الحرب السنوات السبع، كان هناك تأثير ديني كبير على السياسة، حيث رأى البروتستانت والكاثوليك الحرب كصراع ديني للهيمنة، يُعد الاستقطاب السياسي والديني ظاهرة ملحوظة في المجتمع الأمريكي المعاصر، حيث باتت الانتماءات الحزبية والدينية متداخلة بشكل متزايد، فقد لجأ بعض الرؤساء الأمريكيين السابقين والحاليين إلى استخدام الخطاب الديني كأداة لاستقطاب الناخبين والتأثير على مواقفهم السياسية ويتطلب معالجة هذه الظواهر جهودًا متعددة الأطراف من قبل القادة السياسيين والدينيين ومنظمات المجتمع المدني، بهدف تعزيز الحوار. وفي النهاية، يبقى تحقيق التوافق و التوازن بين مختلف الفئات والتيارات السياسية والدينية في المجتمع الأمريكي و بين الحريات الدينية والمصلحة العامة للمجتمع تحديًا مستمرًا في الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، حيث يجب على الجميع العمل معًا لتجاوز الخلافات الدينية والسياسية. والتركيز على ما يجمع و يوحد جميع فئات المجتمع الأمريكي لتحقيق الاستقرار و التقدم

كلمات مفتاحية: الاستقطاب الديني، التحزب، الحريات الدينية، السياسة، الدين، الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية.