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The Perversion of Religious Texts (Bible) by Polarized Christians

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Introduction

Extremism in America, sometimes called radicalism or polarization, has often been defined by those in the middle of the very stable U.S. spectrum - a middle which often seems frustratingly obtuse and incapable of understanding the danger which the country faces from the right and left extremes¹. Dictionaries define "polarized" several different ways depending on whether one is using it in the scientific mode, where it would be "to restrict the vibrations of ...light as in wholly or partially to one direction, such as a polarizing microscope²", or in a social science mode where it refers to behavior that divides "or causes to divide into two sharply contrasting groups or sets of opinions or beliefs [whereby] the cultural sphere has polarized into two competing ideological positions [such as when] Vietnam polarized political opinion³".

In this study, we will use the second definition to denote groups on the extreme right of the United States political spectrum who view their world as either black or white or as friend or enemy. Polarized Christian groups are defined here as groups with extreme anti-state or violent goals who use the Bible to develop multidimensional ideologies. These ideologies allow them to hide their most extreme goals from all but a few people in the group's leadership. With the repugnancy hidden, the group can then continue to conduct its normal functions such as recruitment, organization, fundraising,

¹ The question of equality is one issue that can be used to distinguish the American far right from its far left. "On the whole the left believes that greater equality is desirable, and the right believes that human beings simply aren't equal and that any attempt to achieve equality is doomed to failure" (Sargent, 1995:3).

² Definitions compiled from various website by Google at <http://www.google.com/search?q=definition+of+polarized&rls=com.microsoft:en-us>.

³ Ibid., April, 21, 2011.

etc. without alerting law enforcement agencies or, more generally, the media and the middle of the road political groups. This position paper proposes a research project to study how extremist (polarized) Christian groups pervert the teachings in the Holy Bible to make their ideology fit whatever interpretation best serves the groups' goals⁴.

Theories of Belief Systems

"Terrorists' identities are shaped around strongly held ideologies that define their violence as fully justified acts in service of political, social, religious, or ethno-linguistic ideals and objectives"⁵.

Belief systems (ideology) of polarized groups are the glue which binds their members together. The belief system of an extremist movement identifies and characterizes the source(s) of their problem and specifies appropriate or possible group responses (Smelser, 1967; Marx & McAdam, 1994). For example, Lofland suggests that extremist ideology, which he calls rationale, from Wilson's work on the structure of belief systems, is "a statement of who must do the job" of developing the solutions to the problem that the group formed to solve (Lofland, 1996:103). Just as non-violent movements must develop a system of beliefs to help them move forward, so must violent extremists identify the source of their strain (problem), outline some possible responses, and who should perform them.

Uses of ideology differs from group to group according to their goals and the amount of challenge which achieving them will require. While cults rely on it to justify their groups' autocratic leadership, hate groups use it to legitimize their goal of

⁴ In this study, the word perversion refers to taking Bible verses out of syntax to support a particular extremist ideology such as violent revolution, polygamy, white supremacism, etc.

⁵ See Adam Silverman' article in Terrorism, Readings, Research, and Realities, Snowden & Whitsel, Editors, 2005.

extinction, and political challengers use it to mobilize resources and claim the power which they desire. Ideologies are the glue which binds the group together. Their members ultimately respond to the movement's ideas on how to reach their goal. Once the group develops its ideology, potential benefits may accrue. For example, groups who develop grass roots support via their ideological positions are more likely to be positively labeled by the media and government, such as the environmental movement. However, many groups in the U.S. militia movement experienced the reverse situation when they were negatively labeled because their interest in weapons and Y2K failed to appeal to the mainstream population⁶.

An ideology that is positively perceived by the general public contributes to a movement's chance of success or failure. This is especially true if a group believes it can use violent strategies to achieve its goal while still maintaining a positive framing in society. Such a movement would be the most difficult one for authorities to prevent or control. The positive framing ⁷of a violent group may also make it easier to request a negotiation with those in authority. Finally, positive labels also aid their success rates. For example, Gamson (1997) found that positive labels help to broaden the group's membership, base of support and resources, but only if a group can successfully convey their belief system via the mass media. Just as positive framing can "legitimize" groups' actions, so can negative framing push a group toward more and more extremism.

The Benefits of a Multidimensional Belief System

⁶ For a discussion of Y2K, see the FBI's Project Megiddo Report, etc.

⁷ Framing denotes a method of interpretation that enables individuals to locate, perceive, identify and label life occurrences and link them to the world at large. Thus framing ultimately links individual experiences to each group, to a social movement at large. For a more detailed discussion of framing processes, see Snow, et.al in *Social Movements*, McAdam & Snow, Editors.

To gain positive labeling, right wing US extremists use the Bible to claim their authority (legitimation) comes directly from a higher, non-earthly power. Once they are connected to "Gods word", the extremist groups can then circumvent any state actors and begin to develop various levels of ideology each suited specifically to their various constituents. For example, cult groups such as Aum Shryniko, are a good example. They may attract their followers only on a physical level, like using music or yoga to calm the individual, attract their following by telling some people that their leader only wished to take upon himself the sins of the world, still others who were deeper into the group were told that he could transfer spiritual power to them. His more trusted circle would also be aware that he saw conspiracies everywhere promulgated by groups from the Dutch to the Freemasons⁸. At the most trusted level, Asahara promoted a doomsday prophecy, which his group would not only to be able to survive, but also to control, for its own uses/power as well. Social theory has isolated the following variables, or elements, linked to multidimensional ideologies, especially in the work of Galanter, and Turner & Killian. We will use these variables to survey a small number of groups in our sample study and propose to later study a large number of groups to discover the differences in the multidimensional ideologies used by extremist groups. The following ideological variables used in this research study are:

*(1) Groups perpetuate the idea that only they have the answer to what problem the group is seeking to solve, such as a country's path to moral purity, finding the path to paradise after death, etc. We call this variable, **ideological exclusiveness**;*

(2) Groups create self-conceived elite as core of the group. This core then insulates and reinforces the leadership over the lower levels of membership and the outside world. A

⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aum_Shinrikyo

*member can not progress into the groups' inner core until they totally buy into the groups' extreme belief system. We call this, **elite core**;*

*(3) Belief systems may provide for a tight system of internal control, whereby the leaders can rely on peer control to strictly enforce the secrecy surrounding the groups' activities. We call this, **internal control**.*

*(4) Next, an ideology may provide a common base that appeals to a very diverse membership. This base also results in less dissent when the groups' leaders are still separating their members from the outside world (Turner & Killian, 1987, Barkan & Snowden, 2008). Symbolic acts and special shared meanings motivate the group members to act altruistically, thereby putting the groups' interest above their own (Galanter, 1989⁹). We call this, **homogenous membership**.*

*(5) Belief Systems can legitimize the groups' opposition to the state and/or established society at large (McAdam & Snow, 1997). We call this, **anti-state framing, and***

(6) An overall assessment was made to determine whether each group had a negatively or positively framed goal (+/-). This variable is more an aggravating factor so if a group has a negatively framed goal (one that the general society would deem negative) they were rated with a negative sign and a positive sign if they were approved of their goal.

A Sample Analysis

The remainder of this paper outlines how the belief systems of extremist (polarized) Christian groups, currently popular throughout the United States, might be studied systematically, using the five variables described above. Understanding polarized groups' use of the Bible helps us understand the reasons and rationale behind their

⁹ These authors discuss the use of different types of groups. For Example, Galanter analyzes cults, Turner & Killian studied the civil rights and other protest movements while Barkan & Snowden look at all types of group violence.

violence. Their ideologies give us clues to their future actions and their response to government involvement. The following section samples six Christian groups with various goals. All groups employ use of the Bible throughout their websites. One group, the Christ Community Health Services, uses it to legitimate a positive-framed goal, healthcare to the disadvantaged groups. All the rest of our sampled groups use the Bible to legitimate their pursuit of negative framed goals, such as a call to the end time when a final battle of the world will be fought; to stop abortions in the US; to re-fight the U.S. civil war; to rid the world of homosexuality; or to allow legal polygamy. By using the variables listed above, we can compare how each groups' use of the Bible allows them to seek positive framing for any future violent or anti-social behavior. After a brief discussion of the sampled groups' background, we will proceed with a short study that is modeled on the larger analysis we are proposing. No bloodline Christian groups, who use the 'Identity' belief system (which is a composite of several religions rather than simply Christianity) were chosen for this study (see footnote), but, in a full study, a way to include them should be developed¹⁰.

Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (FLDS)

The roots of the FLDS are based in the mainstream Church of Jesus Christ of

¹⁰ Bloodline Christians are an Anglo-Saxon group whose goal is a pure white race, come from the common belief that they are the true descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel and are the true chosen people of God. According to Numbers 2: 2-32, there were twelve original tribes. These were Issachar, Zebulun, Reuben, Simeon, Judah, Gad, Manasseh, Ephraim, Asher, Dan, Naphtali, and Benjamin. Two of these twelve became the Southern Kingdom of Rehoboam. The other ten became the Northern Kingdom of Jeroboam. From what I can tell this is the kingdom that is considered to be the ten lost tribes. They are said to be the chosen Aryans of Germanic descent and that they are God's family. They are the race of Yahweh and they believe that the true Israelites are Caucasian. They are bloodline Christians and they hold Christian Identity beliefs. Yahweh is the god of the Old Testament, however in most Bibles including the King James Version this word has been taken out. It is said to be in the Torah in Exodus 3:14. The King James Version of the bible reads the following for this verse: And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (<http://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/Exodus-3-14/>) It is said that Yahweh when translated to English means I am that I am. [Thanks to Amber Baker for this note]

Latter-Day Saints (LDS) formerly called the Mormon Church. The LDS church was founded by Joseph Smith, who claimed to be a prophet who received revelations from God. One of the more unique features of the LDS church was their practice of polygamy, which was renounced in 1890.¹¹ Two high-ranking members of the LDS church, Matthias Cowley and John W. Taylor continued practicing plural marriage and were soon excommunicated from mainstream Mormonism.¹² They then formed their own sect, known as the FLDS, but because of fear of prosecution, the sect remained reclusive hidden until the twenty-first century (Baker, 2010).

A primary goal of the FLDS faith is to do God's will by progressing in faith until one reaches the highest level of heaven, the Celestial Kingdom. This is thought to include presiding over another planet for those most successful. The continual seeking of the afterlife and fear of the impending Apocalypse governs Earthly goals in the FLDS community. Men strive to gather importance and standing in the church, by having as many wives as they can financially support. Women may also seek high placement in the church by having and as many children as they can bear (Baker, 2010).

The FLDS is led by someone thought to be a prophet of God, with the title being passed on to whoever becomes the next chosen leader. In 2002, Warren Jeffs became the prophet of the FLDS. He trained as an accountant before becoming a teacher, but when rumors of an impending apocalypse began to circle in the FLDS community in 1998, Jeffs became a very strict leader, outlawing holidays, television programs, and dancing. Recently Jeff's brother served papers on the jailed leader claiming that "Warren Jeffs has

¹¹ See Lyman, Edward. "Woodruff Manifesto." *Utah History Encyclopedia*. Undefined. Media Solutions. University of Utah Office of Information Technology.

¹² See Embry, Jessie L. "Polygamy." *Utah History Encyclopedia*. Undefined. Media Solutions. University of Utah Office of Information Technology.

used his absolute power as the FLDS prophet to expel or encourage out thousands of boys and to expel hundreds of FLDS men from their families and homes so that their wives and children could be reassigned to other men and command the illegal marriages of scores of increasingly younger underage girls” (Hunsaker, 2011).

Until Jeffs’ reign, law enforcement officials in Utah and Arizona had largely left the FLDS church alone. Polygamy is illegal in all states, but because of the secretive nature of the practices of the FLDS church, it had been almost impossible to prove. Police became interested in Jeffs, however, when it was reported that he was inclined to arrange marriages between adult men and underage girls, as well as encouraging husbands to use violence as a way to force their wives to be obedient. In 2007, Jeffs was convicted of rape-as-an-accomplice for forcing a fourteen year old girl to marry her first cousin but his conviction has since been overturned on the basis that he was given improper legal instructions.¹³

The Westboro Baptist Church (WBC)

Westboro Baptist Church based out of Topeka, Kansas, and the members of this church, use the Bible to support their radical beliefs, actions and protests. The church, headed by Pastor Fred Phelps, is known for its extreme stance against homosexuality, (see picture below- it depicts their protest activities, which include picketing funerals, especially military ones)¹⁴. In spite of winning the court battle to have their protests labeled "protected speech", Phelps, his daughter and his church members have created

¹³ See Wagner, Dennis. “Prophet’s Conviction Overturned”. *USA Today*. July 28, 2010. p. 03A

¹⁴ See Wikipedia.com. for more information on Pastor Phelps, who has a long history of anti-homosexual activity.

such a fervor that the United States House and Senate actually passed the Respect for America's Fallen Heroes Act, which bans protests within 300 feet of national cemeteries

Westboro Baptist Church Demonstration¹⁵



from an hour before a funeral to an hour after it¹⁶. Westboro Baptist Church has spawned several counter-movements as they continue their use of God and the Bible out of context. Their extreme actions against soldiers, homosexuals, and celebrities will most likely continue. This is evident in the following quote from Shirley Phelps (daughter):
“The wrath of God is pouring down on you... We’re trying to save you from the

¹⁵ Google.com image

¹⁶ The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Westboro's practice of picketing the funerals of fallen soldiers with offensive placards is constitutionally protected free speech, (Source: CNN, March 12, 2011.)

rebellious, disobedient, filthy matter of the world you live in "(Tyler, 2011)¹⁷. Through pickets with Bible scriptures, live interviews, and websites, the Westboro Baptist Church uses their messages to bash America and the people that live in sin in their eyes.

The League of the South (LOS)

Wikipedia.com calls League of the South a nationalist group whose ultimate goal is a free and independent Southern republic made up of former Confederacy states. It is better called a secessionist group and has been labeled a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center who says the group has been accused of being white supremacist. Formed in 1994 by Michael Hill, the League of the South was named for the former League of United Southerners, a group organized in 1858 to shape Southern public opinion¹⁸. They have a board of directors that govern the League. Each state in the League has its own website and rights, but the Board can bring charges against members who do not follow their rules. Dues must be paid and there are conferences that members are expected to attend. There is also a summer institute for students, similar to college, who must pay tuition to attend. The group has its own magazine and newsletter that keeps its members involved with the views and projects of the group. The group also performs "flagging", which is a large or small organized protest, picket or demonstration that shows their position on a particular candidate or issue (Baker, 2010). They are also

¹⁷ Quote from Tyler, Hannah. "Controversial Protest Group Warns People of 'Wrath of God'". The Lantern, 17 Jan. 2008, Web, 3 Apr 2011.

Wikipedia contributors. "Fred Phelps." *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 3 Apr. 2011. Web. 6 Apr. 2011. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fred_Phelps

¹⁸ See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westboro_Baptist_Church for a more detailed description of the group.

virulently anti-abortion. Some members use the Bible more in their daily functioning and others less. The following is a quote from the webpage of the Arkansas chapter:

"The viewpoint of our rights coming from government is a secular approach to government. We need to reestablish the biblical approach. The biblical approach asserts that our rights and freedoms come directly from God and flow to mankind.... The fruit of this biblical approach is an empowerment of the people through their duly elected state legislatures to push back and nullify unlawful decrees as they see fit.... What region of the United States is interested in a true biblical form of government? You guessed it—The South! In fact, the South is the only region of the nation that is interested. We are known as "The Bible Belt" for a reason! ¹⁹

The Army of God (AOG)

The Army of God is an extreme far right anti-abortion group who came to prominence because of their link to numerous abortion clinic bombings, abortionist murders and other crimes having to do with destroying abortion clinics and their staff. First noticed around 1988, the loosely knit organization has gone farther and farther underground because of the many crimes to which it has been linked. Their website calls Reverend Donald Spitz the leader of this group (Baker, 2010). However, it is doubtful that the real leader is known. It has been rumored that one had to kill an abortion provider to be a member in good standing but that fact has not been substantiated. By keeping this information secret they hope to protect their members and their core support system. On the main website they honor the murderers, such as Paul

¹⁹ See the Arkansas League website at the following link <http://www.arkansaslos.org/overall.shtml>.

Hill who have been convicted and/or executed. Doctors are compared to Hitler and onlookers are encouraged to send thank you notes to their killers. One of their links shows a picture of bodies from the Holocaust beside a picture of a baby in a casket. Their headline for this page is "Deuteronomy 27:25- Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen."²⁰ The group has at times claimed they have a manual that they follow and at other time claimed it was put out as a red herring to confuse law enforcement. Parts of it are available for viewing on the groups' website²¹. The manual tells its members how to act in certain situations, member group structure, qualifications for membership, relationships with law enforcement and what do in the case of arrest. In general they are taught to trust no one (Baker, 2010). For example, Rule #4 states:

IV. If under arrest, answer all questions with only these five words: "I have nothing to say" and request to see a lawyer.

No matter what they say, respond with, "I do not want to talk to you without my lawyer." However, never trust your lawyer if he advises you to break any of these basic legal self-defense principles"²²

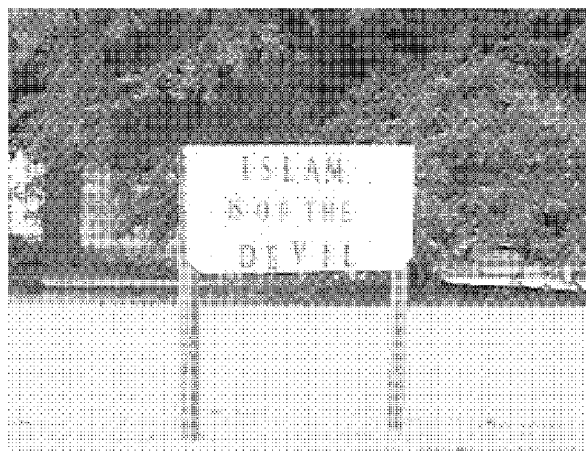
On their website are many links to other pages that elaborate on their cause. Some of these include anti-abortion, anti-homosexuality, and, of course, anti-birth control sites. Bible verses are cited throughout the entire website to justify all their criminal actions, which range from murder and the bombing of law enforcement personnel to destruction of clinic property.

²⁰ www.armyofgod.com

²¹ www.armyofgod.com

²² Sections of the The Army of God Manual can be found at www.armyofgod.com.

Dove World Church and Outreach



Contrary to the above sign, Dove World Church, based in Gainesville, Florida, describes itself as: "a New Testament, Charismatic, Non-Denominational Church that believes in the whole Bible and that we are to act in response to the word of God in order to change the times we are living in. Those times have gotten farther and farther away from God; full of deception like abortion and same sex marriages"²³. Already in the news for the above sign, which outraged its' neighbors, Dove World's Pastor, Terry Jones, made even bigger headlines as the church first threatened to burn the Koran on 09/11/2010. Later the Church and its Pastor were persuaded not to go ahead with the burning, but then, several months later, probably because his church had stopped making headlines, they decided to hold a mock trial of the Koran and then burned it. At first the media did not carry news of the burning, afraid it would trigger unrest in an already tense "Middle East", but the story was picked up from the NY Times.²⁴ Unfortunately, news of the trial and subsequent burning was commented upon by President Karzai in

²³ See their website at www.doveworld.org/the-sign.

²⁴ See www.csmonitor.co/US/Society/2010/0907 and also <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/01/nation/la-na-koran-pastor-20110402> for more information.

Afghanistan. The result was "Thousands of demonstrators angered over the burning of a Koran in Florida mobbed offices of the United Nations in northern Afghanistan on Friday, overrunning the compound and killing at least seven foreign staff workers, according to Afghan officials"²⁵.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, "the twenty-five year old church ...regularly professes anti-gay and anti-Muslim sentiments, with members at one point joining in an anti-gay rally with the Westboro Baptist Church (see above)"²⁶ According to the apocalyptic Pastor, they believe that God is calling a new generation in this end time.

"Our Land needs strong churches that understand and fulfill God's vision of restoration and reformation, churches that are able to handle the revival we will see this century with the apostolic anointing, and bring Godly changes to our entire society"²⁷.

Christ Community Health Services

Christ Community Health Services, out of Memphis, Tennessee, has focused on fulfilling the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of the poor, the uninsured and the homeless since 1995. Statistics show that "Memphis and Shelby County have been consistently named as having one of the highest – if not the highest – infant mortality rate in the United States. Annually, there are approximately 500 stillborn and infant deaths countywide. CCHS strategically placed health care centers and outreach programs in poor, underserved areas, where they provide high-quality health care and other services to

²⁵ <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/world/asia/02afghanis>

²⁶ <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/apr/01/nation/la-na-koran-pastor-20110402>, pg.1.

²⁷ See their website at www.doveworld.org/the-sign.

thousands of patients, caregivers, students and families each year. They say "Our goal is to go where the need is greatest to provide quality services in the name of Jesus Christ"²⁸. Christ Community has five health centers which offer services ranging from adult and pediatric primary care, and parenting classes, social work obstetrics/gynecology, HIV care management, prenatal, dentistry, pharmacy and various outreach programs. Services vary from clinic to clinic, but their stated goal is "Every patient deserves access to quality, affordable health care close to home. Our commitment to serve Memphis' most medically underserved has determined the locations of our clinics... and we will continue to expand into the areas of greatest need"²⁹. Although such clinics have been known³⁰ to be funded by large traditional health care providers chiefly to keep minority patients without health insurance out of their regular facilities, their goal still seems to be more positive than negative in nature. It is for this reason that we chose them for contrast with the other groups, who are all negative examples.

Comparative Analysis of the Bible Uses by Polarized Christian Groups

The following study selected biblical quotes from each of the groups' major websites to see how many examples of the multidimensional variables, listed above, could be found. The five variables, which research has listed as indicators that right wing extremists are using the Bible to claim their authority (legitimation) comes directly from a higher, non-earthly power are: *ideological exclusiveness (A); elite core (B), tight internal control (C), combine membership (D) and anti-state framing (E)*. A check (✓) indicates that the variable was found and a NO indicates it was not found. Then we

²⁸ http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1

²⁹ http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19&Itemid=27

³⁰ The author has worked with funded health centers for undocumented migrant workers.

sampled both positively and negatively framed groups to discover whether examples of the above variables could be found in the ideology published on the groups' own website.

TABLE 1: COMPARISON OF POLARIZED GROUPS USE OF BIBLE

<u>Group</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>+/-</u>
CCHC	✓	No	No	✓	No	+
FLDS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
LOS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
AOG	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
WBC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
DWOC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-

- ✓ Indicates that an example was found, and, in most cases many were found. A “No” indicates that no examples of the variable were found. The last column indicates whether the organization is perceived to have a negative or positively framed goal (+/-). The above table summarizes our findings, which will be discussed after presentation of the examples from each website.

All the following quotes come from the groups' primary websites, shown in the footnotes.

(A) Ideological exclusiveness (Legitimization)

- ✓ FLDS: Modern polygamists proclaim that through his [God] efforts they will be vindicated and the practice of plural marriage restored. A sweeping transformation of the mother Church is also anticipated.³¹
- ✓ LOS: The League of the South asserts that Southern society is radically different from the society impressed upon it by an alien occupier. American society today is egalitarian and Marxist and is devoid of any grace or charm. In contrast, we believe in a Southern society that upholds the ontological or spiritual equality of all men before God".³²
- ✓ AOG: " Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him for the life of thy young children" ...Lamentations 2:19 (legitimation of abortion provider murder)³³.
- ✓ WBC: "WBC kindly warns our fellow men... that they need to REPENT and OBEY in order to go to heaven. Otherwise they risk suffering the wrath of God eternally. The Apostle Paul reminds us of what lies in store for the wicked, impenitent sinner as well as the faithful servant of God, to wit: (*Romans 2:5*) *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds...*"³⁴

³¹ <http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/NEWFILES/FLDSvsLDS.htm>

³² <http://dixienet.org/rights/corebeliefs.shtml>

³³ <http://www.armyofgod.com/>

³⁴ <http://www.godhatesfags.com/schedule.html>

- ✓ DWOC: "What is the reason or message the Church wants to get out with a sign such as that [shown above]? The message of the truth that there is only one way to God, only one way to salvation, and that is through the blood of Jesus. Through the repenting of your sins and being born again. It is time that all Christians unite, stop being passive and selfish and stand up and fight for the truth".³⁵
- ✓ CCHS: Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men that they see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven." We don't serve the needy to gain God's approval or make a name for ourselves; we do it to help others see how great God is.³⁶

(B) Creates a self-conceived elite

- ✓ The FLDS: *Warren Jeffs (and other Mormon "fundamentalists") exercise very different priesthood authority to perform their marriages than that utilized by Church leaders like Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and John Taylor.* [Doctrine and Covenants scripture] D&C 132:18 states that any plural marriage that is not authorized by the "one" man holding the keys of sealing "is not valid neither of force when they are out of the world..." Early Church leaders solemnized plural unions using the priesthood keys held by the senior apostle who rises to that position through seniority based on his ordination to the Quorum of the Twelve.³⁷
- ✓ LOS: "Is structured upon the Biblical notion of hierarchy. In short, a recognition of the natural societal order of superiors and subordinates where Christian charity (as found in the second Table of the Law) toward our neighbors produces harmony and stability. Christ is the head of His Church; husbands are the heads of their families; parents are placed over their children; employers rank above their employees; the teacher is superior to his students, etc."³⁸
- ✓ AOG: Reverend Donald Spitz is the leader of this group but no other leadership positions appear on their website. By keeping this information secret they are protecting their members and their core support system. They also call each other hero, using this phrase to legitimate that: " **Psalm 94:16 - Who will rise up for me against the evildoers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity?**"³⁹

³⁵ <http://www.doveworld.org/the-sign>

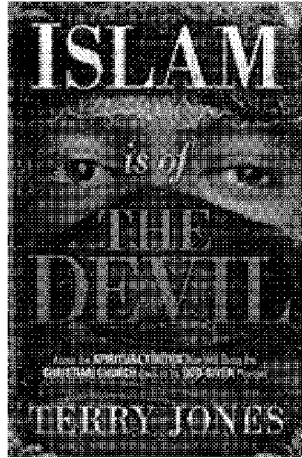
³⁶ http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=66&Itemid=73

³⁷ See <http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/NEWFILES/FLDSvsLDS.htm>

³⁸ See <http://dixienet.org/New%20Site/corebeliefs.shtml> for quote and more information.

³⁹ See <http://www.armyofgod.com/>

- ✓ **WBC:** *Bible Verses About the Hatred of God (for more details, read God Loves Everyone: the Greatest Lie Ever Told)*⁴⁰



- ✓ **DWOC:** Dove World's Pastor wrote this book, thereby making him a 'supposed expert' on the relationship between Islam & Christianity. Caps. Shirts, etc. with this slogan are for sale on the church website.⁴¹

NO CCHS: "**Service:** Jesus taught the disciples in Mark 10:45 the following: *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many."* And, here at Christ Community, we must do the same. We must be committed to serving the needs of patients, their families, physicians, co-workers and all people we encounter".⁴²

(C) Tight Internal Control by Peer Groups:

- ✓ **FLDS:** In the law of consecration, properties are consecrated to the Church with the bishop acting as agent for the Church (D&C 42:31-34; 51:12). FLDS leaders interpret this as only tightly controlled communal property is acceptable.⁴³
- ✓ **AOG:** **Never betray your brothers or sisters in the LORD.** Even if you know nothing, why assist the protectors of the baby killers [police] with assisting them by ruling you out⁴⁴.
- ✓ **LOS:** "While we have no religious requirement for membership, as an organization we do recognize the legacy of Christianity and the universal

⁴⁰ See <http://www.godhatesfags.com/bible/God-hates.html>

⁴¹ See <http://www.doveworld.org/store>

⁴² See <http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index>

⁴³ <http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/FilesForDownload/DoctrinesOfModernPolygamy2ndEd.htm>

⁴⁴ See <http://www.armyofgod.com/>

sovereignty of the triune God. Most League members are Christians, and we base our movement on Christian principles. Trinitarian Christianity can not be⁴⁵ separated or removed from Southern society or culture without both ceasing to be Southern."⁴⁶

- ✓ **WBC:** Your parents, teachers, preachers and leaders have no answers for you because they have sinned away their last day of grace by failing to teach you God's commandments and warning you to flee the wrath to come. *When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. (Ezk. 3:18-19.)*⁴⁷
- ✓ **DWOC:** "DWOC Academy is a place of training the next generation to be strong and stable five-fold ministers under the apostolic anointing. We believe that God is calling a new generation in this end time – a generation of believers that are yielded to His Word and His will."⁴⁸

NO **CCHS: Christ Community Health Services will provide high-quality health care to the underserved in the context of distinctively Christian service. We recognize that Jesus Christ is the true healer of individuals and their communities and the source of our ability to serve**⁴⁹.

(D) Combines a Diverse Membership

- ✓ **FLDS:** Yea, verily I say unto you again, the time has come when the voice of the Lord is unto you: Go ye out of Babylon; gather you out from among the nations, from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. [The FDLS interprets gather to mean a physical gathering where all members must live together] (D&C 133:7-10.)⁵⁰
- ✓ **AOG:** Psalm.94:21 they gather themselves together against the soul of the righteous, and condemn the innocent blood⁵¹. AOG is using this phrase as they are condemning the birth of the unborn, but probably no one would condemn

⁴⁵ See http://dixienet.org/rights/what_a_hate_group_hates.php

⁴⁶ See <http://www.dixienet.org/rights/faq.shtml>

⁴⁷ See <http://www.godhatesfags.com/schedule.html>

⁴⁸ See <http://www.doveworld.org/about-us>

⁴⁹ See

http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=44&Itemid=53

⁵⁰ <http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/FilesForDownload/DoctrinesOfModernPolygamy2ndEd.htm>

⁵¹ See <http://www.armyofgod.com/heroes.html>

taking the death of a living child. Thus they are appealing to a diverse majority the world over.

- ✓ **LOS:** The League of the South is led by cultural conservatives, many of whom are Southern Baptists.... its "Declaration" also denounces "the corrupt and sterile national culture" which is "violent and profane, coarse and rude, cynical and deviant" and "repugnant to . . . every people with authentic Christian sensibilities"⁵²
 - ✓ **WBC:** We have the promises of God that these events must come to pass; and when they do – when we see “Jerusalem compassed with armies” – those who fear and obey God will lift up their heads knowing their redemption draws nigh. See Luke 21:20, 24 and 27. ⁵³
 - ✓ **DWOC:** "Help us to stand up for what is right; for the truth of the Bible. Every donation helps!"⁵⁴
- NO **CCHS:** We're proud that many of our staff, including several of our physicians and nurse practitioners, live, work and worship within the communities we serve. Christ Community not only strives to hire staff from the neighborhoods where we have health centers but also encourages staff members to consider moving into these neighborhoods and get involved outside the health center walls.⁵⁵

(E) Legitimizes opposition to the state and/or established society

- ✓ **FLDS:** "The Book of Revelation refers to the great honor given to men who are the product of plural marriage. In Chapter 21, the Apostle John describes the city of New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven... “as a bride adorned for her husband.” The city is so holy that God “will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God.” The city has twelve gates, each of them bearing the name of one of the twelve plural sons of Jacob and his four wives." (legitimation of polygamy)⁵⁶
- ✓ **LOS:** Their list of "What We **Don't Want**" consists of... To continue to live in a "godless, multicultural American Empire."⁵⁷

⁵² See <http://www.dixienet.org/rights/faq.shtml>

⁵³ See http://www.godhatesfags.com/letters/20090512_open_letter_elect_jews.html

⁵⁴ See <http://www.doveworld.org>

⁵⁵ See:

http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=41

⁵⁶ <http://www.mormonfundamentalism.com/FilesForDownload/DoctrinesOfModernPolygamy2ndEd.htm>

⁵⁷ See http://dixienet.org/rights/what_a_hate_group_hates.php

- ✓ AOG Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person. And all the people shall say, Amen." Deuteronomy 27:25 (Allows murder of abortion doctors like vigilantes).⁵⁸
 - ✓ WBC: "The fullness of the Gentiles is almost complete! The Antichrist Bloody Beast Obama is going to become king of the world. Obama-the-Muslim is a monstrous sinner before God, promoting abortion, sodomy, proud sin and blasphemy".⁵⁹
 - ✓ DWOC: "Apostolic worship which is a conscious, deliberate effort during worship to change the spiritual world, that then works its way out into the natural world and at some point will be visible as a victory over the enemy".⁶⁰ While this would seem to appeal to all worshipers, apostolic training now is a far- right buzzword which refers to the five fold development of people to lead the final battle between good and evil at the end of the world.⁶¹
- NO CCHS: "Christ Community is brimming with committed individuals dedicated to serving their neighbors. Our employees are drawn to Christ Community because they desire to work in a faith-based setting and because the organization's mission matches their own. To them, Christ Community is more than just a job, it's a calling. "⁶²

Analysis and Conclusion

The above quotes are only a small example of how polarized Christian groups use the Bible to legitimize their group goals, their recruitment, their strategies and their extremist positions, such as polygamy, anti- homosexuality, secession, a war against Islam, and the murder of abortion doctors. All the negatively-framed groups in our sample appeared to use the Bible in all of their group functions. However, Table One actually shows some surprising results, i.e., the group with a positive framing did use the Bible as much as the other groups, but in very different ways. In addition to the obvious goal difference, the positive

⁵⁸ See <http://www.armyofgod.com/>

⁵⁹ http://www.godhatesfags.com/letters/20090512_open_letter_elect_jews.html

⁶⁰ <http://www.doveworld.org/about-us>

⁶¹ http://www.fivefold-ministry.com/apostolic_training.php

⁶² See

http://www.christcommunityhealth.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=41

groups' use of the Bible was not used to reinforce anti-state attitudes, maintain a tight internal control, or to develop self-conceived elite. This analysis suggests that, if a more systematic review of a large sample could replicate these findings, it would provide us with important insights into the relationship between extremism and ideology.

As attempts to expand the definition of terrorism continue almost daily, it becomes more and more difficult to predict which person will be the next to engage in criminal extremism. Although recent, the study of group behavioral patterns in social, religious, and political organizations shows promise in preventing extremism. In addition to showing us important signposts for future extremist behavior, ultimately group behavioral analysis could be used to help officials move groups away from conditions which legitimate violent action.

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Please also note the use of all websites cited in the footnotes.