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Public Catholicism and religious pluralism in America : the adaptation of a religious culture to the circumstance of diversity, and its implications

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Agliardo, Michael J.

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2008

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PUBLIC CATHOLICISM AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN AMERICA:
THE ADAPTATION OF A RELIGIOUS CULTURE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF DIVERSITY,
AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

by

Michael J. Agliardo, SJ

Committee in charge:

Professor Richard Madsen, Chair
Professor John H. Evans
Professor David Pellow
Professor Joel Robbins
Professor Gershon Shafir

2008
The Dissertation of Michael Joseph Agliardo is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Chair

University of California, San Diego

2008
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<tr>
<td>COEJL</td>
<td>Coalition On the Environment and Jewish Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRPLP</td>
<td>Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTSA</td>
<td>Catholic Theological Society of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EEN</td>
<td>Evangelical Environmental Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>EJP</td>
<td>Environmental Justice Program (of the USCC / USCCB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICES</td>
<td>Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEEN</td>
<td>International Evangelical Environmental Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCC</td>
<td>National Council of Churches</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCCB</td>
<td>National Conference of Catholic Bishops</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCWC</td>
<td>National Catholic War Council / Welfare Council / Welfare Conference</td>
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<tr>
<td>NRPE</td>
<td>National Religious Partnership for the Environment</td>
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<td>NWCU</td>
<td>National Workshop on Christian Unity</td>
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to acknowledge the members of his committee for their patience, encouragement, and insight along the way. Richard Madsen is an inspiring scholar who brings critical reflection and balanced judgment to the human dilemmas that modern life poses. John Evans, always both cordial and frank, encouraged me to cut through the data and the theory to get to the heart of the matter. Gershon Shafir was especially helpful when I was sorting my proposal out at its beginning stages. David Pellow's encouragement and feedback was always very much appreciated. And Joel Robbins was very accommodating despite the heavy demands on his own schedule.

The author would also like to acknowledge the people who gave so graciously of their time when he was conducting his research. Each of my interviews was a marvelous education in itself. Not only were the people I spoke with generous in sharing their time, wisdom, and enthusiasm with me. They also clearly were people who dedicated themselves in service to their community and their faith. I remember walking away from each of my interviews thinking it was a privilege to have shared such an exchange.

While all those who met with me earned my very sincere thanks, I would especially like to acknowledge those who made a significant contribution to this study. Walt Grazer and Drew Christiansen, SJ, then of the United States Catholic Conference, were very generous in helping a young scholar get the lay of the land.

Beth Johnson, CSJ, of Fordham University and past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, also lent her wisdom at an early stage.

Susan Perry of Orbis Press and Paul McMahon of Paulist Press helped me understand the interests of different segments of the populations they served.

Russ Butkus, Steve Kolmes, and Vince Patterson of the University of Portland, Bob
Stivers and Duane Swank of Pacific Lutheran University, and David Brubaker, Trileigh Tucker, and Gary Chamberlain of Seattle University all helped me piece together crucial dimensions of my analysis.

Jenny Holmes of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Thea Levkovitz of the Washington Association of Churches, Robert Castagna of the Oregon Catholic Conference, Anthony Granados of the Archdiocese of Portland, and J.L. Drouhard of the Archdiocese of Seattle all helped me understand various ways faith and civic involvement intersect in the Pacific Northwest. Other staff members of the dioceses and ecumenical associations of the Pacific Northwest were likewise quite helpful.

Frank Fromherz of the Portland Archdiocese, Sr. Sharon Park of the Washington State Catholic Conference, Loretta Jankoski of the Hunthausen School of Theology, John Hart (then of Carroll College), and Yvonne Smith of the Yakima Nation were all extremely generous with their time and insights. Our conversations were especially invaluable as I attempted to make sense of the unfolding of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, a crucial case in this study.

And I am especially grateful to the Most Rev. William Skylstad, Bishop of Spokane, for his taking the time to meet with me. Everyone I met spoke of his dedication and wisdom, and I was able to witness those first hand.
VITA

1984  Arts Baccalaureate, Harvard University
1993  Master of Divinity, Weston School of Theology, Cambridge, Massachusetts
1994  Ordination to the Priesthood, Roman Catholic Church
1994-1998  Campus Ministry and Adjunct Faculty, Fordham University, New York
1999  Licentiate in Sacred Theology, Weston School of Theology
2005-2007  Pre-doctoral Teaching Fellow, Boston College, Newton, Massachusetts
2008  Doctor of Philosophy, University of California, San Diego

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major field: Sociology

  Sociology of Religion
  John Evans

  Cultural Sociology
  Professor Richard Madsen

  Classical Sociology
  Professor Gershon Shafir

Major field: Theology

  Systemic and Comparative Theology
  Professor Roger Haight, SJ

WRITTEN WORKS

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

PUBLIC CATHOLICISM AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN AMERICA: THE ADAPTATION OF A RELIGIOUS CULTURE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF DIVERSITY, AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

by

Michael J. Agliardo, SJ

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, San Diego, 2008

Professor Richard Madsen, Chair

According to the tenets of the classical sociology of religion, especially those associated with secularization theory, religious diversity leads to the normative expectation is that public life will be denuded of religious reference. That is because to the extent that modern societies accord equal place to a range of faiths, none has a particular claim on public life. However, many contemporary American religious groups have in fact begun to operate under a more open or
pluralist religious paradigm, one unanticipated by classical notions and secularization theory. And
this cultural innovation has also had unanticipated implications for the place of religion in public
life, as well, calling the older model and its corresponding assumptions into question.

This study documents the emergence of pluralism as a constituent dimension of the
culture of American Catholicism, and its implications for religion in public life. When such
"internally grounded pluralism" is a factor in the relations between religious groups in a society, it
supports a larger civic culture in which the substantive content of particular religious traditions
may be brought into shared, public arenas.

This analysis shifts the focus from the macro-level fact of religious diversity within a
society to the intermediary level—the level of religious groups, their culture, and their mutual
relations. Its claim is a particular instance of a more general proposition: That the larger regime
governing religion in public life is always a function of the relations between religious groups.
Since ostensibly, the norms governing American public culture are a function of purely neutral,
secular considerations, this proposition often goes unacknowledged.

The analysis proceeds by developing the notion of internally grounded pluralism;
sketching the history of interfaith relations in America; and then showing how the regime
governing the place of religion in public life reflects these relations. In contemporary religious
environmentalism, one locus where internally grounded pluralism has emerged in Catholic
culture, we witness religious initiatives with considerable public reach despite their overt
religious content.
Chapter I. Internally Grounded Pluralism:
An Innovation in Religious Culture

A. Environmentalism, a Locus of Religious Pluralism

On a blustery day in January of 1996 Congressional conservatives leading a charge to dismantle key provisions of the Endangered Species Act were preparing for an uncomfortable encounter. Cal DeWitt, professor of environmental studies at the University of Wisconsin and co-founder of the Evangelical Environmental Network, was heading up a delegation of evangelical leaders with a message to deliver to House Speaker Newt Gingrich and his colleagues: The Endangered Species Act is the modern day equivalent of Noah's Ark, and they must not allow Congress and special interests to sink that ship. The delegation drove home their thoroughly religiously inspired message: Politicians could not just profess belief in God; they also had to honor God's works, in this case God's work of Creation. (Broadway 1996; Steinfels 1996) In delivering this message, the delegates also served notice that the religious constituency that many conservative Congressional Representatives counted on was more complex than the latter had presupposed. Environmentalism was proving to be a rapidly developing social concern in the ranks of American evangelicals, and from that day on their elected representatives would have to take that into account. As for the Endangered Species Act, for the moment it survived intact.

In delivering this message, Cal DeWitt and his environmental evangelicals brought religion into the political arena. Some conservatives criticized the Evangelical Environmental Network for mixing religion and politics. Yet this was hardly the first time in recent history that Christians had made such a move. In 1979 the rise of the Moral Majority reversed a long trend among conservative Christians of eschewing direct involvement in political affairs.¹ And as it turns out, some of DeWitt's most vocal critics were themselves supporters of the Christian

¹ See Ammerman (1991) for an analysis of what provoked the rise of the Moral Majority and the reentrance of Protestant fundamentalists into American public life.
Coalition (a successor movement to the Moral Majority). In fact, after one sorts through accusations of mixing religion and politics, using bad science, or wielding faulty theology, it turns out that the real issue was not that DeWitt brought religion into the political arena, so much as conservatives' sense that because of their pro-environmental stance these evangelical environmentalists had "broken ranks and committed treason within the world of conservative Christian political activism." (Kearns 1997:358-59)

Lost in the tussle over environmentalism and the Endangered Species Act was a keen appreciation of the way in which DeWitt had gone about the mixing he had indeed wrought. While the Moral Majority had endeavored to construct a common platform among Americans who held similar moral beliefs and attendant policy implications, irrespective of what religious tradition or other source grounded those views, DeWitt brought the scriptural basis of his argument with him into the Halls of Congress. He did not simply emphasize the numerical weight of the constituency he represented, nor did he collar conservatives whom he knew had religious scruples to browbeat them with Scripture in private. Rather, the religious frame was an essential part of the public statement he came to make. This truly was public religion.

Cal DeWitt has since become a well-known representative of a trend in social activism that can be gathered under the rubric of "religious environmentalism." In the American context this term refers to concerted engagement by religious groups of the modern environmental movement. Certainly, religious groups have been taking positions and articulating doctrine with ecological implications since the dawn of religion itself. However, in American history certain specific activities and movements became associated with the term "environmentalism," and they color the assumptions that people bring to the term. These include efforts to conserve and manage

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2 As a number of my informants have pointed out, environmental issues and an ecological sensitivity in religious life have long been integral to the activities of religious organizations and American religious culture. For example, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference has a long history of relating life on the land to the life of faith. It has long been concerned with issues we would recognize today as "environmental." However, in an earlier period these activities were not framed as "environmentalism."
resources such as water and forest; to set aside lands for their scenic value or their function as crucial wildlife habit; and to regulate human activity and its products (such as pollution) that threaten the integrity of surrounding ecosystems. In the more restricted sense of engagement with the causes and actors of American environmentalism, religious environmentalism only noticeably emerged in the United States in the late 1980s, and only in the 1990s did it begin to coalesce into a more widely coordinated body of deliberate efforts.

While some observers of religious environmentalism have indeed protested that such religious activism does not belong in public, as noted these have usually been figures whose real objection was the environmental movement itself. The more usual response has been to politely remark on the novelty of religious environmentalism, at least in its early days. In part this was due to the way the political spectrum was configured. By and large figures on the liberal side tended to be more environmentally friendly, and they welcomed these new friends from strange quarters. Meanwhile, the more prudent figures on the right have been cautious about alienating traditional allies. In the midst of these developments religion has walked center aisle into heart of the public square, and except for those whose interests were jeopardized and the few disgruntled religious conservatives who objected to the stance that Cal DeWitt and his kind took up, almost no one has questioned the legitimacy of this development.

How was a stunt such as Cal Dewitt undertook possible? Did it not violate established common sense regarding the separation of church and state, or more broadly, what belongs in public and what must be relegated to private life? Was this campaign just an isolated incident? As the examples below make clear, this example is not unique. Religious environmentalism has become associated with a new pattern of religious involvement in public affairs. As such, it begs inquiry into what grounded the "common sense" separating religion from public life in the first

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3 For further discussion of the different forms that environmentalism has taken in the United States, see chapter VIII, section B. For a succinct, popular summary of the shape of environmentalism for the three decades since the early sixties, see Sale (1993).
place, and moreover, what has changed.

Religious environmentalism involves a range of activities linking religion with a pro-environmental orientation. Some of these activities entail developing an informed awareness of environmental issues among a faith community's own members; then the rhetorical frames deployed are suited to an "in-house" audience. Some activities involve promoting lifestyle change or individual activism, where the motivation might be overtly religious, and then the results spill over into the larger society. Religious commitment then affects how individuals participate in the larger society—as voters, as consumers, as members of a voluntary association—but that religious dimension only enters public life in and through the choices of individuals, through the modality of their personal "preferences." Some religious environmentalism involves generating support for various public and legislative initiatives, but while the outcome is public in the broadest of senses, again any religious framing remains largely in the background of "private" life, despite its implications for the larger community. However, religious environmentalism also commonly involves an additional dimension, one that seems to fly in the face of over two hundred years of American political culture, as well as settled social science conclusions about the place of religion in the modern world. Advocates of religious environmentalism have been bringing the very substance of religious reasoning into public life and public policy debates.

A further example, this one involving an interreligious statement to Congress, will serve to briefly illuminate another common dimension of religious environmentalism. In June of 2007 leading representatives of the National Association of Evangelicals, the National Council of Churches, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Union for Reform Judaism, and the Orthodox Church in America presented Congress with a joint statement on global climate change, one which they tied to social justice concerns. The statement is brief but forceful, and though it is not a theological tract, it is theologically grounded. At the outset four quotations from Scripture frame the basis of the signers' concerns. And notably, while three of the quotations come from a
book shared by all the faiths represented, one of the quotations is from the Gospel of Matthew, despite one of the signers being Jewish: "Because we will be judged by how we care for 'the least of these' (Mt. 25:35), we consider first and foremost the impact of our actions on the most vulnerable." (Anderson et al. 2007) These religious leaders spoke on behalf of diverse faiths, yet that diversity did not preclude content in a joint statement that was specific to some traditions but not all.

According to the received wisdom, in shared settings rhetoric and reasoning must be employed which share a common ground, and therefore religion cannot play a role in public life because it involves fundamental assumptions which are always "particular." Therefore, in public life religion must be bracketed and recourse made to the rhetoric of "universal" reason, purely "secular" considerations, "neutral" science, and so forth. Or if religion is allowed in, at least all tradition-specific content must be bracketed, so that the resulting contribution is baldly generic, a moral gloss at best. However, in the case of this joint statement on global climate change, common action did not require that religious reasoning or tradition-specific content be excluded. Rather, it served as the vivid support for a standard of justice: Know that we—and not just our actions—will be judged by how those actions affect those who are most vulnerable.

More generally, religious diversity does not seem to present a fundamental obstacle to religious environmentalism being both public and religious. In fact, religious environmentalism is often marked by a deliberate appreciation of the distinctive public contribution that particular traditions can make. In the academic world, this insight was central to a landmark series of conferences on religion and ecology sponsored by the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions. Held from May 1996 to July 1998, each of these conferences was devoted to a specific religious tradition and its resources for reflecting on the relationship between human beings and nature. There were ten in total, one devoted to Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, indigenous traditions, Jainism, Judaism, and Shinto, respectively. According to
the director, Mary Evelyn Tucker (2004) the goal was not to resolve the differences between
these traditions or come up with a final "religious" assessment of ecology. Instead, the differences
were left standing, each tradition providing its own resources and a particular point of entrée for
approaching a common set of profound human and ecological concerns. This development
reflects the emergence of a paradigm for acknowledging religious difference while pursuing
constructive and collaborative engagement.

A marked appreciation that each tradition will develop its own distinctive response to
ecological questions lies at the foundation of the largest coalition assembled in the name of
religious environmentalism in the United States today, the National Religious Partnership for the
Environment. Established in 1993 after a series of high level meetings in New York, Washington,
and even Moscow, meetings involving cardinals and rabbis, Carl Sagan and then Vice President
Al Gore, among others, formally "the Partnership" itself has remained little more than a
barebones coordinating mechanism. Rather than establishing itself as a full-fledged organization
running campaigns and programs in its own right, it directs funding to and facilitates coordination
among its four principle member organizations: the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops
(USCCB), the National Council of Churches (NCC) U.S.A., the Coalition On the Environment
and Jewish Life (COEJL), and the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN). The mainpage of
its website emphasizes that each partner operates "in common biblical faith but drawing upon its
distinctive traditions" (emphasis added). In the words of Walt Grazer (2002a), at the time director
of the USCCB's Environmental Justice Program, "We walk together, separately." Grazer's point
was that the members of the Partnership determined that if environmentalism was to become a

4 I met with Prof. Tucker in the fall of 2004 to discuss the Forum on Religion and Ecology, which was
created to make accessible and further the results of the Harvard conferences.
In general, the majority of interviews for this study were conducted from the spring of 2004 through the
spring of 2005. Further information pertaining to these interviews (date, location, and other circumstances
as relevant) are included under the interviewee's name among the References at the end of the study.
5 A listing of the acronyms used in this study may be found in the front matter.
religious issue, that would have to take place in the tradition and polity of particular faith communities, and not in some amalgamated form. Yet it is crucial to note that the member organizations did not view religious particularity as a threat to their collaboration.

That brings us to a final example illustrating the introduction of religious vocabulary and reasoning into public life. It concerns an initiative sponsored by a member organization of the Partnership, and it exemplifies both the integration with particular tradition that characterizes much religious environmentalism today and the way such activism has been able to bring substantive religious content into public life. That initiative is the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project sponsored by the Catholic bishops of the Pacific Northwest. A pastoral letter is a statement developed by church leaders, sometimes in consultation with the local community, that brings the tradition to bear on issues relevant to society or to a locale. Seed money for this particular project was provided by a grant of the USCCB's Environmental Justice Program. Since its inception, the Environmental Justice Program has provided grants for regional projects that propose to integrate an environmental ethic into the life of the local church, and among the projects sponsored there were a number of pastoral letters. These were examples of "engaged theology": They both brought the tradition to bear on local issues and used the concrete circumstances of the local as a vehicle for probing and developing the tradition itself. Grazer confided, "The big payoff for me has been the regional pastorals. We've had a series of those. The Columbia River [pastoral] was the poster child of all the pastorals."

The Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was indeed a remarkable example of religious involvement in public life. The watershed of the Columbia takes in much of the Pacific Northwest, encompassing eight Catholic dioceses of the United States and Canada. Issues related to the river system touch almost every aspect of life in the region. In 1997 Catholic leaders of the

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6 Grazer was kind enough to meet with me for a series of three interviews held at his office in the U.S. Catholic Conference in Washington, D.C. during the summers of 2002 and 2004. He also shared with me important files and documents related to the history of the USCCB's Environmental Justice Program.
region set in motion a project involving hearings and public reflections that unfolded over the next four years and beyond. The focus of that process was the drafting and publication of a document meant to ground a Catholic response to the environmental issues connected with the river, issues that turned out to be economic, cultural, inter-cultural, and, of course, religious, as well. The pastoral letter had a two-fold purpose, each related to a different constituency. On the one hand, it addressed the Catholic community. For Catholics, it was intended to foster the appreciation that environmental issues were also authentically religious and authentically Catholic issues. On the other, it was addressed to the wider civic community. The document was meant to be a specifically Catholic contribution to discussions on environmental affairs taking place in the larger public sphere of the Pacific Northwest. Reporting on the process, Portland's Oregonian aptly perceived and summarized its two-fold aspect in these words:

> When completed, the pastoral letter is expected to not only provide guidance to the largest religious group in Oregon and much of the Northwest, but also to spark discussion among environmentalists, scientists, business people and others in the region. (O'Keefe 1999a)

Thus the drafters of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter wrote both as religious leaders in the Catholic community and religious members of the larger society. While they were well aware of the distinction between their ecclesial and civic roles, they did not believe that taking up their civic role entailed bracketing their religious credentials. Nor did they prepare two different documents, one suited to each audience they addressed. The same document intended to help Catholics think through environmental issues as religious issues was also to serve as a statement addressed to the larger community. This was a process in which Catholic leaders were thinking through environmentalism as a religious and as a Catholic issue, and in their view it was appropriate to process those "internal" theological reflections in public. In the end, not only did the letter serve as the vehicle for getting Catholics involved in the environmental issues of the region as Catholics. It also supplied vocabulary and theological perspectives for grappling with
environmental issues for the larger community. So not only was the pastoral an example of engaged theology; it was an example of "public theology," a form of public reflection that some have argued is in short supply in American society.\(^7\)

Both local and national newspapers reported on the progress of the pastoral. They provide a window on how this exercise in public theology was received. For example, the article in *The Oregonian* cited above actually delves into some of the theology behind one of the preliminary drafts published in the course of the project. The article refers to the notion of a "sacramental commons," observing that a prior pastoral letter of the U.S. Catholic bishops had already employed the term "sacrament"—traditionally used in reference to the rites of the Church—to describe creation itself. (O'Keefe 1999a) Numerous other articles report on the use of this term "sacrament" and its implications for environmentalism and public policy. These insights were then appropriated beyond the confines of the Catholic community. Jenny Holmes (2004), director of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns, cited Catholic sacramental theology for offering a perspective that complemented insights of other religious environmental activists, and she went on to drew parallels between that perspective and views found in native traditions. In her estimation Protestant activists were able to garner many useful insights from Catholic sacramental notions of creation. Her views are echoed in the reflections of David James Duncan, an environmentalist raised in the evangelical tradition who authored a popular collection of essays on the human relation to nature, *My Story as Told by Water* (2001).\(^8\)

The generally positive reception given the Northwest bishops' foray into public affairs contrasts starkly with assumptions about religion and public life that have characterized American public culture for much of the latter part of the twentieth century, assumptions that to the present

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7 For a thoughtful discussion of the place of theological reflection in American public life and the social history mitigating against this, see Cady (1993: especially 1-64).

8 In an interview with a reporter for *The Oregonian* Duncan related that he was "inspired by the bishops' characterization of the Columbia watershed as a 'sacred commons,' an understanding they share with Native Americans, who have revered the river and all its living contents for thousands of years." (Haught 2001)
day remain part of the established common sense in many quarters of American society. Certainly, they represent a new public moment for Catholicism, in particular. Catholic participation in American public life dates from the time of the Revolution. However, prior to the twentieth century that participation was limited, and often partisan, as well. Catholic leaders worked to gain a hearing for their point of view and to protect the interests of their community. In a democracy such efforts are certainly legitimate, especially when the views and interests of a minority group are at stake. Nonetheless, with the turn of the twentieth century a number of Church leaders sought to broaden Catholic involvement in American public life. Drawing on a developing body of European Catholic thought, they began to make a number of arguments about justice and the common good that went beyond the concerns of their own constituents. This tradition of concern for justice in society is commonly referred to as Catholic social teaching. The advancement of Catholic social teaching in American society inaugurated a new phase in its history, a phase religious historian Martin Marty (1995:143-76) refers to as "social Catholicism." Yet for much of its history, when it came into public view social Catholicism did not bring distinctive Catholic theological insights to bear in any overt way. That theology remained in the background.

Certainly, that newspapers of the day would carry stories discussing the relevance of Catholic sacramental theology to American public life challenges the imagination. In fact, a survey of New York Times headlines from 1900 through the early 1960s reveals that in the 330 odd instances where the word "sacrament" or "sacramental" appears, it does so in reference to church rites and their meaning for the faithful, that is, in reference to their significance for a restricted community, not for the public at large. True, the goings and comings of the various

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9 Marty also calls this phenomenon "public Catholicism," underscoring its focus on the public weal. However, another religious historian, David O'Brien (1989), uses the term "public Catholicism" more broadly. Instead of applying it to a particular phase of American Catholic history or restricting it to concern for the public good, he uses it to refer in general to the interaction of the Catholic community with the wider American society. In this study usage of the term "public Catholicism" will correspond to the sense developed in O'Brien's work.

10 There are references to church services featuring prayers for peace and occasional struggles in Eastern
denominations were deemed more worthy of public attention earlier in the century; then as the
decades progressed discussion of affairs perceived as internal to a given denomination received
less and less attention. In any case, nowhere is there an article to be found treating the public
relevance or policy implications of the Christian notion of a sacrament.\(^{11}\)

Here two observations qualify the observation above that religion in public runs counter
to American common sense and the received wisdom. The first is that when religion is brought
into public by members of some faiths it is far more "remarkable" than when others do so. For
example, in America up until the 1960s the strictures of separation of church and state were
habitually applied more stringently to Catholics than to Protestants. Protestant cultural hegemony
was taken to be normative, while the public presence of Catholicism was viewed by large sectors
of the population as encroaching on the right order of society. As a Catholic, John Kennedy was
well aware of this when he ran for the Presidency in the 1960, and accordingly, he understood he
was obliged to affirm the most absolute separation between church and state. His term in office
was marked by an extremely guarded approach to religion, and it set a trend in American politics
for years to come.\(^{12}\) Such initiatives as the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project and their
reception contrast markedly with that trend of the sixties and seventies, in particular.

Building on that point, the second observation pertains to the period when the present
benchmark for the place of religion in public life was set. For the generation of elites and
intellectuals who voiced the accepted common sense that has held sway, that benchmark was

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\(^{11}\) In the 1920s there are numerous articles dealing with the implications of prohibition for the availability
of sacramental wine, that is, with the implications of public policy for the sacraments, but not the other way
around.

\(^{12}\) As social historian Mark Massa (2003:83) writes, "[I]t is precisely because Kennedy was a Roman
Catholic that he had to secularize the presidency in order to win it." Massa argues that Kennedy set a trend
in the secularization of the presidency that lasted until the Carter era.
established by the cultural changes ushered in during the 1960s. However, that historical moment may have been unusually "secular." Not only did the changing relations of the major traditions, as reflected in the election of Kennedy, unsettle the established terms for bringing religion into public life. Rapid social change and the rejection of traditional authority converged on a similar outcome. The tenor of the times was such that contemporary social observers, professional sociologists, and even theologians readily prophesied the progressive retreat of religion from public life. Such was the thrust of Thomas Luckmann's ([1963] 1967) influential sociological analysis of religion in modernity. Likewise, Harvard theologian Harvey Cox (1965) proposed that as human attention became fixed on the intrinsic practical and justice concerns of this life, religious symbols—the fantastic or mythological trappings of faith—would simply evaporate from modern life, leaving behind the existential truths at the core of religion. And Gabriel Vahanian (1961), proponent of the small but highly publicized "Death of God" movement in academic theology, argued that modern culture had irretrievably lost all sense of the sacred and all appreciation of the sacramental dimension of life. These were the observations and predictions of cultural elites of the 1960s who claimed to have their hand on the pulse of the times. While their predictions have not come to pass, if the era in which they advanced these predictions is indeed the basis of our common sense regarding the place of religion in public life, compared with the rest of American history it sets an atypically secular standard.

After the sixties, one issue did mobilize an explicit and sustained public response from America's religious communities, the legalization of abortion. In the wake of *Roe v. Wade* not only did religious groups mobilize, and not only did many work across religious lines. Many also advanced the public argument that human life is "sacred." However, the religious intervention in public life connected with the abortion debates is not broadly acknowledged as a contributing to its vitality. Indeed, today not only politicians but also many mainstream religious figures tread warily about abortion and move quickly on to other topics.
By contrast, religious environmentalism is able to bring considerations of the sacred into public life much more successfully. But that is not because the issues it treats are any less contentious or weighty. Global warming and the reach of the Endangered Species Act are not the stuff of harmonious concord. When the Pacific Northwest bishops set out to promote discussion of environmental stewardship in the Pacific Northwest, high economic stakes, complex issues that divided even the environmental community, and struggles for community and cultural survival had polarized the region. Yet religious environmentalism seems to signal a new moment for religion in public life. Whence the difference when compared to the pro-life movement? Similarly, Catholic involvement in public life has a long history antedating religious environmentalism, but its proponents were often reticent to introduce overtly religious considerations into public debate. Why the change in recent decades? And what conditions lend that change possibilities for constructive engagement that would have been unimaginable forty years ago?

This study explores the proposition that the key difference is the ability of the faith communities engaged in religious environmentalism to accord each other a religious legitimacy that they had refused or been unable to offer in an earlier era. The difference is pluralism. The religious elites who are the protagonists of today's religious environmentalism have integrated this pluralism into their approach to involvement in public affairs, as is reflected in their capacity to negotiate religious differences among themselves. Moreover, in pursuing their initiatives in public life, they have done so in a way that capitalizes on the receptivity to pluralism that exists in their respective constituencies in the society at large. In other words, religious environmentalism is able to take advantage of a recent development in American religious culture: key religious communities in American society have been able to internalize a certain pluralism as a dimension of their relationships with one another. This study explores the historical, sociological, and theoretical implications of this development. It argues that this pluralism in the relationship between religious groups makes possible a public culture receptive to the substantive content of
particular traditions. In other words, that religious groups have transformed their mutual relations
also has implications for the larger culture of public life.

The distinctive character of the internally grounded pluralism is examined in the section
immediately below. The remainder of this chapter then outlines this study, its methods, and key
terms that it employs.

B. Religious Pluralism—From a Religious Perspective

Pluralism does not present itself \textit{prima facie} as the most likely explanation for the way
religious environmentalists are able to bring religious frames and reasoning into public life. This
latter phenomenon is a recent one, whereas religious diversity and pluralism are as old as
America itself. America has long been known for its toleration of religious diversity.\textsuperscript{13} Even
before the founding of the United States, a number of colonial statesmen and leading citizens
embarked on a series of novel social experiments in liberty, according religious diversity limited
place in several colonies—Maryland, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania, in particular. The results
of those experiments were drawn upon in the debates surrounding the drafting of the U.S.
Constitution and its Bill of Rights. A cautious acknowledgment of religious diversity extending
beyond the bounds of Protestant Christianity has been a normative part of public culture in the
United States since at least the mid-twentieth century. And more recently the very celebration of
cultural diversity, which necessarily has religious implications, has been part of the rhetoric of

\textsuperscript{13} In the wake of the American Revolution, Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur (2006 [1782]:44-47) wrote an
early, widely popular account of America as the meeting place of ethnic and religious diversity. In an oft-
cited passage he speaks of the prosperous Catholic farmer, the plodding German Lutheran, the Low Dutch
Calvinist, and the fiery dissenter from Anglican orthodoxy all living peaceably in the same community,
trading friendships with one another, and just as likely to gather to pray in a Quaker meeting house as their
own places of worship if the latter proved inconvenient. Crèvecoeur's point was that in America the
affiliations of ethnicity and creed rooted in Europe were mere historical memories, memories that faded
into the background against the practical exigencies and opportunities of this new land. Though his portrait
was indeed an idealization crafted with that point in mind, it underscored that America represented the
possibility of a break from European patterns of religious affiliation and hostility.
multiculturalism that pervades everyday speech and the mainstream media. In what sense does the pluralism evinced by religious environmentalism represent a new development? In order to address that question a some preliminary distinctions must be developed, first between the notions of diversity and pluralism, and second, between the ways that pluralism can be taken up in the social world.

The distinction between religious diversity and religious pluralism drawn in this study is not always carefully observed in ordinary usage, but it is one worth maintaining. Here religious diversity refers to the multiplicity of religious groups or identities present in a particular society or other context. That is, it refers to mere "diversity," without any necessary implication concerning the status of various groups or their relations with one another. Generally speaking, diversity in this sense is taken as a given both by social actors in that context and by social observers of the same. Meanwhile, pluralism here refers to more than mere diversity in its bare facticity. As religious historian Martin Marty (2007:16) writes, "Speak of 'pluralism' and you venture to a terrain in which people have thought about what to do about diversity." "Pluralism" calls attention to how that diversity is, or should be, accommodated. So for social actors, it may refer to an ideal explicitly held or advocated. Or it may refer to institutional provisions for integrating diversity in that context. Then it is pluralism instantiated. When social scientists use the term, ideally they should be referring to some ideal for accommodating diversity that they or a given set of social actors hold, or at least they should be about highlighting some dimension of a given set of social arrangements which integrates diversity. As noted in chapter III, this distinctive sense of pluralism as having to do with the integration of diversity into a larger whole is present in earlier sociological writing. However, in more recent writing, that is often not the case, and the terms "diversity" and "pluralism" are used interchangeably. In this study the

At the same time, in making this distinction, the claim is not that diversity simply is a "fact," and pluralism the accommodation thereof. The entire social world is a construct, so that religious identity and the boundaries that set off one religious community as distinct from another are not quite "facts" in the same way that natural phenomena are. Social actors construct diversity itself by deciding upon the basis for drawing boundaries among the various groups in their experience. Generally speaking the religious diversity taken as a historical given by social actors themselves also serves as the starting point for the problematique of this analysis. The religious pluralism that is the focus here then has to do with what social actors make of this diversity, how they negotiate and accommodate it. The implications of diversity are not simply given. What people make of religious diversity bears on what it "in fact" implies for a society. And as it turns out, when diversity is taken up from within certain forms of pluralism, that can entail that people not only accommodate religious diversity, but that they rethink it and the meaning of the boundaries between faith communities. As a result, it can actually change the very nature of religious diversity. That is, ultimately it can lead to the revisiting of the "fact" that is the starting point of this analysis. So while diversity and pluralism here refer to distinct phenomena, it must be acknowledged that they are also caught up in one another's social evolution.

The further distinction drawn here has to do with the place in the social order where religious pluralism is articulated. Pluralism can be located in the institutional structure of some social context or forum in which a number of religious groups participate. It consists of the framework and culture for accommodating this diversity. Such a framework of arrangements can be as broad as that maintained by the U.S. Constitution and American national culture, or it can be more local: a municipality, an educational association, or any other common forum. Many observers have such formal arrangements in mind when they discuss "pluralism." In this study I refer to such arrangements as "structural pluralism." They stand over against the religious groups
in a given context as the arrangements which "contain" them and in which they operate.

Alternatively, pluralism can be articulated at the level of religious groups themselves, as a constituent dimension of their internal culture. In this case social actors are grappling with religious diversity from a very different perspective, from the perspective of a given faith community itself. Pluralism located at this level I term "internally grounded pluralism." For a faith community to internalize a pluralist perspective entails acknowledging that the domain of all that might validly be considered religious extends beyond the borders of their own community, practice, and tradition. That is not the same as adopting a relativist stance, if by that is meant a stance where one brackets the very possibility of making truth claims. Nor does it imply offering unqualified or uncritical affirmation of any religious tradition that presented itself as such. Rather it means taking religious truth seriously and affirming one's own tradition (since that is the location of the perspective in question), while at the same time being open to the religious claims, insights, and authority of members of other faith communities. So while it is not relativism, it also effectively rules out the a priori supposition that one's own group holds a monopoly on religious truth and religious authority.

In my field research on religious environmentalism, most of the groups I observed operated out of a perspective that incorporated internally grounded pluralism to some greater or lesser degree. But I also conducted fieldwork in a context that could be described as more "sectarian." A brief comparison will help to draw into relief some of the distinctive features of an internally grounded pluralist religious ethos.

One site I visited was a university campus in the Pacific Northwest that could be termed "conservative Christian." Students and faculty were required to sign a statement of faith affirming certain doctrines. Weekly religious services on campus were compulsory, and attendance was taken. Students who attended the school also attended affiliated or approved churches on the weekends. The university maintained institutional ties with academic, service, religious training,
and missionary programs that reflected its own religious heritage and values. The social world of this campus was a circumscribed one, and contact with other perspectives, both religious and secular, was discouraged. Indeed, occasional conversational snippets betrayed a strong sense of an "us" versus "them" ethos.\(^{15}\)

At the same time, internally it was a unified world. Faculty regularly supported the religious mission of the school. To this end, in addition to his science degrees, the coordinator of the environmental science program held a Master of Divinity degree awarded by a seminary of the university's sponsoring denomination. There was a religious studies requirement built into the curriculum. However, whereas other religiously affiliated universities in the area often offered classes in their environmental studies programs that would count toward such a requirement—classes that served to integrate theology, ethics, and environmental issues—the program at this university did not. As the program coordinator explained, the reason was that such integration took place in all the classes one took as a matter of course. Thus I observed an environmental studies class begin with Scripture and prayer, and religious considerations were woven into lecture and discussion. Such an approach was possible because, given the membership requirements of the school, the professor could presume an audience that shared his religious vision. Overall, religious truth was a unified and unifying medium in this world. The operative presupposition was not that there are in the first moment many distinct disciplines each with their own method, or many religious traditions each with its own truth or perspective thereon. Then in a later move this epistemological diversity would have to be integrated (in an integrating seminar, or beyond the walls of the university altogether in the existential quest of the individual). Rather, Truth was conceived in unitary terms; epistemologically speaking, the universe had one principle.

\(^{15}\) Clearly, the administration of this institution took a strong, clear-cut stance regarding its identity and values, and it required those who would be members to adhere to those standards. Nonetheless, here I should also interject that as far as my limited experience was concerned, the atmosphere on campus was not oppressive or intolerant. The faculty and staff I met were exceptionally dedicated, and the students I interviewed were very enthusiastic about their experience there.
divide, that running between truth and falsehood. The hermeneutical approach to truth assumed in this context was ran along a single axis.

In most other environmental studies programs I visited in the region, a more complex hermeneutic perspective was evident into the institutional culture. For example, theological and ethical considerations were usually separated out into designated electives. In some such courses, a single approach, one informed to greater of lesser extent by the host tradition of the institution, was pursued, but in a way that acknowledged other traditions. In others, various traditions were presented side by side, though admittedly some were given greater attention and resources than others. In either case, distinctions of discipline and tradition were taken very seriously, and students were required to juggle a range of perspectives on specifically religious truth. Truth was a segmented affair, one that took up location in more than one place in more than one way.

The distinctions I have sketched here are simplified and idealized, to be sure. So for example, it is worth noting that in the "other" environmental studies programs I visited, while distinctions of genre and tradition were made in one "moment" of the educational process, at a further stage students did often take a capstone seminar to foster the very integration which took place throughout in the conservative Christian setting. Moreover, there were certainly people in either setting, both faculty and students, whose appreciation of the nature of truth was more akin to how it has been characterized in the alternative one. And in all probability, when pressed most people would say that truth is a little bit dichotomous (black-and-white) and a little bit perspectival. What I have drawn here is a distinction between two ideal types—both rooted in the social world but abstracted from its complexity prior to analysis—in order to better define the terms to be used here. Internally grounded pluralism is here understood to reflect the latter, perspectival appreciation of truth, and accordingly in settings in which it is instantiated, one looks for distinctions of discipline, genre, and tradition as integral to how social actors there approach truth. Thus to the extent that certain practices move in the direction of a more pluralist ethos over
the course of their recent history, such distinctions will be increasingly prominent.

At the same time, how internally grounded pluralism manifests itself can be subtle. I observed it take a number of forms in my own fieldwork. Certainly, it can take the form of an explicit affirmation of the religious significance of another tradition or traditions. But in other instances, it may simply be reflected in a willingness to speak as one religious voice among many. In other words, it may be reflected in the way social actors stake their claims on a more hermeneutically complex map, one that is able to locate claims within traditions, rather than one that simply divides the religious universe into truth and falsehood. In any case, what such a paradigm necessarily entails is a rejection of strict monopoly claims, and hence a willingness to share the religious stage with others. So while the manifestation of this orientation may at times be subtle, they remain significant for this reason: On a practical level, they are sufficient to make room for the religious voice of the other, while at the same time extending the implied range of the audience of one's own discourse beyond the bounds of one's own faith community.

While both structural and internally grounded pluralism make room for the voice of the other, they do so in different ways. One difference pertains to the field in which their relevant norms operate. The institutional arrangements associated with structural pluralism confront particular religious groups as those given arrangements within which they must conduct their business. Some religious groups may identify very strongly with those arrangements, but others may view them as constraints imposed from outside, beyond the community. For that reason, the norms for negotiating religious diversity that pertain to some common forum need not apply when a religious group is operating on its own, apart from such a forum. Thus while the U.S. Constitution\textsuperscript{16} provides for and regulates the legal existence of a wide range of religious groups in American society, it does not determine the attitude those religious groups must take up with

\textsuperscript{16} Throughout references to the U.S. Constitution also intend, where applicable, its amendments, especially the First Amendment, with its specifications regarding the non-establishment and free exercise of religion.
regard to one another. And indeed, people proceed (and speak) differently when they are operating within their own faith communities than when they are participating in some larger forum. However, internally grounded pluralism arises out of a faith community's own world of sense and meaning. When pluralism is articulated as a dimension of the culture of faith communities themselves, it has a normative thrust that extends beyond that of structural pluralism. Internally grounded pluralism is more than mere legal toleration.

Structural and internally grounded pluralism also differ in terms of the kind of legitimacy associated with each. It is one thing for politicians or media representatives to acknowledge a range of faith traditions. When ostensibly "non-religious" spokespersons accommodate diverse faith communities in a common forum, they customarily have done so by way of affirming the latter's basic legal rights, and beyond that, their moral right to participate in the larger community. That is, they have often done so on civic grounds, prescinding from any claim to religious authority or any reference to the specifically religious content of a tradition. Meanwhile, in the process of acknowledging a universe of religious meaning which extends beyond the theological and institutional borders of their respective traditions, what religious leaders can offer in their recognition of the tradition of others is specifically religious legitimation. To give an example: Occasionally during the pontificate of John Paul II, when the Dalai Lama visited Europe he would meet with the Pope. One can debate what effect this had on the standing of the Pope in the eyes of Christians or Muslims or Hindus, but to be sure it placed the Pope somewhere on the religious map of Tibetan Buddhists; since their own religious leader had not simply bypassed the Pope, presumably he was someone to make religious sense of. Likewise, given the welcome the Pope extended the Dalai Lama, it would be difficult for even the most rigid Catholic to simply dismiss this Buddhist leader and his faith. Sociologically, such developments are significant insofar as the classical sociology of religion emphasized the opposite: the delegitimizing implications of the presence of other traditions for a given faith and for religion overall. In this
line of thought the possibility of internally grounded pluralism was not even considered.

Clearly, the distinction between structural and internally grounded pluralism is only relevant to the extent that institutional arrangements in a society have been disengaged from particular religious traditions. In medieval France, Reformation England, or present-day Iran the distinction would not be particularly cogent because the relevant structural arrangements reflect the internal orientation of a particular tradition. However, in the U.S. Constitution no theological or ecclesial considerations were explicitly articulated. Instead, reference to religion in general and specific religious traditions in particular was bracketed. The legal arrangements enshrined in the Constitution, and eventually extended to the States, then established a relatively neutral framework within which religious groups could work out a principled coexistence. John Courtney Murray, a prominent American Catholic theologian and social thinker, had this framework in mind when in the 1950s he cited America's constitutional arrangements as its "articles of peace." The phrase is a telling one. It underscores that, despite establishing the framework for a peaceable *modus vivendi*, these arrangements entailed no necessary attitude on the part of religious groups to one another. Contention, outright hostility, or an unwillingness to accord one another religious legitimacy could remain embedded in the relationship between faith communities. This distinction between the pluralism present in the arrangements of American society and the pluralism (or lack thereof) in its constituent faith communities reflects the distinction between structural and internally grounded pluralism.

At the same time, the distinction between structural and internally grounded pluralism can be overdrawn. Even in a nation such as the United States, where the present-day legal framework is ostensibly religiously neutral, it remains consonant with many Christian, especially Protestant, beliefs. Historically, the theological origins of many of the considerations which

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17 Murray used this term throughout the second chapter of *We Hold these Truths* (1960) to refer to the religion clauses of the First Amendment, in particular. That important book in Catholic intellectual history explores the religious and civic implications, especially for Catholics, of the American experiment in disestablishment.
shaped this framework is well-documented. (Evans 1997:11-45; Witte 2000:5, 7-9, 23-36; see also the dated but impressive documentary evidence in Morris [1864] 2007.) During the era leading up to the American Revolution Protestant churchmen and community leaders debated the true nature of Christian religion and how best to honor it. The legal arrangements they wrote into the American Constitution then reflected the assumptions that emerged from the consensus, such as it was, that emerged from those debates. For example, the legal provisions respecting the primacy of conscience, upon which the notion of privacy depends, derive from the concern during the colonial era to safeguard "the divine right of private judgment" (Beneke 2006:26-98). In the end, the constitutional framework which emerged from colonial deliberations assumed such widespread Protestant theological notions as the individual as the principle locus of God's action, the confessional nature of faith, and the voluntary nature of religious association (the congregational model).

How this framework was then interpreted and applied has also varied over the course of American history. For example, while no religion was to be granted privileges over others, often Native American traditions were simply not treated as a (legitimate) religions. That was a Christian theological assessment, but from the nineteenth until well into the twentieth centuries Christianity supplied the common sense which the U.S. government and legal system presumed, so that judgment held sway. Native American religions, embedded as they were in the culture and life of various peoples, did not fit American the legal or cultural norms for religion. They had strong ceremonial and narrative dimensions—that was how meaning was carried—while in Christianity the conceptual and theoretical dimensions of faith tended to be identified with the nature of faith as such. They were not based on the concept of individuals deciding for themselves about their relationship with God, then living out that decision in a legally recognized corporate institution conceived as the free association of other such individuals. Native Americans were born into their traditions. Their religions were not abstract creeds that could be
lived out in one place as well as another. The notion that geography might have religious significance—that religion was not merely a matter of the heart, but also of place—was a principle that to this day has gained only halting acceptance in the U.S. legal system. For most of U.S. history, the law made little provision for safeguarding the religious practices of Native American communities or their ties to the ancestral lands. Indeed, during the latter half of the nineteenth century the U.S. government actually partnered with missionaries to spread Christianity among Native Americans in the Western territories. (Beaver 1966) To Native Americans the American Constitution has hardly seemed a religiously neutral framework because it makes little provision for their religious values.

At the same time, the distinction between structural and internally grounded pluralism has been breached by the ongoing dialogue between various religious communities and the culture of the larger society throughout American history. While many U.S. legal and constitutional principles are consonant with certain broadly Protestant assumptions, no one religious group has ever been able to imposed its own stamp on American society. Indeed, from the character of American education to that of its prisons, from the Social Gospel to Prohibition, debate about how to shape American institutions has often broken down along denominational lines. With regard to shape of America's structural pluralism in particular, religious groups have always been active in constructing and renegotiating the formal arrangements that order their coexistence. So while the term "structural" often connotes that some feature of the social world is a static given for the problematique or the social actors of a particular discussion, that is not necessarily the case here. Rather, this analysis assumes that there exists the dialectical relationship between religious communities and the structures set in relief by the notion of "structural pluralism."

Finally, religious communities themselves have been profoundly reshaped by their participation in America's ongoing experiment with structural pluralism and its guarantees of
religious freedom. Some faith traditions have been able to recognize their own assumptions as inscribed in the larger arrangements of society, or they have been able to internalize these assumptions into the culture of their own polity with relative ease. In the 1950s American theologian John Courtney Murray worked to reconcile the structural pluralism of American institutional arrangements with the Catholic theological tradition, and the effort proved more arduous. Throughout American history, the tension between Catholicism's "internal" orientation to other faiths and broader American cultural principles remained a point of contention with many Protestant leaders, as well. Since American Catholics did not affirm these principles in the way American Protestants did, their suitability as citizens was constantly questioned.

If a group has operated on the presupposition that it has a monopoly on religious authority—which is often the case—adopting a pluralist orientation in a religiously diverse society can have considerable implications for how a religious group rethinks and re-presents its own claims not only with regard to others, but also with regard to its own members. It will necessarily have far-reaching implications for how individuals in that tradition understand their identity. Pluralism becomes not only a statement about others, but about self. And making such a move is not without further paradoxes. On what basis do representatives of one tradition recognize another tradition when the basis of that other tradition is, by definition, distinct from their own? The logic of pluralism is not a linear one. Internalizing a pluralist orientation will entail cultural change on many levels; it will entail considerable innovation. And how one tradition does so will differ from another depending upon the resources at its disposal, historical circumstances, and a range of other factors.

In sum, while the American Constitution and legal system have accommodated religious diversity on a broad, institutional level, that is distinct from religious groups themselves taking up a pluralist stance. In religious environmentalism a number of faith communities are endeavoring to accommodate one another in some larger religious dialogue. That is a development which goes
beyond legal toleration, significant though such toleration is in the history of the West. It goes beyond "mere" civic inclusion. It goes beyond strategic cooperation or the polite *modus vivendi* that often prevailed between religious groups in earlier periods of American history, such as led John Courtney Murray to speak of America's "articles of peace." The way religious groups themselves negotiate religious diversity is clearly a sociological phenomenon in its own right, and the realization of pluralism as a constituent dimension of the culture of faith communities themselves is significant cultural development. If indeed it is that case that the arrangements institutionalized in the larger culture in which all faith communities participate is shaped by the relations among those groups, this raises the question of the implications of the emergence of internally grounded pluralism for the way religion will be accommodated in American public life.

In the American context, while internally grounded pluralism is not new—Protestant groups extended varying degrees of religious recognition to one another since colonial times—the range of groups that are adopting such an orientation and the range of faiths to which they then extend it may be.

This study will pursue the implications of this development for the evolving place of religion in the public sphere. The argument proceeds by looking at how the relations between the main religious groups in American society, especially Protestants and Catholics, have affected the way diversity has been accommodated in public life at a number of representative moments in American history. Then it focuses on changes within the Catholic community tracing the both the development of internally grounded pluralism in its religious culture and the history of its involvement in the public sphere.

American Catholicism provides a revealing test case for pluralism for a number of reasons. Historically, American Catholics have played an important if subsidiary part in the overall story of religion in America, often serving as those significant others over against whom the Protestant majority defined itself. Tensions between American Protestants and Catholics have
often been the subtext of the logic determining what is and is not acceptable when it comes to religion in American public culture. One source of tension has been the that American cultural and legal norms neither accommodated Catholicism well nor affirmed its religious legitimacy, while Catholic doctrine failed to affirm the American cultural values on anything more than a provisional basis. It took advantage of the structural pluralism of the American circumstance, but did not adopt a corresponding internally grounded orientation. However, in recent history, Catholicism has pursued a thoroughgoing reevaluation of its relationship with other faiths, both Christian and non-Christian. The development of internally grounded pluralism in Catholicism marks an important stage in that group's own orientation to other religions. In the American context it has brought about a new chapter in Catholicism's struggle to find its place in American society. So beyond the impact of this development for the Americanization of Catholicism, it has fostered reciprocal developments with profound implications for American religious and public culture overall. As a result, many of the assumptions that had in fact been the basis for keeping religion out of American public life no longer seem to apply in quite the same way.

The argument that internally grounded pluralism is a condition for the possibility of a public culture with greater room for religious frames and religious reasoning than in past is, then, a particular instance of a broader general principle, namely that how a society (or even some lesser institutional forum) accommodates religious diversity is a function of the relations between its resident faith communities themselves. This principle shifts the focus of analysis to the level of the faith community, to the intermediary or "meso" level between society and the individual. Certainly, micro- and macrosocial factors that shaped the overall social environment—rising educational levels, the ebb and flow of immigration patterns, and so forth—also affected how members of various religious groups in American society have related to one another. For example, as the twentieth century progressed, American Catholic communities began to shed their immigrant ethos, and Catholics' educational and occupational profiles began to resemble
those of the predominantly Protestant mainstream. This development eventually correlated with a decrease in the estrangement that existed between American Catholics and Protestants. To claim that internally grounded pluralism itself was a significant factor in overcoming of Catholic-Protestant estrangement in the years that followed these macrosocial shifts is not to negate their explanatory role in favor of that of advances in theology, as if the explanatory role of one set of factors necessarily excludes that of the other. Rather the claim is that internally grounded pluralism both expresses and facilitates an improvement in interfaith relations, but at a different "moment" in the process of social change. To cite the importance of internally grounded pluralism is not to negate the role of shifting demographic patterns or other developments that may have provoked or supported its rise; it is not an affirmation of some purely idealistic approach to social change. Nonetheless, it is to deny that the development of internally grounded pluralism simply reduces to other "objective" macrosocial factors, factors that operated independent of how religious actors constructed other faiths (and by implication, their own identity). Internally grounded pluralism represents a cultural development with its own integrity and relative autonomy. As such, it represents a distinct moment in the processes of social change, one with important consequences in its own right. While not denying that one can in turn "explain" in some sense why this cultural form arose when it did in American Catholicism by referring to a whole host of other factors, the present study will not focus on such an effort. Instead, its principal focus will be to document the appearance of internally grounded pluralism in American Catholicism and to elucidate the consequences of its appearance for public life.

C. Overview

The present study is an exploratory one with three interrelated goals. It main goal it to establish the initial plausibility of its central hypothesis. That hypothesis concerns internally grounded pluralism and its capacity to support the introduction of substantive religious content
into public life. This study proceeds by examining American religious history in light of the supposition that the relations between religious groups has indeed been an important factor in determining how religion can enter public life. It assumes that the laws and norms governing the place of religion in public have never been a function of merely secular consideration. The argument concerning the role of internally grounded pluralism in the present day then takes its shape against the backdrop of this presupposition.

Clearly, the proposal that the relations between religious groups affect the structure of the larger culture in which they participate is one of such generality that it is not meant to serve as a theory of any kind. Rather, it serves to prompt the standard sociological move of "looking below the surface," in this case looking beyond ostensibly secular or otherwise "neutral" arrangements and asking about the cooperation or contests between religious groups that may be integrally related to such arrangements. This generality is a heuristic device. Its sense will vary with historical circumstances. The more concrete claim being made regarding pluralism and its implications for the public sphere is one instance of giving it specificity. The reason for attending to the generality itself in all its vagueness is to establish the importance if this way of seeing in the first place, that is, to establish a preliminary justification for attending to the implications of interfaith relations for public life in modern liberal societies even after the fact of disestablishment. At the same time, while this notion is not developed systematically, some sense of the relevant religious history does serve to establish a baseline against which to gauge the importance of internally grounded pluralism.

In keeping with the exploratory nature of this study, its second goal is to get at the significance of internally grounded pluralism as an cultural development, as a phenomenon in its own right. Therefore, this study explores that significance on a number of levels: historical, sociological, theoretical, and cultural. In the first half of this chapter, what is distinctive about internally grounded pluralism, that is, how it differs from given "structural" arrangements for
accommodating religious diversity, has already been noted. Chapter III then rounds out that
discussion.

The third goal of this study involves reviewing social science and popular commentary
about religion in public life in order to probe the necessity of a greater appreciation of the
significance of pluralism for both. The groundwork for that task is laid in chapter II. While this
study does not have a theoretical focus, it is worth considering why such a tremendous shift in
religious culture as pluralism have gone relatively unattended in sociological theory concerning
religion. That it has may indicate the degree to which deep-seated assumptions about religion
have gone untested.

The main argument runs as follows. Long-standing, fundamental tensions between
religious groups often correlate with a refusal to accord religious legitimacy to the other.
Historically, such a refusal may even be the principal source of the tensions in question. Those
tensions will then affect whether any or all of the religious groups in society may bring their faith
into public, shared forums. If one group enjoys unquestioned dominance, then it may be able to
do so, but the minority group or groups may be excluded. If all enjoy a comparable status in
society, then high tension will probably result in the exclusion of all robust, substantive religious
content from public life. When one reviews American history in light of this hypothesis, one
would expect that Catholics, being a religious minority, would have difficulty accessing public
forums or resources during periods of high tension with the Protestant majority. During periods of
relative parity, if tensions are high, then public life would suffer from a more general absence of
religious content. Similarly, when tensions are low, then Catholics should experience fewer
hindrances to bringing religion in.

With these suppositions in mind, this study attempts to gauge the state of religious
tension at different moments in American history and how this correlated with the presence of
religion in public life. It then tracks a particular form of Catholic activity, the writing of pastoral
letters on issues that affect the common good. It gauges how public they were at different periods, along with the extent to which they were able to bring religion into public life. During periods of high tension, one would expect that the more public these letters, the less religious content they could or would attempt to carry. Of its nature internally grounded pluralism constitutes one way that religious groups articulate the overcoming of their mutual estrangement. It is the very embodiment of low religious tension. Therefore it should correlate with pastoral letters that occasion more distinctive religious content entering into public life.

Graph 1.1: The public accessibility function (A) of a faith community.

If one were to express the above relations graphically, then the relationship between how public (P) a religious initiative is and how distinctively and overtly religious (R) it is can be graphed as per Graph 1.1. Here the slope of the graph is negative. The more public (P) an initiative is, the less religious (R); that is, generally speaking one would not expect some initiative to take on a more religious cast outside the community of committed believers than among its members. Again, the graph will have a quite different slope depending on whether it pertains to a dominant faith community, a minority faith community, or one that exists in relative parity with others in a modern, structurally differentiated society. We can call this relationship between the public dimension of the religious initiatives of a given faith community and the religious content they carry the public accessibility function (A) for that faith community in a given period or set of circumstances.
Graph 1.2 The relationship between religious tension and the slope of the accessibility function.

As historical circumstances change, religious tensions that impinge on the life of a particular faith community may change, as well. Again, when these tensions are high, one would expect that community's access to public life for religious purposes would be diminished. In other words, the slope of its public accessibility function would be more steeply negative. In times of lower tension, the slope would even out, as going public would present fewer hindrances to bringing religious content into public life. Graph 1.2 expresses graphically how the amount of religious tension in society affects the slope of the public accessibility function for a given faith community (ΔA). (Here ΔA represents the slope of the function A, which itself captures something of the relationship between the P and R, as defined above.)

Of course, it is not immediately clear how to measure the relevant variables P, R, and T numerically, nor is it clear that the above relationships exist as linear functions. This study does not attempt to measure the relevant variables with reference to the faith communities it covers. Its focus is qualitative, in the sense that it limits its primary task to defining the relevant concepts, rounding out their sense historically and sociologically.

The concerns of this study then unfold along two axes. The first has to do with the history of the relations between faith communities in American society. While its principle focus is relations between Catholics and Protestants, relations between different Protestant groups is also significant, as are relations with the American Jewish community (especially in the twentieth
century) and Native Americans (especially in the present day). The second axis corresponds to the internal evolution of American Catholic culture from the perspective of those who have been actively engaged in constructing that culture. These axes intersect in the story of American Catholicism. The development of internally grounded pluralism is important precisely as a dimension of Catholicism's adaptation to American society. Yet it is also the case that each of these histories pertain to distinct series of developments, each with its own relative autonomy. This study attempts to track both these storylines and their convergences.

The remainder of this chapter treats this study, its parameters, and its limitations. The present section proceeds to give an overview of the chapters which follow. The next section of this chapter discusses the method followed in different parts of this study. The section following that clarifies what this study is and is not arguing, and it acknowledges certain limitations, as well. Then the chapter closes with a discussion of the terms to be employed: religion, public life, pluralism, and so forth.

Chapter II reviews existing social science literature concerning religious diversity. Classical sociological theory maintained assumptions about religion that led it both to dismiss the possibility of internally grounded pluralism and to deduce certain necessary implications for the place of religion in society based on the mere fact of religious diversity. Classical theory arose in the European context. However, developments in America have begged a reevaluation of classical theory and its understanding of the necessary implications of religious diversity. Therefore, the next section reviews relevant developments in the American context. It was in America that the institutions of civil society early became an important locus for determining the overall shape of social life. Almost the entirety of this study deals with the operations of religion in this domain, so a brief examination of religion in the theory of civil society follows in the next section. Finally, the last section of chapter II considers what contemporary observers of religion in public life have to say regarding the public role of religion.
After this review of the literature on religious diversity, Chapter III lays the groundwork for a deeper appreciation of the phenomenon of internally grounded pluralism. We move from the fact of the diversity to how religious groups make sense of that fact. It begins with a historical review. Given the long antecedent history of religious groups grappling with one another's existence, this review provides the background for appreciating what is genuinely new about the specific forms of internally grounded pluralism that can be observed in America today. It proceeds to what sociological theory has had to say about religious pluralism. While sociology has had a lot to say about religious diversity, it has had relatively little to say about religious pluralism. Given the scarcity of sociological treatment of religious pluralism, the chapter next reviews what the allied disciplines of anthropology and social history have to say about pluralism. And since this study takes up how religious actors construct their mutual relations, the chapter ends by turning to theology, to what religious actors themselves have had to say about religious diversity and different models they have employed for coming to grips with it.

Chapters IV and V examine the institutional arrangements for accommodating religious diversity that developed in America at key moments in its history. In addition to providing historical background for the remainder of the study, the primary task of the chapter is to develop the heuristic lens to be used for viewing the link between interfaith relations and the forms of structural pluralism it has sustained. Chapter IV concentrates on the emergence of the American experiment in religious liberty. It examines the colonial period and the framework for religious liberty enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. Though this framework was sketched in broad rhetorical strokes, when it came to religious liberty the real concern, both in terms of the exigencies of the day and the priorities of most religious Americans, was working out a collaborative social order for and among Protestants. Chapter V then reviews some of the struggles that took place in society when it came to extending that framework beyond the intra-Protestant entente that was the presumptive basis of America's experiment in religious liberty. It
focuses on extending that framework to Catholics, in particular, citing key developments in the
nineteenth century, at the turn of the twentieth century, and through the post-World War II era.

With this historical background in place, chapter VI then focuses on developments within
Catholic history and culture in the twentieth century. It begins by examining the emergence of
"social Catholicism" during the World War I era. Social Catholicism is a form of civic
involvement in which Catholics moved beyond emphasizing merely their own concerns, which
were often partisan. Instead it foregrounded the notion of the common good. Chapter VI traces
the history of one form of social Catholicism through the 1950s, that found in the production of
pastoral letters of the U.S. Catholic bishops. Then it documents the emergence of internally
grounded pluralism in American Catholicism. With the reforms of the Second Vatican Council
(1962-65), the worldwide Catholic Church came to affirm internally grounded pluralism in a
relatively modest form. Nonetheless, though modest in its expression, this change had
revolutionary implications for American Catholicism. The chapter closes with an examination of
the impact this had on the shape of social Catholicism after Vatican II.

Then chapter VIII looks at religious environmentalism from the perspective of social
Catholicism. It begins with the history of the rise of religious environmentalism in American
religion both in and beyond American Catholicism. It takes a slight detour to document the
difference internally grounded pluralism has made in the culture of American Catholicism,
examining several institutional settings and showing how this pluralism has found its way into
Catholic environmentalism. Then it reviews the history of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter
Project. That history brings together the lines of discussion of the preceding chapters by looking
at Catholic pluralism in the context of civic engagement. The Columbia River Pastoral Letter
Project was a highly public process, yet it was one with an obvious and highly overt religious
dimension. In the post-Vatican II era the public accessibility function for the contemporary
American Catholic community already began to level off, and at least with regard to
environmental issues, internally grounded pluralism correlates with few overt hindrances to bringing the religious content of Catholicism into public life.

The final chapter then offers some concluding reflections regarding interfaith relations, pluralism, and public culture. And it returns to some of the theoretical concerns raised at the outset.

**D. Method and Approach**

In order to ground the main argument of this study, it was necessary to look at American religious history and the tensions that scored its surface, and it was necessary to document the emergence of internally grounded pluralism in the life of an American faith community.

The American Catholic community recommended itself for this study for several reasons. In the first place, tensions between Catholics and Protestants have constituted a significant subplot in American history, and this story of both contest and cooperation has had a readily documented impact on American public life. Second, Catholic-Protestant relations hearken back to those events in European history which were not only crucial in defining modernity; they were also pivotal in determining how social science came to think about religion and interfaith relations. Third, in the 1960s the Catholic Church convened an ecumenical council, a meeting of the worldwide episcopate known as the Second Vatican Council, whose sessions took place each fall from 1962 through 1965. In the wake of Vatican II the American Catholic Church underwent a series of well-documented reforms, reforms that had a profound impact both on interfaith relations and American public life. (As an aside, it should also be noted that to date no systematic social science analysis connecting these two levels of change has been undertaken.) Finally, given the institutional history of Catholicism, especially in the United States, it would seem an unlikely candidate for the development of internally grounded pluralism. A highly institutionalized entity, and one that has assumed a defensive posture for much of the modern era, the Catholic Church is
better known for drawing quite distinct boundaries, especially regarding membership and doctrine. Boundedness, rather than openness, would seem to typify its institutional ethos. Pluralism is not a term many people, either outside observers or its own adherents, would immediately reach for in describing Catholicism. In that, it serves as a something of a "hard case": If the American Catholic Church can develop a pluralist orientation, what might that indicate about religious systems and modern society more generally?

The idea of using pastoral letters to gauge the role of Catholicism in public life immediately suggests itself because of two letters that the U.S. bishops issued in the 1980s, one on the question of peace and nuclear weapons (National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) 1983) and one on economic justice (National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) 1986). These were both lengthy documents that emerged as the result of a multi-year, public process, and they received considerable media play. They are mentioned in any standard treatment of contemporary American Catholicism. And in particular, José Casanova featured them in his seminal discussion of *Public Religions in the Modern World* (1994). Given their length, complexity, and publicity, admittedly these two pastorals were somewhat exceptional. Nonetheless, the genre itself does provide a useful measure for tracking the shifting nature of Catholic involvement in public life. Broadly speaking, a pastoral letter is any document issued by a church authority to address an issue before the community. Over and above pastoral letters written by local bishops and pastors, American Catholic bishops have issued joint pastoral letters since the founding of the United States as a nation. However, it is only in the beginning of the twentieth century, quite late in American history, that the bishops began to take up questions of the good of society overall. In so doing, they also began to address a wider audience, one extending beyond the Catholic community. It is during the twentieth century then that some of these pastorals reflect the interplay between a manifest public dimension and an overt religious dimension.
At the same time, religious environmentalism turns out to be a promising locus for examining how internally grounded pluralism has had an impact on this interplay. As noted at the outset, in the United States religious environmentalism is a relatively recent movement, one whose roots—with a few exceptions—do not extend back past the 1980s; that is certainly the case for environmental activism on the part of the institutional Catholic Church.\textsuperscript{18} When environmentalism was taken up by the Catholic episcopacy is well-documented. Its vocabulary, institutional features, and methods were all developed from the late eighties forward. Precisely for this reason, religious environmentalism recommends itself as a promising source of sites that are relatively more informed by such internally grounded pluralism as came to be articulated in the post-Vatican II era, at least when compared with initiatives with a longer institutional and ideological history. As William Sewell, Jr. (1996), Jack Goldstone (1998), and a number of other sociologists have recently been at pains to show, social outcomes are often path-dependent, and that is especially the case where singular forms of cultural innovation are involved or where the unit of analysis corresponds to institutional actors (Mahoney 2000). Patterns get set in place; social actors adjust their expectations and actions accordingly; and hence they perpetuate those patterns. For that reason, the approach of religious groups dealing with issues that extend further back in history is more likely to be colored by commitments and vocabulary from an earlier historical moment. On the other hand, as a uniquely post-Vatican II concern, religious environmentalism is a more likely arena for detecting the impact of internally grounded pluralism. And fortunately, there are a number of national and regional pastoral letters that take up environmental concerns.

The decision to focus on American Catholic pastoral letters and the process of selecting them emerged from a targeted expert survey I undertook prior to beginning the research for this

\textsuperscript{18} Prior to the eighties there were certain Catholic figures, such as the philosopher and cultural historian Thomas Berry, who considered environmental issues from within a frame that could be considered religious. However, in Catholic circles he was the exception, not the rule.
study. In order to learn more about interfaith relations and religious environmentalism, I attended the annual meeting of the National Workshop on Christian Unity in Cleveland in the spring of 2003. There I was allowed to make available a survey that helped me to gain a sense of how Christians of different traditions linked faith and environmental issues, and how they may have borrowed across denominational lines. I also spoke with Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, Distinguished Professor of Systematic Theology at Fordham University and past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America; her 1998 presidential address to the CTSA had placed environmental concerns on its agenda. She spoke with me about several key issues, including what work is being done in the theological community on environmentalism and who serves as the primary dialogue partners for many Catholic theologians working in this area. The help she lent in mapping the field of Catholic environmentalism provided valuable context. When it came to selecting the historical cases, two authorities in American Catholic social history lent their expertise. Thomas Buckley, SJ, Professor of American Religious History at the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley, and Mark Massa, SJ, director of the Curran Center for American Catholic Studies at Fordham University. Finally, Drew Christiansen, SJ, and Walt Grazer, past and (at the time) current directors of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Environmental Justice Program, provided an overview of major contemporary Catholic initiatives concerning environmental issues. Their insight and guidance proved invaluable.

In brief, the main argument concerning the role of internally grounded pluralism is advanced by comparing Catholic pastoral letters prior to Vatican II, when pluralism received Catholic official endorsement, with those published afterward. Of course, not every pastoral letter has a significant public dimension. Some concern Church order or specifically Catholic piety, for example, and therefore they are only of marginal interest to a wider audience. During the pre-

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19 As I note in chapter VI, the National Workshop on Christian Unity was established in 1964, during the timeframe when the Second Vatican Council was underway. It has since served as one forum for interchange among Christians of various traditions, including Catholics.
Vatican II those all that manifest a significant public dimension are reviewed in this study. Particular attention is given to two documents produced in 1919, documents that address the question of rebuilding the social order in the wake of the Great War. During the post-Vatican II era, the rate of pastoral letter production increased. Rather than review them all, to sample the affect that internally grounded pluralism had on social Catholicism, the peace pastoral of 1983 and the economic pastoral of 1986 were selected for study. Given the very full public process that led to their publication, they have an authoritative representative status. Then the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, a pastoral letter and one whose principal focus was environmental, was selected as for closer analysis. Though Columbia River Pastoral Letter was a regional pastoral (one produced by a local grouping of Catholic bishops) and not a national one, the process behind it was comparable to that which led to the economic and peace pastorals. Both Grazer and Christiansen singled out that project as coming closest to realizing what local coordinators and the national staff hoped to achieve through such efforts.

Plans for the fieldwork were developed during an exploratory phase which took place in the spring through the fall of 2003. In order to understand the kinds of issues that arise on the local level in connection with religion and environmental affairs, I met with figures such as Rosemary Johnston, Executive Director of the Ecumenical Council of San Diego County. I also met with members of the executive board of the San Diego Sierra Club and attended one of their council meetings. And I drew on the questionnaire I had distributed at the National Workshop on Christian Unity.

The goal of my field research was to understand how the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project came into being, was designed, unfolded, and was received. To that end, I met with all of the key committee members involved in the project, including Bishop William Skylstad (the chair), one of the other bishops, the theologian who wrote the successive drafts of the document, diocesan staff in the four dioceses most involved in the effort, officials of the Washington State
and Oregon Catholic Conferences,20 regional ecumenical organizations, regional environmental organizations (both religiously affiliated and secular), university campuses that had environmental programs (many of which provided resource people to the effort), and parishioners and staff at parishes who had responded to the pastoral letter. I also met with several sociologists and reporters in the area who had knowledge of the project and had expertise in religion or environmental issues. While I began with an initial set of prospective interviewees, I also relied on "snowballing": In the course of interviews with key informants names of other potential interviewees frequently emerged, or I would actively solicit suggestions. I conducted a first round of interviews in the spring of 2004. After conducting a preliminary analysis of the data collected, I returned for a second and third series of interviews in fall 2004 and spring 2005, respectively.

While I prepared questions that I brought to each interview, I did not employ a set interview guide. For one, I was interested in piecing together the story of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter and its reception, and that meant adapting my line of inquiry to each interviewee and the role he or she played in that story. Second, since I was interested in how these people constructed their activity or their reception of the project, I let them relate their accounts as fully as possible in their own terms. While the explicit focus of most conversations was religious environmentalism, not religious pluralism per se, how religious diversity and secular culture were negotiated constantly surfaced. Indeed, most of my informants were well aware of being members of a particular tradition, the strengths of their respective traditions, and the differences or tensions between some religious communities and others. At the same time, they themselves occasionally noted that the extent to which people cooperated across faith boundaries on environmental issues was a rewarding experience, especially if it was a new one for them.

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20 The state Catholic conferences are standing organizations which serves as the joint policy and advocacy arms of the dioceses in their respective states. The Oregon Catholic Conference serves the Archdiocese of Portland and the Diocese of Baker. The Washington State Catholic Conference serves the Archdiocese of Seattle, the Diocese of Yakima, and the Diocese of Spokane.
personally. However, more often, collaboration with people from other faith traditions and a respectful appreciation of those traditions seemed taken-for-granted. As the opportunities presented themselves, I did ask questions that probed how religious diversity was negotiated. However, in the end, that question was for me to work out not simply on the basis of my interviewees' opinions about other faiths, but on the basis of how they shaped the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, or how it was received.

In the analysis pursued here, where the unit of analysis is a faith community and its culture, the sample size is necessarily small, while the historical circumstances in play are often significant enough that each case merits careful analysis. The concern here is not simply to establish some causal connection between two factors. Rather, it is to document and analyze an instance of cultural innovation and its impact on the social world. Insofar as the central theme here is how religious actors make sense of other faiths, the approach pursued here relies on how they themselves construct their activity and their world.

This study then turns on how social actors involved in public life understood and pieced together their activity, how their actions fit into or reshaped Catholic culture, and the implications this had for the larger culture of the public sphere. Accordingly, the method pursued here emphasizes the analysis of social construction; its assumptions and method draw on hermeneutic theory and interpretive sociology. That is not to say that this is a study of purely subjective constructs. Through language and coordinated effort, social actors put in place frames, institutions, and a common patterns of life that are independent of any given person. Though there is a reflexive dimension to all this social activity, a dimension to which one must attend, that does not mean that that activity or its implications for the larger social order boil down to what any one person thinks. Thus the pluralism that emerges is not simply an internal orientation. It is pluralism instantiated, a new and in a sense objective element in the larger social order.

There is a certain asymmetry between the research I conducted in connection with the
Columbia River Pastoral Letter and the other cases which are used to make the central claim of this study. I rely on my own fieldwork to investigate the history and cultural logic of the former, while for the latter, with the exception of the odd interview, I rely on documentary and secondary sources. The historical cases afford greater perspective. For most a range of measured assessments regarding their distinctive features and impact are readily available. On the other hand, while investigating the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project I was able to speak to participants first-hand. That certainly has its advantages; however, it also requires mastering far more detailed data, which then ground assessments that have yet to be sifted by a range of investigators over time.

Making use of secondary material is always problematic. To be sure, I marshaled given historical accounts in service of my own analysis. In addition, I endeavored to make use of historical materials written by authors from a range of religious and secular perspectives. They were all accounts of reputable authorities, published in scholarly journals or by well-known presses. Where I included assessments of a particular authority, I avoided those that were idiosyncratic. Since I was looking for how social actors themselves constructed the religious field, I cited reports and historical events that illustrated the same. Nonetheless, in assessing which events and reports were representative, I did have to rely on the judgment of historians and other analysts in the field.

The analysis of the pastoral letters was standardized by a uniform set of concerns throughout. When interrogating my interviewees and my other sources alike, I was interested to tease out answers to the following questions, questions regarding the public and the religious dimensions of the pastorals selected for analysis:

- What was the intended audience of a given initiative or statement? Was the audience understood to be segmented in some way, that is, including an in-house and a wider component? If so, how was that segmentation recognized and negotiated?
How did the relevant spokespersons articulate the authority on the basis of which they themselves acted? If they assumed specifically religious authority, how did they position that voice in public forums? How did they locate themselves with respect to their audience? How did they map the larger universe in which they acted?

Did a given public initiative or statement acknowledge others as people with religious beliefs and values, or did it just treat them as generic citizens or secular moral agents? If as religious persons, how did the initiative acknowledge and understand the traditions that others represented? Did it recognize the possibility of other religious voices? How was the relationship between the secular and the religious expressed or reflected in a given effort?

Was the participation of members of other faiths welcomed as part of a given effort? If so, how were the voices of others integrated?

What was the operative model of truth, especially religious truth, and how did this enter into an effort or the document(s) which emerged from it?

How successfully was a document or initiative received by the wider public? Did those outside the relevant faith community recognize it as addressing them?

These questions offer a range of angles for evaluating the extent to which religious diversity was acknowledged, engaged, and accommodated. While I was not always able to work out the answer to all these questions for each initiative or interviewee in this study, these questions provided the framework for bringing together the data I gathered from the range of my respondents. And it provided the basis for comparing different initiatives.

At the same time, while the analysis of actors' construction of their activity is a central focus, the accounts that people give of their actions, or that others give in their regard, are not simply accounts of reality as such. Every account is caught up in some purpose or frame. Since the purpose and frame of the present study differs from that of the people on whose accounts I rely, I had to rely not only on critical listening, but also some deliberate mechanisms for
disengaging the matter in their reports and free it up for the present purpose. When it came to making use of historical sources, that meant drawing on a range of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and other authorities. It also meant drawing on a range of disciplines, in particular history, political science, law, theology, and of course, a number of the social sciences. Throughout I endeavor to make clear the relevant field, and the position within that field, of the authorities on which I rely.

Finally, this study focuses on social actors who may be described as cultural elites. They are people whose social location lends them the opportunity to make statements and establish norms for the groups in which they hold leadership roles. Such people are often in a position to reflect on, comment on, and occasionally propose changes, often with both deliberate and unanticipated consequences, to the existing pattern of ideas and practices that mark their respective communities. In other words, they hold a strategic role in the social world; they are in a position to initiate new patterns of cultural innovation. Admittedly, the clergy, academics, and community leaders I treat here may not prove to be the trendsetters of America's religious future, that is, those cultural prophets, in the Weberian sense, whose vision catalyzes the various currents of the historical moment into some new and durable meaningful pattern. However, many of the people I cite are prominently placed within the Catholic community in particular, and there they do hold out one of the real options for that community's future.

E. Clarification and Limitations

The focus is the difference internally grounded pluralism makes for Catholic involvement in public life, and for the dynamics of civil society overall. Just to be clear, this study does not claim that internally grounded pluralism is the next, universal stage of social evolution in Western religious history. While such pluralism has taken root in certain Catholic circles (and as will be evident, in other faith communities, often in distinctive ways), it does not represent a universal
emphasis even among American Catholics. Instead, its presence within American Catholicism varies with issue and sub-community. Also, this study does not define internally grounded pluralism as a blanket affirmation of other faiths. It merely reflects an openness to their religious legitimacy. Finally, this study does not attempt to measure the impact of religion on environmental issues or public issues in general. Many people had hoped that religion might add momentum to a sagging environmental movement. That question remains to be answered.

The exploratory nature of this study should also be emphasized. What is being undertaken here is a first order analysis, that is, one that maps a larger terrain and the relationships among its more prominent features. It does so by documenting a realized example of internally grounded pluralism and assembling a theoretical and historical context for bringing out the significance of this development. Since this study covers a long period of history, takes into consideration the relationship between such diverse realms as religion, government, and the informal norms of culture, and makes use of a variety of types of relevant data, it is not able to control a limited number of precisely defined variables. The goal is rather to establish a perspective for bringing the argument here into focus, pointing out its systematic features, and making the case for its plausibility. Admittedly, while the case study on which it turns is illuminating, one can legitimately ask how typical it is or whether other factors may prove more significant in determining the place of religion in public life. Nonetheless, the value of this study lies in making connections between issues that have been neglected.

A number of limitations to this study should also be acknowledged at the outset. In the first place, the argument is cast in more general terms as one about religion and public life in liberal, structurally differentiated societies. Yet it is colored by history and circumstances of the cases I have selected. Certainly, it goes without saying that every empirical study is circumscribed by its own particularity. There is a sense in which the circumstances of America and its long history of accommodating religious diversity are unique. There is a sense in which
the Catholic Church is a unique religious body. There is a sense in which the Columbia River Pastoral Letter was a unique endeavor taking place in a singular part of the country. All these factors must be acknowledged at the outset. They certainly enter the discussion and analysis which follow.

Beyond that, I would emphasize three points. First, the argument here is based on the case of American Catholicism, not Catholicism in general. So while documents and developments from the Catholic world outside the United States are relevant to the history here, how they are received in the American Catholic community is the salient issue. For example, in treating *Dignitatis humanae*, the Vatican II Declaration on Religious Freedom, this study is most concerned with how the production of the document was influenced by American actors and how it was received by the American Church, not with the meaning of the document for "Catholicism in general." Second, in a number of places the uniquely secular cast of the culture of the Pacific Northwest is a significant factor. Where relevant, I integrate that consideration into the discussion the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project. And third, the next section defines how a number of key terms will be used in this study, and one of the reasons for doing so is to be better able to abstract the conclusions I draw from their empirical circumstances. The point is to at least control how those terms are used in this study.

Another consideration in social science research is objectivity. Certainly, since I take a constructionist approach to the social world, I am not at pains to claim that social science data self-materializes independent of any observer. However, one might recast the question of objectivity this way: If someone else had pursued this project, would they have obtained different results?

Apart from deliberate biases, we all have biases that may escape our reflexive grasp. In this study I make an argument concerning how the resources of various religious traditions can be shared in public. My own personal experience leads me to believe people of a given tradition can
learn and grow from their encounter with other traditions, and that public life can be enriched by considerations that bring the resources of a tradition to bear on its concerns. I found myself in deep sympathy with most of the people with whom I spoke, and I was gratified to see their own enthusiasm for their respective traditions. At the same time, I genuinely appreciate the achievement that American civic culture represents and the careful balance it maintains. Public culture is a public good, and any study undertaken in its regard must respect its integrity. That is, public culture is not available for the pet projects and predilections of individuals. Nonetheless, I should acknowledge that I do hope that the developments on which I report can serve as constructive examples for the future of religious involvement in American public culture. I was at pains to assemble the various aspects of a story that brought these developments into view.

I should also acknowledge that I am a committed Catholic and a priest writing about the Catholic Church in American society. One discovery I did make as an insider to the world of things religious and things Catholic was that I had to be deliberate about listening with outsider ears. For example, when I reviewed some initial interviews, I found that I missed opportunities to ask for clarification or further details because I assumed I understood what my interviewee was telling me. However, once I was more deliberate about asking my informants to unpack their own statements and observations, I did find that having a reasonable initial grasp of some of the institutional and theological issues in my informants' world ultimately helped me to isolate in *media res* what often turned out to be significant border conditions and developments.

As for how my interviewees reacted to my being a priest, and how that might have colored their responses, my sense is that it prompted people to reflect on religion: religion in public affairs, religion and environmentalism, religion and commitment, interfaith relations, and so forth. In the end, I had lots of great conversations. I spoke for hours with people who waxed enthusiastic about environmental efforts they were involved in and the place of faith in those efforts. I am sure I communicated some of my own enthusiasm regarding their efforts. At the
same time, I was not conducting opinion research. I was asking about when and how faith was integrated into public sphere initiatives. I asked for examples and for reasons why something counted as an example. Where a positive enthusiasm was involved in these exchanges, it may have provoked notice of details that lent a fuller picture to what many viewed as hopeful developments, but these accounts were not constructed solely on the basis of enthusiasm.21

F. Assumptions and Definitions

This study makes use of a number of key terms. Many have a complex history in both ordinary usage and in the social sciences. Accordingly, some account of the many senses of these terms, how they are colored by their social history, and how they will be used here is in order. Obviously, "pluralism" is a key term in this study. Some discussion of the sense in which it will be used has already been supplied, and a fuller exploration of the notion will be given in chapter III. The term "public" and the related notion of the public sphere appear throughout this analysis.

The notion of "the public" is commonly used in contrast to "the private." Here I briefly explore the history behind the modern notion of the public and what the contrast that is commonly drawn with the private implies for the place of religion in social life. I also sketch the notion of "religion" which will guide this study. And since the terms "spiritual" and "spirituality" play a role not only in religious culture, but also in interreligious affairs, I review some findings on how this term functions in contemporary America and in the locale where I did my fieldwork. Finally, I highlight two senses of the notion of "the secular" which merit clarification. The secular may

21 I had considered remaining silent about my being a Catholic priest. However, two considerations weighed against that decision. The first was professional courtesy. Unless I was aware of a specific reason not to mention a part of my identity that bears an obvious relevance to the topic of an interview, I thought I should be forthright, especially, if I thought it might come up in the course of conversation. Second, clothing one's identity in the mantle of "the neutral social scientist" does not guarantee "objectivity" in the sense of untainted or standardized data. Studies have found that people entertain various understandings of who social scientists are, and they then adapt their answers based on that understanding. There is no absolute space from which to conduct fieldwork. So in lieu of that the only alternative seems to be to minimize the intrusiveness of the position in which one is located and to factor it into one's analysis.
signal the overt negation of religion, but that is not always the case. It may also simply indicate the bracketing of all reference to religion so as not to explicitly favor any one tradition. Then it refers to "secular neutrality."

The term "public" is so ubiquitous it defies precision. However, several key senses of the term are relevant to the present discussion, along with the assumptions and implications they import. The word "public" itself has Latin roots, ultimately deriving from a word of Etruscan origin referring to the "people." And for this study the idea of that which pertains to a group of people as a whole, as in the notion of a "republic," is central. In ordinary usage, the term has a derivative sense that is relevant here, one pertaining to the idea of crossing a boundary that opens onto some larger community, as in the idea of "publishing" or otherwise making something "public." Then the significant sociological issue is the location of that boundary.

Despite the present ubiquity of the term "public," in the Middle Ages of Western Europe, any notion of "the public" was absent or severely truncated, especially in those areas where feudal traditions had become entrenched. In feudal society people were embedded in ties based on family and feudal custom, and it was those bases of identity that occupied the foreground of culture and consciousness. The notion of a public, by contrast, foregrounds generalized ties to all the inhabitants of a given territory. When that notion was eventually retrieved in early modern Europe, it was inevitably shaped by the circumstances of its revival. Those social circumstances have colored usage of the term to the present day.

In The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere (1989), Jürgen Habermas provides an analysis of the origins of the modern public sphere that has set the stage for many a contemporary discussion of public life in the social sciences. He begins by observing that at one time Europe's traditional monarchies were the public institutions of society; in his or her person

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22 The Latin *publicus* can be traced to an alteration of the term *poplus*, an early form of *populus*. (*Oxford English Dictionary* 2008)

23 For a classic discussion on social ties in feudal society see Bloch (1961: especially parts III–V).
the monarch stood for the people of the realm. The monarch manifested what Habermas calls "representative publicity" (p. 8). Gradually standing bureaucracies grew up to administer public affairs as an enduring apparatus alongside this or that monarch, and the modern state was born. At the same time, as mercantile society gave rise to a prominent social class whose affairs were caught up in the vicissitudes of state policy, they created various institutions (from newsletters and coffee houses to the salons of France) for exchanging ideas about those policies, and about the affairs of society more generally. Habermas collectively dubs these forums the "public sphere." Concerned as its participants were with common affairs and, ultimately, having some influence on public policy, there was a public dimension to their activity. At the same, the participants in the public sphere were not included in the running of the government. Rather, they often saw themselves as standing over against the state, even resisting its claims. Therefore, from the perspective of Greek and Roman civilization, this arena was not public at all. Indeed, it was composed of people who otherwise saw themselves as private citizens. Habermas himself stresses the extent to which they saw their authentic selfhood to reside in private life, understood as an autonomous sphere apart from the state. Again, that stood in contrast to the Classical view that human flourishing achieved its highest expression in public life. (Habermas 1989:1-26)

Habermas thus paints a picture of the public sphere that sets it in defensive opposition to the state. From a Classical perspective, and indeed, from the perspective of most societies, a sphere claiming to be "public" yet standing apart from the structures of governance would be anomalous, even illegitimate. Nonetheless, this tension has deep historical roots in Europe. Prior to the modern era resistance to feudal control and the struggle for local autonomy were ongoing themes in the reemergence of urban life in Europe. The rise of the mercantile class, cities, and urban institutions were all closely linked.24 And the distinction between public and private, and

24 In The City, Max Weber ([1921] 1966) highlights this link between urban life and institutions, self-determination in economic affairs, and self-government, arguing that they were crucial for the reemergence of public life in the modern West. See also the work of medieval historian Henri Pirenne (1925).
how each is understood, bears the cast of the circumstances of the bourgeoisie during the early modern period. Civil society such as exists in the contemporary West—that domain in which citizens form organizations independent of state control to address common concerns and enhance social life—took shape alongside the modern state. And likewise this distinction from the modern state is built into the very self-understanding of its institutions.

At the same time, it should be noted that in colonial America the circumstances and assumptions concerning public life were slightly different. While a wary reserve vis-à-vis government was built into American lore and rhetoric, often that was with Old World exemplars in mind. On the other hand, in America, especially in the New England colonies, the roots of participatory democracy run deep, as Alexis de Tocqueville ([1838-1840] 1988) has noted. In New England the leading citizens set out to establish a commonwealth under their own direction from the outset. And when the United States was formed, opposition between government and the governed was never so sharply drawn as in Europe.

As for Habermas's project, it has a twofold purpose. On the one hand, he would recount how the integrity of the public sphere succumbed to a central contradiction, that between its self-understanding as a universalistic arena of free, rational discourse versus its historical origins and structural presuppositions as a forum of the propertied classes. On the other, he would retrieve for present-day society that very ideal of universalistic, rational discourse. Habermas's concern that the citizenry be constructively involved in the running of society has been a shared by many prominent observers since the advent of modern democracy. While it would not be appropriate to review the long history of those discussions here, one further reference will be illustrative. In the American context, a famous exchange between journalist Walter Lippmann (1925) and social philosopher John Dewey ([1927] 1991) also captured the Habermas's concern for popular participation in the democratic process. Lippmann contended that given the complexity of the modern world, the ideal of informed, participatory democracy was impossible to attain. In
response, Dewey, while conceding many points, argued that an effective public might be summoned into being by a given cause or event. In stressing the dialogical nature of the notion of a public—that a public is a public with respect to some given context or cause—Dewey thus brought out a more dynamic dimension of the notion. To be sure, a dialogical dimension was already implicit in the notion of the bourgeoisie organized in parallel to the state, and even in the image of the monarch parading before his or her subjects. Dewey's notion of a public as a mobilized conversation about an affair in which it has both a stake and a putative say makes that explicit.

The above discussion surfaces two interrelated sets of assumptions that bear on any treatment of faith communities and the public sphere. The first has to do with the centrality of the individual in the way the modern social order is typically conceived. The second, with the way the public is counterpoised to the private.

In Habermas's analysis the participants of the public sphere are properly understood to be citizens, that is, individuals conceived as members of the polity by dint of being persons, not on account of ethnic, religious, familial, class, or other affiliation. Habermas argues that this represents an important ideal because it allows arguments to be decided apart from any consideration of the status of the speaker. He also links this perspective to bourgeois discussions of human nature as such and to the desire to construct a social order based on natural laws. Certainly that was a central line of contemporary discussions. What is also crucial to note is how these assumptions (citizens as abstract and abstracted beings, human nature as such, natural laws) systematically strip away any mooring for overt religious considerations. Insofar as in Christian tradition God was seen as the author of nature, such a perspective need not deny religion, but it made secular considerations paramount and at best left religion in the background.

At the same time, the emergence of a public composed of "citizens," individuals stripped of competing loyalties, also coincided with the imperatives of the modern state. While serfs and
lesser nobles were caught up in feudal obligations, freemen were available to pay the king's taxes
and fight in his armies. Likewise, it coincided with the needs of the capitalist firm for
disembedded workers. In other words, the preeminence of this kind of "citizen" in the way the
modern social order is conceived and ordered is not simply a corollary of bourgeois political
discourse about abstract human nature. Conceiving the citizen in this way systematically demoted
of other aspects of individual identity, along with the claims those made. In doing so, it coincided
with the rise of the state and the firm as the preeminent institutions of modernity, as well as their
efforts to sideline those competing institutions, including religious institutions, that offered an
alternative take on identity.

The centrality of the individual then plays a crucial role in determining how public and
private are related, and what this in turn implies for the place of religion in society. Again,
Habermas's account is instructive. He associates "the public" with the affairs of the state. He
counterpoises that to "the private," understood as the domestic sphere and that which pertains to
the interiority of individuals. In this categorial scheme, when the state decouples itself from
religion, the only alternative location for religion would seem to be the interior life of individuals.
In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Habermas gives no sustained treatment to
religion. 25 The apparent implication is that with this decoupling religion somehow ceases to play
a role in public life. If it has any social role at all, as a private phenomenon it can only exercise
that role indirectly, via the fiat of individuals. And that is indeed the way many sociological
accounts have framed the role of religion in modern societies, as a property of the individual, a
personal preference.

Yet Habermas's normative presuppositions would seem to bar even this avenue for the

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25 Craig Calhoun (1991:43) rightly observes that there is something "remarkable" in Habermas's silence
about religion, even if one were to accept religion's wholesale relegation to the realm of the private.
Habermas was particularly concerned with the role of the family in the development of interiority and
authentic humanity, and religion was certainly involved in that process.
influence of religion in public affairs because he stipulates that when individuals participate in public life, they do so as "citizens," in the sense of generic persons stripped of all tradition and affiliation save rationality and membership in the social polity. 26 Not only do the categories Habermas deploys not envision any public role for religious groups qua corporate bodies. Once religion is framed in terms of his assumptions, even seeing the public role it actually plays may become difficult. And when that role does intrude itself into consciousness, the tendency will be to view it as something illegitimate, the intrusion of an irrational personal preference into the affairs of society, of the private into the realm of the public. Given that traditionally religion is the most public of institutions, that is a particularly ironic result.

The story of the privatization of religion in the modern world is a one that has already been told many times over. It has an objective dimension. That is, objectively speaking, the early modern era did witness a shift in the place of religious institutions on the map of society, along with other changes in the larger culture that saw it increasingly denuded of religious reference. While in the past many proponents of modernity have naturalized these developments in terms of the march of Reason or Progress (or in the case of sociologists, the inevitable secularization of modern society), in fact many of these changes were deliberate and programmatic. Some recent studies have looked at this process in the American context, where protagonists carried out the secularization of various institutions in the name of an agenda, one that then became a self-fulfilling prophecy. 27 In the European case the struggle over the place of ecclesial institutions in society has a long history, and in the early modern era it was the monarchs who were eventually able, with their nascent state bureaucracies, to gained the upper hand and subordinate religion to

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26 In taking this approach, Habermas is true to the Enlightenment. In her discussion on theology in public life, Cady (1993:9-13) notes that the universalism of the Enlightenment sought to include all persons in public debates, but not their whole personhood. They were included as abstract, rights bearing monads. As she notes, this then raises the question of what kind of public life we can really share when all that is of value must be left at the door.

27 See, for example, The Secular Revolution (2003), a collection of essays edited by Christian Smith arguing essentially this point.
their purposes. At the same time, as Habermas relates, struggle for independence from ecclesial control was also built into the historical memory of the bourgeois public sphere at the time of its emergence.

The point here is to call attention to how certain presuppositions were built into the definition of "public" and "private," presuppositions that served the ascent of the state and the firm. These presuppositions became part of the mythology of modernity, and because they exist at such a deep (or, in Gramscian terms, hegemonic) level, they may prevent an appropriate appreciation of the role religion actually does or could play in public life. Yet in the American case, religion was integral to the functioning of the public sphere from the outset. Indeed, religious referents and the writings of clergy were central to the very discussions leading to separation of church and state. And even when formally decoupled from the state, religious organizations continued to play an active role in civil society and public life. That is a role that social science is beginning to reappraise. For the American case in particular, the assumptions about religion, the public, and the private that constitute essential pillars of the mythology of modernity do not apply so neatly.

Historian David O'Brien published a volume on Catholic involvement in public life entitled Public Catholicism (1989:3). In light of foregoing considerations, the very notion of "public Catholicism" would seem an oxymoron. The perspective that frames modern society highlights the dance between the individual and society, where the state has stepped in to take over the role of society (or to take over the role of the "representative" monarch). This is reflected in how the divide between public and private are conceived. On the one hand, there is family life and the interiority of individuals, on the other, the affairs of society and state. Room for the

28 Also see Casanova (1994:40-66). He offers a similar discussion concerning other senses of public and private and their implications for religion in public life.

29 On this point, Casanova (1994:238) concurs with a telling remark of another sociologist, Thomas Luckmann (1977): the theory of secularization "is primarily a mythological account of the emergence of the modern world."
institutions of civil society must be made after the fact; they are located in the mid-ground between these poles, and hence defined by them. Here the contrast with the presuppositions of the definition of "public Catholicism" given by O'Brien is illustrative. O'Brien defines public Catholicism in terms of "how Catholics thought about their responsibilities as participants in wider communities, local, state, and national, and how they acted on those responsibilities" (p. 3). In articulating public Catholicism, Catholic leaders speak from a community to address "wider communities," thereby actualizing their participation in the latter. Here use of the term "public" signals both address of the shared concerns of members of the larger society and the crossing of a boundary to enable participation in such discussions. However, that boundary is really not properly understood as dividing the public realm from the private, in the sense of "mere" individual life. Public Catholicism does not emerge into American public life from the interiority of private individuals. It is already a community phenomenon imbued with social meaning.

Likewise, in this study "public" refers both to that which pertains to or addresses the larger community, and to the crossing of a boundary, the boundary drawn between a given faith community and the surrounding society. And while this study does draw on Habermas's understanding of the public sphere as a non-governmental realm of exchange about common affairs, it does not assume all must enter as individuals abstracted from other communities and commitments. Moreover, in this analysis "public" is not properly counterpoised to private, as if they were the only two categories available. Here going public means crossing a divide that separates the endogenous culture of the Catholic community and its "in-house" affairs from those of the wider community. Here the Catholic community is not properly classed as simply "private." Even classing a church as an institution of civil society captures only part of its reality, especially if doing so connotes that it is simply a remainder institution, an entity occupying some

30 A review of O'Brien's work also shows that in fact the public Catholicism he treats does not deal just with what Catholics thought about their own responsibilities. It deals with the nature of a just social order as such, and hence the responsibilities of all insofar as they are citizens.
residual space between the individual and the state. A faith community and its institutional church have their own purposes and their own autonomous cultural logic. Churches are not permanent institutions of the public sphere. Rather, they enter into it dialogically, insofar as doing so cogent for its own identity and mission. And admittedly, precisely because faith communities have their own reasons, that can lead to certain tensions.

Another critical term to reflect on is "religion." The people I observed and interviewed for this study made widespread usage of the term. They spoke not simply of the relevance of Christianity or Judaism or Native tradition or Church teaching, but of religion. They formed associations and entered into dialogue with each other under the rubric of religion. Religion was a crucial category for the social actors I came across. More than that, it obviously plays a singular role in the wider social world, one that elicits special treatment and special concern.

Here I will sketch the larger notion of religion that guides this study. This is not the place to develop an entire sociology of religion. However, there are so many notions of "religion" afoot in both common parlance and social theory that some minimal clarification of the notion of religion operative here is in order. And since I take a constructionist approach here, when I use a key term that the social actors also use, it is necessary for me to indicate how my own use relates to theirs. Here, in order to isolate what counts as religion both in my field work and my historical research, I employ a common-sense definition, one more or less consonant with how the term has traditionally been used.

Very simply, for most of the people I came across who claimed they were doing or saying something religious, the ultimate point of reference for that claim was God. People referred to God in many ways, but most often they spoke of God as the author of creation or as the source of moral authority. In the grand scheme of things, God was clearly different from all else, the judger and not the judged, the Creator and not creation, the eternal and not the temporal, and so forth. In classical theology this difference is often summed up by affirming that God is
"transcendent." There are theological-philosophical implications to that claim. But for what people said and did it entailed that they placed God at the center, in the sense that reference to God was pivotal for the meaning of all else. Taking this as a starting point, in this study I consider something to be religious insofar as it is placed in a framework in which God is, at least formally, the center and source of meaning. What makes something religious then is a matter of how it is framed. Somehow some connection must be made to God, or at least to some other referent clearly linked to God. A given tradition will usually trace a path back to God in some characteristic way. In Evangelical Christianity the characteristic way to trace the link God is through the Bible, the Word of God; in a Native American tradition it might be through reference to the Great Spirit; in Catholic Christianity it might be through the sacramental ministry of the Church. All sorts of authority claims can in fact be tied up with how this is done.

Generally speaking, such a way of understanding religion held true for the people I came across. Almost all were Jewish or Christian. There are other systems that various authorities recognize to be religions, and not all profess a faith in God. Accordingly, to abstract this definition from monotheism and broaden it a bit: A given cultural system is a religion to the extent that it is framed in terms of some transcendent element, the pivot about which everything else meaningfully turns. This definition should be used analogously, that is, with stress on the qualification "to the extent." In a sense, this definition privileges monotheism as its prime analogate. And in fact, originally, "religion" was a Western category, and other traditions were classed as "religions" by analogy with monotheism. Subsequently, scholars have looked at the collection that resulted and endeavored to identify some common element or elements. However, the original way this collection came into classificatory being was by means of analogy. The definition I employ here simply retrieves that original sense.

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31 For example, in classical theology "transcendent" usually means absolutely transcendent, and hence not contingent or relative. By implication there can only be one transcendent element in a system of meaning. 32 There is ample precedent for the approach I take. The first witness I would call to the stand is Max
This definition is sociological in the sense that it takes framing, and hence social construction, as its starting point. But it is not functionalist. It does not begin with some theoretical claim about the necessary presence or function of some feature of the social world which then gets baptized as "religion." Whether and in what way religion is present in society usually does have significant cultural implications. However, here I am not at pains to work all that out a priori. In the end, determining whether a society has one or many or any religions and the difference it makes is a matter of taking a look.

For the present study, this definition has several strengths: It is consonant with what ordinary people themselves say and do. It allows for dialogue with a range of both sociological and theological schools of thought. It is suggestive, in the sense of raising questions and offering insight, without attempting to answer those questions in some tautological manner from the outset (the main shortcoming of most forms of sociological reductionism). And it provides a clear idea

Weber, even though he himself refused to define religion, at least when he began writing "Religionssoziologie" ("The Sociology of Religion") ([1922] 1963:1). Nonetheless, practically speaking, his operational definition of religion is often taken to be a system of meaning that provides the overall orientation for a culture. Most sociologists of religion working in the Weberian tradition have followed some such operational norm. However, as Robertson (1970:34-35) notes, there has to be something more involved, because Weber himself held that the "goal orientations" of some modern societies are secular rather than religious. Here I simply propose that that crucial something more has to do with whether the term to which a culture is oriented is understood to be transcendent.

Certainly, the notion of transcendence was at the crux of Max Weber's sociology of religion. The crucial point he made about Calvinism in his discussion of the Protestant ethic was that it was the tradition in which the Judeo-Christian notion of a transcendent God reached its apex (Weber [1904-05] 1998). And when it came to distinguishing Chinese from Western religious systems and their impact on the social order, again, his analysis turned on the presence of a transcendent term and how this was represented (Weber [1922] 1951).

I would simply make the presence of a transcendent term primary for the identification of a religious system as such. Then whether or not that system in fact serves as the point of reference for the culture of an entire society is a matter of subsequent historical and sociological determination. There are religions that play a less meaningful role in their host society, but they are religions nonetheless.

In the West the notion of transcendence has been the starting point for traditional theology, though often in dialectical tension with themes pertaining to the immanence of the Divine. Social science is not obligated to take theology at face value. However, in fact some theological reflections on transcendence have informed social scientific inquiry into religion. Rudolf Otto's *The Idea of the Holy* ([1917] 1958) inspired a number of phenomenological approaches to religion. *Radical Monotheism and Western Culture* (1960), one of several sociologically informed monographs by American theologian H. Richard Niebuhr, also attracted attention among American social theorists. The writings of Paul Tillich (1957), also cited by a range of American sociologists, treat religion under the theme of "ultimate concern," and this notion may be viewed as an existential take on transcendence. The approach I have taken is a constructionist reworking of the
of what to look for in the field: the presence of a frame or system of meaning formally oriented
around a transcendent term. You can identify such a term because people speak differently and
act differently about it. It is ultimate, in the sense that there is no further term that conditions or
bounds it. As such, it alone provides the basis for saying something definitive about all those
other phenomenon that otherwise set the boundary conditions and terms of existence: the origin
of things (creation), death, what really counts in life, where it is all going (eschatology), and so
forth.

Admittedly, in most instances I could simply rely on what most people ordinarily
consider to be religion on a practical level without trying to define the term myself. At the same
time, this definition will allow a certain precision in summing up observations and stating
conclusions along the way. But more to the point, here I am at pains to make an argument about
religion in public life. The argument is not simply about Catholicism in public life, though
Catholicism provides the main case at hand. Rather, the argument is about religion: that internally
grounded pluralism, understood not merely as civic coexistence but as sharing the religious stage
with others, supports a culture which allows specifically religious content to be brought into
public space. This all requires some standard for delineating what counts as religious from what
does not. In addition, in the final chapter I do refer back to this notion because it also has some
explanatory capacity. It sheds light both on how pluralism functions in religious settings and on
the role I observed religion play in civil society. I then draw on this notion to offer some
reflections on religion and modernity, as well.

Another significant term I came across among people I interviewed was "spiritual." Since
this term is commonly used in connection with both religion in public life and interreligious
exchanges, I offer here a few comments on how it functions and what I myself mean when I use
the term.
Mark Shibley (2004) recently published a sociological discussion of "spirituality" in the culture of the Pacific Northwest, where the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project unfolded. He reports that about one quarter of the population do not profess any "religious preference," and more, over half, do not belong to a religious congregation. These figures are much higher than in any other region of the United States. Yet Shibley also notes that while only one third of these unaffiliated persons consider themselves to be in "religious" some sense, two thirds still believe in the active presence of God in the world. And a sizeable proportion of the remaining sample still affirm some orientation to "the sacred," especially as found in nature. Thus a significant proportion of the unaffiliated profess belief in God or a sense of the sacred, yet would not consider themselves to be "religious." Shibley makes sense of this finding by drawing on the work of a well-known researcher on post-sixties religious trends, Wade Clark Roof. According to Roof, a marked segment of the American population favors "spirituality," understood as "direct, personal experience with the sacred," over against "religion," understood as "mediated, institutionalized experience with the sacred" (Roof 1999; as cited in Shibley 2004:139). Roof categorizes such people as "spiritual seekers." Shibley assumes this contrast between religion and spirituality in his analysis. He then terms this value orientation "secular but spiritual" (p. 141).

What makes these people "secular" seems to be that they "claim no religious preference" (at least from among the usual choices) and they "do not appear on church rolls" (pp. 140-41). In other words, they are secular in the sense of "not religious," where "religious" is defined in terms of affiliation with established institutional religion. Certainly, given the definition of the term I outlined above, these people, though unaffiliated, are religious because they do affirm the reality of God or the sacred, that is, of a transcendent term of reference. Shibley, on the other hand, is trying to characterize the attitudes of the people in his study, so the way he defines the terms

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33 Admittedly, how particular survey respondents actually understood the terms "sacred" or "God" is difficult to ascertain. The term "sacred" is particularly difficult to pin down.
spiritual, secular, and religious must be understood in light of that task. Nonetheless, his way of contrasting spirituality and religion, while it may capture something of how these terms function in the social world, is not helpful when incorporated at the level of analysis. Neither is reducing "religious" to affiliation with certain institutions (especially since the raison d'être for determining which institutions count as religious is left implicit). And neither is the stark counterpoising of religion and the secular. Their relationship is more complex.

A study by Marler and Hadaway (2002) suggests that how "spiritual" and "religious" are used by the broader population tends to differ from the way Shibley has characterized this sample of the unaffiliated in the Pacific Northwest. Marler and Hadaway reviewed data from several surveys, including the work of Roof, and they conducted interviews of their own based on cluster analysis of the types they had isolated. In their interviews, they found that often among both the marginal and the religiously affiliated, "being spiritual" and "being religious" were either identical or closely related. "Only 8 percent of marginal Protestant interviewees talked about 'being religious' and 'being spiritual' as different and independent concepts." (p. 296) Some in this 8 percent were wont to state that though they were not religious, they were nonetheless spiritual. For these people, "being spiritual" seemed to denote "what is left: a residual spirituality." (p. 297) Here "spiritual" was decoupled from "religious," but not opposed. Use of the former term then seems to serve as a way of underscoring that even though one does participate in organized religion, that did not necessarily imply crass materialism. Finally, Marler and Hadaway did interview "a small contingent" who considered themselves "spiritual but not religious" and who did indeed tend to oppose the two categories more directly, affirming spirituality over against religion. (p. 297-98) Such people might fit the type of the seeker described by Roof (1999:199-208), individuals who call upon the quintessential Romantic value of authenticity to assert the superiority of a path viewed as intentional and interior over against one understood to be institutional and hence superficial. And it may indeed be that such a culture is particularly
prevalent in the Pacific Northwest.

And so while Marler and Hadaway note that for most Protestants the religious and the spiritual are distinct but *interdependent* concepts, Roof and Shibley call our attention to those people who tend to oppose them, affirming "spirituality" at the expense of "religion." Meanwhile, other observers draw on these reports of vibrant "spirituality" in contemporary culture to argue that in fact religion in America is as vital as ever, just taking a non-institutional turn (Cimino and Lattin 1998; Miller 1997). Still others argue that this is evidence of religion giving way to spirituality as one in a series of steps toward inevitable secularization (Bruce 2002). Obviously, the very sense of such arguments turns on the meaning given to "religious" and "spiritual" at the level of the analysis. Then whether or not the evidence in the social world supports a given line of argument requires sorting out what social actors themselves mean by these terms.

My own survey of the relevant literature leads me to believe that something of significance is happening in the social world that the "word play" associated with "spirituality" and "religion" is heralding, and social scientists have not been very effective at sorting it out. While this study is not concerned with gauging the overall trend of America's religious or spiritual future, in treating pluralism, it does wander outside of strict confessional bounds, and more, it does involve field research in a part of the country where non-institutional religion/spirituality—call it what you will—is pervasive. Both these conditions call for some strategy for negotiating the thicket to which these intertwined terms have given rise. Simply reporting usages that people make of terms, mere description, cannot serve as the beginning and end of the analysis.

The proposition that the religious and the spiritual are opposed to one another catches our attention because it flies in the face of the way these terms have traditionally been associated. For that reason, it suggests that something of interest may be afoot in the social world, in other words, that the relevant usage has a polemical dimension. Clearly, the opposition in question derives its
ironic edge by drawing on a primary context of reference, one that antedates the usage that observers such as Roof and Shibley discuss. What this polemical usage indeed seems to indicate, at least if Romantic strands in American religious culture can be cited as precedent, is a process of contestation over the monopoly claims of the dominant religious traditions to all that is of spiritual value.

If there is a polemical dimension to how the term "spiritual" is being used in contemporary America and how it is being opposed to "religious," then that usage cannot be equated with its conceptual content or imported directly into the meaning given the term at the level of analysis. Rather, recognizing that usage often emerges as the result of a complex interplay with the previous history of a term and how that history is marshaled by social actors, some distinction must be made between the primary senses of a term and others which are derivative. Historically the latter depend upon the former for their sense, and that dependence may perdure in the logic of things.

On a conceptual level the ordinary, traditional meaning of the term spiritual simply refers to that which is asserted to be real but not material, that is, some value or property—something like the friendship between two people or the beauty of a landscape—which is affirmed by a social actor, but which is not a physical "thing." Something spiritual cannot quite be fixed in space and time the way a physical entity can; it cannot be put in a box. If one defines the religious along the lines I have, as that which is caught up in a framework ordered to some transcendent referent, then strictly speaking, that something is spiritual does not necessarily entail that it be religious, but neither are the categories opposed. Indeed, by dint of not being strictly locatable in physical terms, spiritual realities manifest a sort of limited transcendence; that is, they "go beyond" the merely physical. However, at the level of analysis I would only consider them properly religious when they are brought into in a religious frame. Of course, in practice, the primary referent of the term "spiritual" is often the human soul, understood to be spiritual, and
things associated with it. Or the referent is God, insofar as God is understood to be a spiritual being, and hence all the things associated with God—the stuff of religion. These latter senses are derivative, but given that they reflect deep-rooted assumptions in the West, they account for the widespread association of religion and spirituality.

Often derivative senses take on a life of their own, and they may then serve as the basis of further derivations. When employing a term in a given circumstance, social actors rarely are explicitly aware of this complex history. However, in specifically distinguishing the spiritual from the religious, they clearly are summoning some of it up. Those marginal Protestants cited by Marler and Hadaway who, though not religious, consider themselves spiritual nonetheless have in mind traditional associations of the term "spiritual" with religion. And statements that positively contrast religion and spirituality clearly reflect a particularly contested and convoluted set of developments. So despite what actors may or may not be able to articulate at given moment, explication of the larger sense of a term does not boil down to its function or to its explicit conceptual content at a given historical moment.

In contrast to the population Shibley was reporting on, in the contexts I investigated the religious and the spiritual were not explicitly opposed to one another. People spoke about the spiritual values of Native traditions, or about Celtic or Buddhist spirituality. In doing so, they singled out some aspect of a given religious tradition precisely insofar as it was informed by that tradition, not in opposition to it. At the same time, they did partially decouple that spirituality from the tradition in question. That is, "spirituality" was often used in connection with that which could be appreciated as a value by others standing outside the tradition, perhaps even appropriated by those others. The spiritual then did seem to signal that which was less institutionally and doctrinally encumbered than the religious—it had a greater human, existential thrust. But it was also rooted in a tradition, and it depended upon that tradition for its terms of reference and the cultural practices which gave it social meaning. The prevalence of "spirituality"
then seemed to signal a move beyond the boundaries of a single tradition, but not necessarily the denial of tradition. When that move is made by an individual in his or her unique life journey, then it may reflect something of the "seeker" ethos that Roof describes and that Shibley argues is particularly prevalent in the Pacific Northwest. And based on my cursory observations, when spirituality was referenced by actors associated with institutional religion, the term did run counter to traditional monopoly claims that had separated various traditions—It is telling that theologians and people involved in interfaith dialogue used the term spirituality more often than bishops and other official institutional representatives. Associations with the "spiritual" helped sustain the activity of sharing what was of central value among diverse traditions. And so at the level of the religious group the contemporary emphasis on spirituality and the move beyond the boundaries of a single tradition that it signals may reflect the degree to which pluralism—openness to other traditions—is taking root there.

Also significant for the present analysis is the term "secular," along with two notions I would distinguish in connection with its usage. In ordinary speech the religious and the secular are often counterpoised to one another. And if asked what the term "secular" meant, most people would initially respond that it meant "not religious." That is a negative definition. If pressed to give a positive definition, some might respond that "the secular" is that which has to do with this world or this life. As in the case of the term "religion," the tack I take here is essentially consonant with ordinary common sense. When I use the term secular in this study, it refers to a way of acting or talking that eschews making a link to God or otherwise bringing to bear a religious frame of reference. More positively, something is secular when understood in terms of a bounded system of meaning. That is to say, all the elements in the system are defined in respect to one another, and none is understood to be transcendent. Insofar as all elements of a system are then defined in proportion (ratio) to one another, the rationality of such a system is immanent; it is not measured by anything beyond the system.
Admittedly, few people on the street would put it quite that way. At the same time, it does capture much of the common sense of ordinary usage. People do say that a religious tradition gains a secular feel to the extent that reference to God and all those spiritual and eschatological elements associated with God (prayer, hope, judgment, salvation) are replaced by elements that do not necessarily make such a connection explicit: service to the poor, increased self-esteem, and other values that may be measured solely in the terms of this life. And according to some sociologists, one process associated with secularization is the removal of some entity from a frame or institution in which reference to God is explicit (Dobbelare 1981). Finally, to cite a widely-read essay, *The Secular City* (1965), theologian Harvey Cox wrote of a possible future secularized world as one in which people act and think quite simply in terms of this life and the ethical demands of the world as it exists in its own terms.

Several nuances can be added to this basic notion, nuances which then allow one to probe the social circumstances of religion and secularity. The first has to do with whether social actors are advocating "militant secularism," that is, whether they define the situation in such a way as to positively deny any transcendent referent or preclude affiliation with any religious framework. Such secularism is very different from the "secularity" that merely prescinds from making any such connection. The latter approach consists of bracketing reference to religion, but not explicitly denying religion as such. One might prescind from any reference to the transcendent so as to emphasize the value of things one encounters in their own right. Such an approach may be said to characterize the activities of American church groups often viewed as "liberal." It certainly characterizes the thrust of Cox's work, who was not at all hostile to doing God's will. Rather, he was attempting to argue that somehow this might more authentically be done by paying attention to the demands of life in their integrity, without being distracted by the symbolic trappings of this or that theological framework. Another role for secularity pertains to circumstances where members of two or more religious groups share the same cultural space, and
the purpose is to avoid giving preference to one way of bringing a religious tradition (frame) to bear over others. Then, as noted earlier, secularity, or what is often termed "secular neutrality," can serve as a sort of common ground.

So then social actors can frame a situation or cultural practice in terms that are militantly secular or in terms that are secular but still open to a religious dimension. And there are various reasons for taking the latter course. Determining the precise character of secular culture when one encounters it may require a certain amount of sophisticated analysis. However, as a general proposition, most observers would concur that the secular cast of many societies in Europe, which are often characterized by a single, dominant tradition, is due to struggles with the dominant church. That struggle then becomes equated with a struggle with religion as such. Hence, it leads to a cultural ethos that is more militantly secular. (Davie 1999; Davie 2002) In the United States, where many principle institutions took on a secular cast at an earlier date than in Europe, the cultural ethos is quite different.

The point has already been argued that "secular neutrality" is rarely exactly what it purports to be. Arrangements that recommend themselves as being religious neutral because they are "secular" (in the sense of prescinding from any overt religious reference) in fact are usually more amenable to the religious framework of some traditions than others. Thus "secular" institutions often retained an "elective affinity" (to appropriate a term from Max Weber) for the faith context in which they were formed. It is in this sense that America remains to this day a Protestant nation. Or a Christian nation. Or a monotheistic nation. The sense is not absolute. It can sometimes be invisible to the group whose imprint was left on a given institution. It will be more apparent to those who have difficulty reconciling their religious values and culture to its requisites.34 Accordingly, how secular neutrality gets defined and who does the defining turns out

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34 In our day, the most visible complaints about biases ascribed to secular neutrality argue that it disadvantages religion in general, or even that it favors the "religion of atheism." (For a sophisticated discussion of the jurisprudence of "secular neutrality" see Gedicks (1995).) However, Lori Beaman (2003)
to be a significant factor in the relations between faith communities.

The preceding discussion of the terms public, private, religion, spirituality, and the secular reveals some of the social history and hidden complexity pertaining to these commonplace notions. In proposing definitions for these terms, I go beyond reporting what social actors themselves reference. My purpose is not to take issue with the usage of the people I came across. Rather, it is to offer consideration that will help me probe that usage more closely. It will provide a useful starting point for interrogating my data more effectively, and in some cases for sorting out what is primary from what is secondary. In addition, I have structured the terms I chose in this way to enable me to better articulate the argument of the present analysis. In the end, I am forced to make use of some of the same terms in constructing my argument that people about whom I am reporting do. That can lead to confusion. Unfortunately, it is difficult to avoid, since these people are concerned with some of the same issues as this analysis itself.

Offers an analysis in which she argues that in the United States (and Canada) the presuppositions of law and the institutional assumptions of society give Protestantism a "constitutional" advantage over other religions. In this regard, legal scholar Bette Evans (1997:5) notes that the rubric under which most legal claims concerning the free exercise of religion are framed is individual conscience, which effectively "obscures the uniqueness of collective activity and devalues religious group activities.... For many Americans, religion is experienced more as a commitment to a people, a congregation, or an institution than as personal spirituality. To focus on individual conscience gives a somewhat Protestant theological tinge to the characterization of religious experience and hence underemphasizes its institutional and social elements."
Chapter II. Religious Diversity and Public Religion in the Social Sciences

A. Religious Diversity in Classical Sociological Theory

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the three great monotheistic religious traditions Western thinkers have been most familiar with, all manifest a universal normative ethical thrust. The recognition of an objective moral order and the responsibility for justice in society are integral to their ethos. Hence they have all been concerned with the proper governance of society (though in differentiate ways in different historical periods). When one of these religious traditions has been the dominant tradition in a society, religious and secular authorities habitually viewed religious diversity as a threat to the moral consensus of society. That was a consensus for which their faith took responsibility, so that unity in faith and social cohesion seemed tightly linked.

Although classical sociology emerged as a species of critical reflection on traditional society in the West, it also inevitably imported many of its presuppositions. With regard to religion, the lineage of these presuppositions can be traced to the Enlightenment predecessors of sociology, and they found their way into secularization theory, long the dominant school of sociological thought concerning religion in modern society. While secularization theory no longer commands a universal following, many of its assumptions continue to inform social science and common sense. Since internally grounded pluralism is not a development that this line of thought was able to anticipate, some appreciation of these presuppositions, their influence, and their shortcomings are in order.

In France, even before the advent of sociology as a discipline, Enlightenment intellectuals debated about the faith that was proper for the citizen. Here Rousseau's vacillating deliberations are illustrative. In The Social Contract ([1762] 1968) he affirms that religion is indeed necessary for the foundation of any state, but then considering the forms that religion has taken historically he finds none completely satisfactory to the task. Religions of humanity, that is, what he
considers authentic religion articulated according to the highest spiritual principles—he gives the example of "the Christianity of the Gospels"—are true and good, but they are so other-worldly as to distract citizens from the purposes of social life. (p. 183) Civil religions, such as the cults of classical antiquity, take a more practical, institutional form. But they are not only fabrications; also, they can become vicious. Given Rousseau's near deification of the General Will, this is an inconvenient insight, but he nonetheless states it baldly. (pp. 181-82) He also notes that religion can take another form, the "religion of the priest," a form which includes Catholic Christianity. While specific and institutional enough to create its own laws, it expands beyond the borders of any given state. As a result it divides the loyalty of citizens. Accordingly, this form of religion is so manifestly bad that it merits no further discussion. (p. 181) Having found no ideal form of religion to suit his purposes, Rousseau proposes that society tolerate all creeds that would themselves adhere to its regime of toleration. However, he does not leave things rest there. Instead, despite his discounting the suitability of civil religion, he goes on to outline a general creed, a form of Enlightenment Deism, that all believers must accept as an expression of the social conscience or suffer banishment. (p. 186)

Rousseau reached his startling, internally inconsistent conclusion, advocating intolerance in the name of a religious creed he admitted would be little more than a legal fiction, because he believed that society must rest not only on a moral consensus, but on a religious one, as well. Rousseau is not the first political philosopher to reflect on the civic virtues necessary for a republic; Machiavelli ([1513-17] 1996) had placed that theme at the center of his own political thought two and a half centuries earlier. Machiavelli, however, did not consider the form of religious faith appropriate for his subjects. But he had had in mind the city-state, whereas Rousseau was faced with the question of how to cultivate the unity and virtues necessary for an emerging new form, the nation. This form took in a comparatively vast citizenry spread over a large geographic area whose borders were sometimes artificially crafted. Such a circumstance
might readily reduce any sense of unity to a mere abstraction. It required some institution that could inculcate a sense of unity on a deep level, the level of common values, identity, and even a shared transcendent orientation, something like what traditional religion apparently provided.

In linking religious faith and national identity, Rousseau's thought accorded with the tenor of early modern times. Spain established a national faith in the aftermath of the Reconquista; in the German principalities each ruler determined which church was to be established locally on a territorial basis; England engaged in a century of religious struggle and even civil war in charting its national religious course; France, too, had had its seventeenth century struggles between various Calvinist and Catholic factions. However, in the late eighteenth century French intellectuals raised the question of religious faith and citizenship in a new form. Whereas earlier struggles involved contests over the role of a traditional faith or between several competing ones, during the Enlightenment the philosophes considered a new option: crafting a new faith based on reason, or accepting an existing one insofar as it met the exigencies of the state. In succeeding years, when the Revolution overtook France, the nation was torn by the quest for a national creed.

Auguste Comte was heir to these intellectual movements. He lived in a France where traditional Catholic faith was once again legal, but he was convinced that reason and science could devise a better alternative. In his earlier work, Comte placed traditional religion into an intellectualist schema, one that essentially located it in the quest for explanation, to be replaced first by philosophy, and ultimately by positive (that is, empirical and verifiable) science. However, when he later devised his own "religion of humanity," one suited for an age of science, he essentially admitted that there was more to religion than an intellectual-explanatory dimension. Comte's "religion" was not religion in a traditional sense, nor was it a new deism. Rather, it was explicitly non-theistic, an institution to be led by an elite versed in the principles underlying

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1 Cours de philosophie positive (1830-42), variously translated as "Positive Philosophy" or "The Positive Philosophy of Auguste Comte."
society’s workings, one that would devise laws and moral norms according to scientific principles. (Comte 1851-54) Here it is crucial to note that in making this proposal, Comte came to define the essence of religion in terms of law and morality, that is, in terms of a social function. In other words, for Comte not only did religion serve this important function; it was this function.

Émile Durkheim, a figure considered a seminal thinker in the sociology of religion to this day, brought together in his own work many of the preceding lines of thought linking religion and social solidarity. While he drew on a wide range of sources, Comte and, to a lesser extent, Rousseau were important early influences.2

Durkheim himself came from a prominent Jewish family—his father, grandfather, and great-grandfather before him had all been respected rabbis—and in his day the question of the place of Jews in French society was a lively one. Advocates of a Republican France held up its secular ideals as the basis for the full incorporation of all Frenchmen, including French Jews, into the project of building modern France. Durkheim himself was an especially ardent advocate of those ideals. Thus when the Dreyfus Affair erupted in the latter half of the 1890s, Durkheim publicly took up Dreyfus’s cause. But he did so in the name of the secular ideals of French Republicanism, not in the name of traditional Judaism. At the same time, while the Republican ideals Durkheim championed offered an equal place in society to members of all religious traditions, they did so by sidelining all such traditions equally. These ideals had been crafted in the struggle to neutralize the place and power of Catholicism in French society, and accordingly they essentially denied the public legitimacy of all religion. French Republicanism would remove all formal barriers to Jewish participation in society, but the invitation it extended was to Jews as generic citizens, not as Jewish citizens. As a result the opportunity that Republicanism represented to leave behind a ghettoized existence also contained the formula for undermining the

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distinctive bases of Jewish community life. Durkheim himself left behind the small, tight-knit Jewish community of his forebears to join the intellectual center of French society, and one can discern many themes relevant to this journey in his sociology.

Early in his career Durkheim was concerned with how a modern, diversified society could maintain solidarity (the main theme of The Division of Labor in Society [1893] 1933). In his classic study Suicide ([1897] 1951), he argued that a diminished sense of solidarity with others made individuals vulnerable to the "anomic" effects of rapid social change and an increasingly anonymous social order. There he explicitly cited religious community as that factor which made the crucial difference integrating individuals into the life of the community. In his final masterwork, The Elementary Forms of Religious Life ([1912] 1976), Durkheim made an argument about the essential nature of religion which then served to address the questions he had raised in his earlier studies. There he argued that in their origins the central symbols of religion (the great ancestor, the totem, and so forth) are none other than collective representations of society. Thus religion is essentially the veneration of society, albeit in veiled, symbolic form. Its rites then serve as the means by which the shared norms and imperatives of society take up residence in the psyche of individuals; in so doing it acts as that force which lifts them beyond mere biological, egocentric self-interest to serve something greater than themselves.

These conclusions fit neatly into Durkheim's earlier insights concerning social change, anomie, and the integrating role of traditional religion in social life. It allowed him to isolate what to his mind was useful and good in traditional religion: collective purpose, moral inspiration, and social norms. Having discovered that religion is essentially the collective ethos of society itself, society could create new forms that serve these same purposes. All the good that religion offers both the individual and the collective need not be tied to the traditional forms it has taken. Durkheim's work grounded the hope that modern society could somehow regain what seemed to be lost with the demise of religious community in the forms it had taken theretofore. As long as
there was a "conscience collective" there could be some "religion" at work vivifying society.

In The Elementary Forms of Religious Life Durkheim did not simply equate religion with society in disguise. Strictly speaking, Durkheim claimed he was merely accounting for religion's origins. Nonetheless, in the end such sociological reductionism was one clear thrust of his work. And that was how his legacy was taken up. From his defining religion in terms of moral community to his discussion of ritual as the enactment of group solidarity, Durkheim's sociology of religion has inspired many sociologists after him to think of religion in terms of an ethos which brings coherence to a group and animates the individual to participate in its normative way of life. For our purposes, this whole line of thought linking religion with social solidarity is crucial because of the light it casts on religious diversity. From this perspective, religious diversity is highly problematic because it constitutes a fracture in the fundamental moral and practical cohesion of any group. And it explains why religion cannot admit rivals: Its essential nature is to be the collective form of the group, and that is a role which cannot be shared.

Another major sociological school of thought concerning religion derives the work of Max Weber. And again, its theoretical assumptions stress the total claims of a religious system on the members of a given society. However, whereas Durkheim began with an approach stressing social solidarity, Weber's analysis has a strong "intellectualist dimension." Ideas—a quest for meaning and a process of "rationalization"—are central to his sociological account of religion.

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3 Thus in discussing religion when it takes the form of the "individual cult" (various forms of religious individualism) Durkheim admits that how such a form can derive from the veneration of society does not seem at all obvious. He then addresses this objection by hypothetically drawing a sequence of events that could have brought the individual cult forth from religion's originally communal form. (Durkheim [1912] 1976:471-72) And he adds that in the end, apart from the vivifying effect of society, even religious individualism would remain a mere philosophy: "Therefore, even when religion seems to be entirely within the individual conscience, it is still in society that it finds the living source from which it is nourished." (p. 471)

4 In the end, while most sociologists have come to recognize Durkheim's main line of argument in Elementary Forms to be contrived—and while his reducing the origins of religion to group solidarity is debatable—Durkheim does cogently articulate how the human individual is indeed a social creature. He deftly argues for the social dimensions of everything from the moral virtues to the creative arts to a deeply personal act such as suicide. And insofar as religion must necessarily take on some social form, Durkheim's many brilliant insights do illuminate how it often functions.
By highlighting "meaning" Weber refers us to the ideas and purposes of social actors, at least insofar as these ideas inform their activity in society. Since social actors are up to many purposes, strictly speaking this starting point can bring into relief the wide variety of groups in a society. At the same time, Weber himself was interested in the larger patterns that distinguished one civilization from another: What was distinctive about Chinese or Indian or ancient Jewish civilization? How was this reflected in the institutions and evolutionary trajectory of society? He was especially interested in what Karl Jaspers (1953), a member of his intellectual circle, called "axial religion," that is, religion organized around a central notion or theme or body of principles. But whereas Jaspers was concerned with what such comprehensive visions might say about the human spirit, Weber was concerned with their sociological potential.

Weber argued that the great religious traditions contained principles that have served as the basis for organizing the central institutions and culture of society. At the same time, he was clear that in no case was such a capacity realized by dint of intellectual force alone. Rather, it had to be fostered by an intellectual elite, a literate priesthood of some sort, a social group that could gain the strategic cooperation of other classes in society. When a set of principles aligned with the strategic interests of key sectors of society, a circumstance Weber called "elective affinity," then they had extraordinary dynamic potential. And while Weber does emphasize that ideas only affect social evolution when they are ideas pertaining to social action, he does grant that religious culture can attain a relative autonomy, so that in that sense the religious ideas can come to exert a force of their own. The ordering principles of a faith constituted what Weber termed its "rationality," and the process by which a given set of principles became the basis for organizing social life was "rationalization." Rationalization then became a central theme in Weber's

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5 According to Jaspers, during a certain period in history (roughly 800 to 200 B.C.E.) philosopher-theologians in China, India, and the Middle East achieved a critical breakthrough of insight, a capacity to grasp the whole, and in each case this gave rise to a central vision around which to order some philosophical or religious system.
treatment of religion. As a result, his overarching problematique, which involved discerning the characteristic cultural pattern of whole societies, led him to view religion as a candidate for ordering a given society, and that is not an aspiration which admits plurality.

In the contemporary West, however, as Weber (1946) himself emphasized, religion does not obviously serve as the ordering principle of society. Weber's account of how this came to be and what this implies for religion sheds light on both the strengths and the limitations of his thought for making sense of religion, diversity, and pluralism in contemporary society. Weber essentially argues that the process of rationalization about the core principle of monotheism, orientation to a transcendent God, led to religion writing itself out of the script. For Weber, Calvinism is that form in which the theology of God's transcendence reaches its apex. In Calvinism God is so utterly transcendent and remote that ritual and sacrament are thus stripped of any "real" significance. They are purely symbolic because the creature can make no claim on God. The only real religious response that believers are able to make to a such an unknowable Almighty is to quietly fulfill their God-given role and ethical duty in the world. According to Weber, this means that if one is a businessman one runs one's affairs as efficiently and effectively as possible, of course reinvesting whatever profits one earns. In the end, this formula effectively releases economic life to follow its own autonomous dynamism—one does what one does because it makes good business sense. And all the other spheres of social life eventually follow an analogous course of independence from religion.

This leads to what must be viewed as a problematic outcome for religion. Once religion is no longer the explicit, preeminent guiding orientation of society, it is effectively relegated to its own sphere, becoming one more aspect of social life, one more option which individuals may choose or not.6 From a Weberian point of view religion is not quite itself when forced to accept

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6 The foregoing portrayal of Weber's thought is based on ideas culled from throughout his corpus. His interest in the role of religious traditions in shaping social evolution is developed in Ancient Judaism (1952), The Religion of India (1958), The Religion of China (1968), and The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit
this situation. By aspiration it wants to be not a particular sphere but the basis for ordering all the spheres. Weber does not foresee that faith communities might adapt to this circumstance, that they could flourish in a religiously diverse universe, or that they could play a public role in society apart from adjudicating its affairs from above. Whether or not such a characterization aptly summarizes the place of religion in the modern world, it must be admitted that the anxieties of many religious leaders of since Weber's day do manifest analogous concerns.

Many of the assumptions that Weber made about religion were inscribed in the typology of religious organizations that he developed around the notions of "church" and "sect." Weber set up this typology to distinguish religious organizations into which people were born from those whose members made a positive decision to join, and based on this distinction he drew out a range of implications concerning the dynamism of each group. Its basic terms were subsequently taken over by his associate and colleague, Ernst Troeltsch. When Troeltsch' work was in turn taken up in the American context, the church-sect distinction continued to serve for several decades as one of the crucial "building blocks for a sociological analysis of religion" (as one sociologist emphasized, Coleman 1968:55).

The original inspiration of this typology was a particular set of historical circumstances: those pertaining to European Christendom during the period when there was one official church in a given society and one or more dissenting groups. Under those circumstances perhaps the crucial factor explaining the culture of each type was their relationship to each other. The political leaders of society declared one church to be the religious custodian of society, and as a result with

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respect to this one church all others were deviant. Locked in a context where their statuses were mutually contradictory, the authority claims these churches made were viewed as mutually contradictory, as well. Indeed, the one outstanding similarity between sect and church was that each seemed make monopoly claims regarding the burning theological questions of the day, salvation and ecclesiology. The point is that in these circumstances religions were not merely two broad worldviews locked in competition. Their relationships were structured so that the legitimacy claims of one directly undermined those of the others, and this situation was complicated by specific and incompatible authority claims.

While such an account roughly describes the circumstances of Europe especially in the aftermath of the Reformation struggles, when being a member of the established church was the law and joining a dissenting church presumed a deliberate act, by Weber's day, the cogency of the distinction between church and sect in the sense he outlined had already waned significantly. Accordingly, Troeltsch then took what was originally a distinction based on mode of membership and reworked it in terms of the stance of a religious group vis-à-vis "the world," which effectively meant the reigning social order.7 (Troeltsch [1912] 1931)

In the American context the introduction of the church-sect typology provoked further adaptations. These adaptations were necessary because other factors distinguishing various categories of religious groups proved more relevant than the notion of mutually antagonistic groups vying over religious supremacy in society. In the United States no one group is legally canonized. However, this has not meant that all groups have had equal claim on America's public life, either. In order to capture this complexity, sociologists of religion came up with a whole series of classifications from church and denomination to sect and cult. That was because the original categories of Troeltsch and Weber, derived as they were from an era when monopoly

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7 In keeping with this different framework, he also added a third type of religious orientation, mysticism, or more broadly, what we might term today religious individualism.
claims in religion were presumptive, did not apply to the American circumstance.

Nevertheless, through the 1960s the assumptions underlying what had emerged as the classical paradigm in the sociology of religion remained virtually unquestioned: that religion plays a crucial function in the social system, that it grounds the norms of the social order, that it provides a frame of meaning for its members, that divorced from these over-arching roles it loses its raison d'être and its relevance to public life, and so forth. These assumptions are reflected, for example, in the work of a figure who dominated American sociology at mid-century, Talcott Parsons. And they are best captured in the work of Peter Berger, whose innovative theoretical synthesis perhaps gave them their best last gasp.

In two minor classics, *the Social Construction of Reality* (1966), written in collaboration with Thomas Luckmann, and *The Sacred Canopy* (1967), Berger outlined a sociology of religion grounded in a sociology of knowledge. Like Parsons before him, his synthesis united key insights in the work of both Weber and Durkheim. It linked a theory about how worldviews are constructed with insights concerning the roles such a construction plays; that is, it linked intellectualist insights with functionalist ones. At the same time, Berger endeavored to account for how large-scale social constructs came into being by resorting to an analysis of individual psychology and behavior. He emphasized that it is in society that individuals build up their concepts concerning how the world works; that is, we do so by internalizing the vocabulary and cultural patterns around us in coordination with others. These social products themselves have been built up over time by our predecessors to serve the very purpose for which we appropriate them: making sense of and negotiating experience. These concepts get built up hierarchically, and religion constitutes the highest level of social construction, so that beyond this level lies chaos.

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8 Parsons outlined a comprehensive theory of society in which religion occupies the place of the "symbolic system," the highest and most general level of culture. (For example, see his discussion of "nonempirical existential ideas" in Parsons (1938) or his grand synthesis in *The Structure of Social Action* (1951).) In many respects (including his assertions that the personality system is in a sense the introversion of the social system) he anticipated the basic moves that Berger eventually made.
itself. Consequently, it constitutes a crucial element in our intellectual apparatus, the crucial layer of meaning that allows us to continue on in the face of events such as death, those irruptions which threaten our sense of order.\(^9\) It is a sacred canopy.

Finally, Berger argues that the plausibility of this whole delicate edifice depends upon its consensual and omnipresent nature. When alternate religious systems coexist within the same society, then that society has no single, taken-for-granted, matter-of-fact construction of order. These are the presuppositions that lead Berger to conclude that no religious group can afford to compromise its monopoly claims, and that religious diversity overall not only threatens the religious enterprise as such, but also the human capacity to negotiate life in the face of the enveloping chaos.

Several years before the above works appeared Thomas Luckmann, Berger's colleague, had written a monograph, *The Invisible Religion* ([1963] 1967).\(^{10}\) In that work he offered an alternative vision of religion once it ceased to serve as some overarching principle ordering society. Luckmann argued that though institutional religion inevitably was on the wane in the modern world, "religion" would necessarily continue to exist, but it would do so in privatized form, as the construct of individuals or small groups, not as the institutional social force it had been. Luckmann drew on classical theory at a fairly sophisticated level to broaden (perhaps overly so) the definition of religion. While his own definition of religion was so defuse as to admit the whole of human culture as somehow "religious,"\(^{11}\) his insistence that sociology look

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\(^9\) The intellectualist bent of Berger's formulation shows through here. When confronted with the mystery that envelopes existence, human beings have developed a range of responses. Intellectual mastery is only one option in that range.

\(^{10}\) Though the English publication date is 1967, the German edition, *Das Problem der Religion in der modernen Gesellschaft*, appeared in 1963.

\(^{11}\) "It is in keeping with an elementary sense of the concept of religion to call the transcendence of biological nature by the human organism a religious phenomenon. As we have tried to show, this phenomenon rests upon the functional relation of Self and society. We may, therefore, regard the social processes that lead to the formation of Self as fundamentally religious." (Luckmann [1963] 1967:48-49) Luckmann's argument includes many sophisticated insights. Certainly, the attainment of reflexive self-awareness brings us to the borders of the domain of the religious, and his notion of the "formation of the
beyond the traditional institutional forms religion had heretofore taken has proved valuable. Yet for all his insight and sophistication, he did not also consider the possibility that traditional institutional religion might continue to play a public role in society. Absent a monopoly claim on the religious life of society, the only other possibility for religion in Luckmann's treatment seemed to be privatization, which he understood as social marginalization.

Many of the insights and assumptions about religion from classical sociology were then taken up into "secularization theory" (which can be thought of as modernization theory as applied to the case of religion). In simplest terms, secularization theory holds that in the modern era religion as such is archaic and outmoded. It echoes the bold proclamations of Enlightenment figures such as Voltaire that religion is incompatible with the modern age and will wither in the new social order being ushered in.\(^{12}\) "Secularization relates to the diminution in the social significance of religion." (Wilson 1982:149) Measures of secularization include the degree to which individuals pursue their affairs apart from any religious frame, the degree to which institutions operate free from religious imperatives, the degree to which public life or the larger culture eschew religious reference, and so forth. The elimination of religion as the official ideology of a nation state (the dethroning of a tradition as the Bergerian/Durkheimian consensual worldview of a society), disestablishment and the 'liberation' of society's institutions from religious oversight (the structural differentiation outlined by Weber), and the privatization of religious belief (Luckmann's analysis) can all be read as forms of "secularization." Many social

\[^{12}\text{Sometimes this view was articulated with regard to traditional religion(s), but not religion per se. Then the expectation was that some more "rational" form of religion, such as French Deism or American Unitarianism, would take its place.}\]
theorists had assumed that such developments were mutually reinforcing, proceeding apace as part of one grand process, "the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance" (Wilson 1966:14).

A number of versions of secularization theory have been articulated, some by way of merely spelling out its assumptions taken at face value (Wilson 1966; Wilson 1982), some by way of critique (Greeley 1972b; Martin 1969), some by way of systematically outlining the concept of secularization in response to its failings or these critiques (Dobbelaere 1981; Shiner 1967; Tschannen 1991). However, as a number of commentators have noted (Hadden 1987; Swatos and Christiano 1999), in the end while the concept was refined in a hundred different directions, no coherent theory explaining some necessary and comprehensive connection between modernization and secularization has withstood the demands of logical coherence or empirical verification. Indeed, some forms of secularization (disestablishment, for example) have served as the impetus for obvious and measurable rises of other religious indicators (the rise of voluntary churches and individual participation).

Nonetheless, secularization "theory"—or at least the nexus of assumptions that go by that designation—has had such a claim on the sociological imagination that within the discipline public religion came to be viewed as somehow illegitimate, a sort of retrograde indicator. It was a phenomenon out of step with the obviously countervailing trends of disestablishment, structural differentiation, and the legitimated religious diversity that resulted. The assumption that religion is a totalistic philosophy implied that it would be futile to expect that several faiths could civilly coexist within the same public space. Accordingly, the ethos of the new society would have to be secularity (in the sense of secular neutrality). But more, not only can no one faith tradition legitimately claim to be the ethos of society; sociologically speaking, in light of these assumptions, when a particular faith plays any public role in the modern world, that event is necessarily fraught with contradiction. It is an encroachment on the neutral territory, and a
dangerous one, since all such encroachments are viewed as beachheads in preparation for a full-scale invasion. According to this paradigmatic way of seeing, religious diversity presents an insurmountable problem for religion to play any public role in society.

At the same time, it leads to the ironic result that when secularity excludes all religions on the assumption that to do otherwise would be to favor one over the others, secularity itself can become militant secularism. In other words, in keeping with the expectation that "religion" is imperious and exclusivist, secularity itself can morph into such a totalistic ethos. And so secularization theory argues that in the modern world religion must become private, an idiosyncrasy of personal life. However, to the extent that militant secularism reigns in a society, it may be more apt to argue that the churches then all become sects, confraternities of deliberate choice alienated from society and dissenting from its orthodoxy.

The root of the problem is the assumption that religion is by definition a total worldview. In one form or another it runs throughout the classical sociology of religion and contemporary secularization theory. It also informs a number of discussions in political science and philosophy. Any perspective making such an assumption will not anticipate the development of pluralism as an orientation internal to religious groups. And likewise, it will not foresee the possibility that such internally grounded pluralism could facilitate a public role for religion.

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13 Many religious partisans claim that supposedly neutral secularity in fact functions as militant secularism, and hence as a religion in its own right. Since I reject the equating religion with a totalistic worldview, I am not making precisely that argument.

14 The assumption of this study, as indicated toward the end of the first chapter, is that by definition religion is a system brought into relationship with an insight or frame that has a transcendent dimension. To be sure, often such a system can grow to be totalistic, especially in historical conditions where a particular faith community does not encounter what it takes to be serious contenders to its own religious hegemony. However, that may be more a strong tendency of religion rather than an essential dimension. In fact, transcendence cuts more than one way. It also entails that no one closed system or limited construct usurp one's total allegiance. The religious term for such cooption is not religion but idolatry. Anyone with any religious sensibility understands this intuitively. But admittedly that is a theological insight, one that may be difficult to establish with any sociological rigor.
B. Religious Diversity and the American Experience

As William Swatos (1999:209) suggests, it may be no accident that the proponents of secularization theory have either been Europeans (Wilson, Luckmann, and Dobbelaere, and one might add, Steve Bruce) or European-trained theorists (Berger, and again add Parsons for his stint in Europe and his intellectual lineage). In Europe all social institutions from government to healthcare to education have been tightly intertwined. Not only has severing religion from the mix been difficult, even traumatic; it seemed to compromise the viability of religion itself. Grace Davie (1999; 2002) argues that the link between religion and government woven into the cultural fabric of Europe may account for the hard times religion there now seems to be facing there. Her point is that the issue lies not with religion itself, but with the way religion and state authority came to be intertwined in Europe.\footnote{Even today, one gets the impression that European religious elites themselves still have had a difficult time appreciating how religion should function in a segmented, pluralistic social order, and as a result of this lack of imagination they have been unable to engage the social world that has relentlessly unfolded in their very backyards.}

However, from early in America's history observers of developments on the western side of the Atlantic have came away with a very different assessment of the place of religion in modern public life. They noted America's unique arrangement of divorcing church from state, along with the surprising finding that in many ways this was a boon to religion. That led them to stress the salutary effect of keeping religion out of public life. However, later observers increasingly highlighted the public significance of religion even in the context of disestablishment and diversity.

Here three themes of inquiry often associated with religion in the American context illustrate the way in which the American experience leads social theory beyond a monopoly conception of religion. These themes are civil society, the denomination, and pluralism. A fourth theme associated with the study of American religion, the question of civil religion, also casts a
spotlight on the place of diversity in American religion, and that will be noted, as well. None of these notions originated with America, but circumstances in America spurred their theoretical development. The point here will not be to provide an exhaustive history or analysis of each notion, especially since there are other studies to which to turn. Rather, it will be to indicate how they enrich our capacity to think about religious diversity in modern society, especially as it bears on the public nature of religion. To that end, a seminal work for the discussion of the each notion will be cited, as well as something of the conversation that followed upon each work.

Interest in the notion of civil society has waxed and waned among scholars. In the past two decades it has reemerged as a central focus in debates over the nature and vitality of democratic culture, and with it scholarly interest in the work of Alexis de Tocqueville has also peaked. Certainly, when it comes to the early development of civil society in America, he is the classic authority. When Tocqueville visited America in 1831-32, he was struck by the culture of the democracy he encountered. Prior to his visit his European prejudices had accustomed him to thinking of democracy as a system in which uncouth individuals exercised their power through tyranny of the majority. However, in America he instead found a vital network of civic associations and a political culture infused with discussion of the common good. Government in America was far more limited than in Europe, and Tocqueville observed that in the social space that opened up between the individual and the state a level of intermediary organizations had sprung up. In exploring the culture and institutions of this domain, civil society, Tocqueville opened up a line of inquiry for understanding how democracy could work in a large-scale, modern nation.

In his work Tocqueville underscored the importance of religion as an institution of civil society. Indeed, according to Tocqueville religion was not just one institution of civil society. Indeed, according to Tocqueville religion was not just one institution of civil society.

16 For the European context, the work of Georg Hegel, especially his Philosophy of Right (1821), serves as another locus for reflection on civil society. See Beem (1999a) for a comparison of his and Tocqueville's approaches.
Rather, religion was deeply implicated in its development from the outset. The voluntary associations Tocqueville observed were not a spontaneous development. They had their cultural roots in the covenantal voluntarism that marked Puritan New England society, in particular. (Allen 1998) That ethos had been the source of local government, state government, and myriad civic associations, and the church community continued to foster civic involvement.\footnote{To be sure, this portrait is an idealized one at best. In the first place, in Tocqueville's day

"Religion, which never intervenes directly in the government of American society, should [nevertheless] be considered as the first of [Americans'] political institutions, for although it did not given them the taste for liberty, it singularly facilitates their use thereof.

"The inhabitants of the United States themselves consider religious beliefs from this angle...I am sure that they think it necessary to the maintenance of republican institutions. That is not the view of one class or party among the citizens, but of the whole nation; it is found in all ranks." (Tocqueville [1838-1840] 1988:292-93)}

At the same time, Tocqueville was not an advocate of religious involvement in public life. In view of the ill will born religion in Europe because of its entanglement with government, Tocqueville argued that one of the keys to the success of American civil society was the cultural consensus that religious leaders not bring religion directly to bear on public affairs. "I have said that American priests proclaim themselves in general terms in favor of civil liberties...but none of them lend their support to any particular political system. They are at pains to keep out of [public] affairs and not to mix in the combinations of parties." (Tocqueville [1838-1840] 1988:290) Later he adds, "Religion in America is a world apart in which the clergyman is supreme, but one which he is careful never to leave; within its limits he guides men's minds, while outside them he leaves men to themselves[.]" (Tocqueville [1838-1840] 1988:448) Overall, Tocqueville paints a portrait in which all manner of religious leaders unanimously support and foster the democratic consensus upon which American government is based. At the same time, they inhabit a separate sphere neatly bounded from politics and public affairs. And they maintain harmony among themselves because they confine their doctrinal peculiarities to the precincts of individuals' minds.

\footnote{Tocqueville summarizes the relevant discussion with this oft-quoted passage: "Religion, which never intervenes directly in the government of American society, should [nevertheless] be considered as the first of [Americans'] political institutions, for although it did not given them the taste for liberty, it singularly facilitates their use thereof. "The inhabitants of the United States themselves consider religious beliefs from this angle...I am sure that they think it necessary to the maintenance of republican institutions. That is not the view of one class or party among the citizens, but of the whole nation; it is found in all ranks." (Tocqueville [1838-1840] 1988:292-93)}
from one end of the colonies to the other clergy spoke out on all manner of public issues. In Massachusetts the Congregational Church remained established until 1833, and it still tended to see public life as a domain of its special prerogative. And despite Tocqueville's trouble-free account "concerning the progress of Roman Catholicism in the United States" (pp. 450-51), clashes between Protestants and Catholics in the larger American cities, especially in the North, were a growing reality that he blatantly overlooked. Tocqueville repeatedly sidestepped issues that "complicated" the narrative he would tell of religion, civil society, and democracy. While many citizens in his day did argue that the public realm was not the proper place for religion, and while religion had significantly disengaged from public life since colonial times—and that on a voluntary basis, strictly speaking religion was still very much involved in public life and very much a public institution in its own right. That situation only deepened as the century progressed.

American religious historians speak of the nineteenth century as a period of the informal or "cultural" establishment of Protestantism, especially evangelical Protestantism. In that light, Tocqueville's selective depiction of religion as a private phenomenon is more the report of the common sense of the day than a literal description of the American reality. It contained a truth,

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18 For example, one divisive issue of the day that aroused pervasive clerical and religious involvement was abolition. (Morone 2003:123-220)
19 Tocqueville's account of Catholicism in America was true in part. Catholics with longer generational roots in America had come to express their faith in American cultural categories, and they had the cultural and institutional resources for living their faith out of the limelight. They adopted a republican style of Catholicism which accorded with Tocqueville's account. As Tocqueville himself notes in more than one place, he also tended to speak with priests who were fellow Frenchmen, and they understood many of the issues associated with life in a republic. However, newer immigrants from Ireland and the priests they brought with them were often crowded into urban areas, and they lacked independent resources. They found themselves in constant conflict with Protestant authorities who would have them conform to the norms of their new society. To these immigrants the fine points of democratic culture did not seem particularly cogent. Their religion was in the public light whether they liked it or not, and in turn they made it a rallying point for their participation in public life.
20 In doing so, in all probability he did not see himself as resorting to dishonesty. He was not operating as a social scientist would today, for whom the representativeness of the data is always a key criterion. Rather, he was deliberately looking for examples to bring out the merits of new social order for the sake of own native France, a nation caught oscillating between the extremes of radical democracy and monarchist restoration precisely because, in his opinion, it had insufficiently developed the institutions of an autonomous civil society.
21 The contours of this establishment will be examined in the next chapter.
but also significant layers of unelaborated or implicit meaning. Who promoted the idea that faith should not "intrude" upon public affairs, and under what circumstances? To whom did they apply this dictum? When did they fail to even notice that others had blithely ignored it? Why were Catholics constantly accused of bringing their private religion into public space, while in equivalent circumstances fellow Protestants were praised for being good citizens?

In the end, if religion really had remained a merely indirect influence on public life, filtered through individual, private conscience on an ad hoc basis, American history would not have unfolded as it did. Religion has been systematically involved in the thick of American public life from the outset. But despite its being an idealization, one applied only selectively, the settlement Tocqueville sketched for religion in democratic society was one that held its grip on the American imagination.

In addition, while Tocqueville skirted around some inconvenient empirical data, his discussion of religion in America is valuable for two important reasons. First, he showed how intimately connected religion was with democracy and modernity. Democracy did not arise in the United States despite religion, but in tandem with it. And religious communities were among its most informed and enthusiastic supporters. Second, Tocqueville cited civil society, not the state, as the new, critical locus for religious culture. In doing so he drew an alternative model, however idealized, for the way religion could be grounded in the social order. As opposed to the models that prevailed in Europe, here society did not require one uniform consensus lest it fall into self-contradiction. Civil society required some consensus to function, to be sure, but it could also tolerate debate. It was a flexible, intermediary level in the social order that could accommodate a segmented consensus.

The notion of the denomination also developed in a distinctive way in the American context. In today's parlance the term "denomination" often simply refers to any "religious sect or body having a common faith and organization, and designated by a distinctive name." (Oxford
Thus the body in question has been set apart by a name—it has been
denominated—from within some larger tradition; an example would be Methodism as a
denomination of Christianity. To that one could add the unstated contextual presupposition that
such a body exists within a society where all such entities enjoy legal status. Denominations exist
in a society alongside other denominations: One does not normally speak of Catholicism in
imperial Spain as a denomination, but one can more readily apply that designation to Catholicism
in contemporary America. Finally, one should note that as the term is commonly used, it is
broadly applied to any religious body or "sect," whereas historically the term has been taken up
with certain distinct senses. In the first place, as regards confession it has most typically been
applied to Protestant bodies. And in the second, in sociological literature the distinction between
a sect and a denomination is usually carefully maintained, the sect being more closed off to
society and other religious groups, the denomination being more open.²²

The notion underlying the term "denomination" can be traced to efforts to bring
contending Christian groups in England into some modus of peaceful coexistence. For example, it
is found in the Westminster Confession, first published in 1646 in the midst of the English Civil
War. The document argues that the universal and "invisible" church of Christ is present to greater
or lesser degree in the various visible churches according to the purity of the doctrine and worship
they manifest.²³ The reasoning here is vaguely Neo-Platonic. There is an ideal, true Church and
there are particular, historical, institutional churches which participate it is essence to greater or
lesser degree (hence the repeated reference to "purity"). At the same time, this notion did not

²² Distinguishing between sects and denominations is not restricted to sociology. This distinction is
reflected in one of the principle examples given in the dictionary entry cited: In his Autobiography ([1788]
1909:104-05) Benjamin Franklin refers to "the multitudes of all sects and denominations that attended
[George Whitefield's] sermons."

²³ Chapter XXV of the Westminster Confession of 1646 includes the following: "The catholic or universal
Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect… [It] has been sometimes more,
sometimes less visible. And particular Churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure,
according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public
worship performed more or less purely in them." (Westminster Assembly [1646] 2006 )
apply to any Christian body indiscriminately. The document reflected an exclusively intra-Protestant consensus. Eventually, the term "denomination" came to be used in connection with those Protestant bodies that willingly participated in such a consensus.

Though the notion of the "denomination" originated in England, it eventually gained currency in the American colonies. Over the course of its history it developed a number of senses, most of which had to do with ways of negotiating religious diversity especially among Protestant Christians. Those will be cited in historical context in the following chapters insofar as they are relevant. While denominationalism was originally an internally grounded theological assessment among like-minded Protestant bodies, it later gave rise to a more general paradigm in the larger society for making sense of the coexistence of a multitude of institutional Christian churches. And eventually it took on the even more generic sense of any religious group to which one belongs in a religiously diverse society (a usage that was common in social science surveys, for example). In this last sense it refers to any voluntary religious association one might join as a matter of individual choice. It has come to characterize America to the extent that sociologist Andrew Greeley describes it as The Denominational Society (1972a).

The first influential, sociologically informed use of the term dates to the work of Protestant theologian H. Richard Niebuhr. His study The Social Sources of Denominationalism ([1929] 1957) reflects his concern over the very centripetal effects on Christian unity that disestablishment and all that went with it had unleashed. In developing his analysis Niebuhr proposed a general theory about how denominations come to be and the place they hold in the social order. He argued that separate Christian bodies often begin as sects of the "disinherited," individuals marginalized by the larger society and its religious establishment, who then form

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24 Originally, the Westminster Confession clearly did not embrace Roman Catholicism. It referred to the "Pope of Rome" as the Antichrist (Westminster Assembly [1646] 2006: Chapter XXV) and to the Roman Catholic understanding of the sacraments as idolatry (Chapter XXIX).

25 Wilson (1959:4-5) put forward this definition in his early work on sect formation.
religious communities that in turn reject "the world." However, the argument goes, over time the ascetic disciple introduced by religious commitment leads to socio-economic advancement. Eventually succeeding generations find it convenient to relax their rejection of "the world" and take up a more open stance to society and the other religious groups in it. They become "denominations." Niebuhr was clear that the denomination was a form which was different both from the church and the sect of Troeltsch's schema. Whereas the sect was closed off and perfectionist and the church universalistic in terms both of membership and its supervisory role, the denomination occupied a different place in the social order, in some sense a midway position. It assumed an order in which there were other religious groups, and it was open to sharing with them in taking responsibility for that order. It was neither closed off, nor did it have to dominate society. The denomination could unite religious diversity and participation in public life.

In the years after Troeltsch and Niebuhr wrote, sociologists produced further variations on the church-sect typology, adding new forms related to their concerns (for example Becker 1932; Gustafson 1975; Robertson 1970; Yinger 1946).

In the 1960s David Martin (1962) contributed a further crucial insight. He took issue with Niebuhr's proposal that there is a general evolutionary progression from sect to denomination, arguing instead that the denomination is a distinct cultural type. He pointed out that those groups that began as sects in both Britain and America often retained their sectarian boundedness. Meanwhile, groups that became prototypical mainline denominations displayed their denominational character from the outset. He identified this "denominational character" with a pragmatic and utilitarian attitude toward church order, organization, morality, and sacramental life, one reflected in a pervasive tendency to distinguish between essence and form. That meant that differences between the specific forms of such groups did not matter so much to their members as what they perceived to be their underlying spirit. While there is good reason to be
wary of the proclivity of pragmatism to undermine the integrity of any culture, the flexibility of the denomination represented an important new development in religious organization.

These considerations reveal how important the denomination is as a religious institution in democratic society. In reflecting upon the typological categories devised by Weber and Troeltsch, Niebuhr understood the necessity to rethink the forms that religious groups take in the context of disestablishment and voluntary religious affiliation. The term denomination is commonly used as a synonym for any religious organization in a diverse society; in this sense denominations are all those religious "clubs" found in the phone directory. However, sociologists came to appreciate that in addition to the denomination and the sect, there were other forms that religious culture took and other ways to classify these forms. Each had a distinct culture and relationship to the life of the larger society. For their part, as Martin argued, the denominational character of many mainline groups was present from the outset: they manifested an internally grounded pluralism as part of their doctrinal and organizational heritage. In the midst of their diversity these religious groups acknowledged their larger unity.

This points to the importance of the internal culture of religious groups as an autonomous dynamic, one with important sociological implications. The segmented understanding of unity-in-diversity which marked the denomination constituted a paradigm which was in turn well adapted for a society marked by religious diversity. Denominations that recognized a kindred Spirit at work in one another could collaborate. Moreover, the members of a denomination did not reject society even if their faith was not adopted as its official faith. Thus the denomination signaled a form which could take ownership for society without owning society. Finally, while the full character and significance of the denomination emerged in the context of disestablishment, it is crucial to note that this cultural form, a form with a peculiar affinity to modern conditions, antedates disestablishment and the modern conditions to which it is "adapted." This circumstance

26 See the discussion of the work of Will Herberg immediate below.
suggests that this pragmatic and collaborative religious form may be as much a precondition for modernity as a mere adaptation to the rise of "secular" society.

The literature on religious typology is one area of sociological reflection that raises key questions concerned the orientation of religious groups to one another and the larger society. Rather than only look from the top down at the ordering of religious groups within society, it takes up the perspective of those groups. This literature points us to the implications of internally grounded pluralism. Writing during the mid-twentieth century, Will Herberg opened another perspective on the culture of religious groups in American society. This perspective complements the foregoing by unfolding what happens when a group participates in the culture of the larger society in such a way that it internalizes important elements of that culture as its own.

Herberg opened the second chapter of his *Catholic, Protestant, Jew* (1955), a book that became a minor classic, with a quote from historian Oscar Handlin. Handlin had observed that the story of immigrants in America is the story of America. Herberg made use of Handlin to introduce his own central theme: that the story of religion in America is a story of Americanization. It is the story of people coming to a new country and then facing the challenge of working out the relationship between their ethnic identity, their religious identity, and their American identity. Herberg argued that religion in fact serves as the vessel that guides immigrants to the shore of their new American identity. In the process of facilitating Americanization, it then becomes an enduring and constructive part of the mix.

In part the story Herberg told was a story of success. He announced that America was Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. He did not appeal for greater accommodation of minority groups. He simply announced they had taken up their place in the life of the nation. In making this announcement he effectively took the rage out of what had been a raging debate: Was America a Protestant nation? Yes it was. But there was also an important sense in which it was Catholic and Jewish, as well.
At the same time, for Herberg this success had an ironic, even a tragic side. In a later article on "Some Aspects of America's Three-Religions Pluralism" (1962:34), Herberg referred back to his analysis in *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* with the observation that "these three [faiths] are felt, by and large, to be three alternative forms of being religious in the American way." The American way, or what he had spelled out in *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (pp. 78-81) as "the American Way of Life," was a set of values marked by idealism, moralism, and boundless optimism, "a kind of secularized Puritanism, a Puritanism without transcendence" (Herberg 1955:81). Success in America meant honoring the values which define success in American terms. It thus entailed that the three great American religious families of Protestantism, Judaism, and Catholicism import "Americanism" into the heart of the religious community—into its assemblies, its ceremonies, and its culture. It was in undergoing such a transformation that these faith communities ultimately were able to become different modalities of the one American identity they all shared. Herberg was concerned that in the process the distinctive traditions of each became impoverished, that they reduced religion to the service of the pragmatic and utilitarian purposes of the day, as opposed to God's own purposes. They achieved success but at the risk of losing their collective souls.

Herberg's work aroused the interest it did because it spoke to two issues of his day, the place of Judaism and Catholicism in America, and the extent to which American religious groups were "selling out." Though sociology can provide certain measures for determining whether a theological system, like any cultural system, is able to maintain its integrity, whether or not religion in America serves God's purposes is not the focus here. Rather, the light Herberg shed on the nature of pluralism and the form that pluralism took in his day are.

In his discussion of the unity in tension between America's three religious families, Herberg (1955:236) quoted a definition of pluralism that appeared in an editorial in the what was probably the most important evangelical weekly of the day, *The Christian Century*. The editorial
was entitled "Pluralism—National Menace" (June 13, 1951), and its author, who was warning about the danger of Catholics forming a nation within the nation, viewed pluralism as "comprising two or more elements which live side by side, yet without mingling, in one political unit." In his own analysis, Herberg demonstrated quite the opposite, that the cultural system he described entailed more than diversity merely existing "side by side," sharing only a legal bureaucracy and a market economy. American society was manifest precisely in and through its Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities, not despite them. Or from the perspective of its citizens, pluralism meant that their Protestant or Catholic or Jewish identity was how they experienced their American identity; it was not an alternative identity. Again, as with Tocqueville, Herberg may have been highlighting an ideal to speak to the questions of his day. Yet in the process of doing so, he developed a model for thinking about pluralism which reflected sophisticated interrelationships and cultural dialogue.

The character of the pluralist regime that Herberg sketched is also worth noting. Though his focus was religious groups, it is clear that the kind of pluralism he cited was cultural but not religious. The "American Way of Life" was not a religious consensus or a consensual religion, but a consensus on values without overt religious reference. In his day there was very little specifically religious dialogue between traditions. When representatives of different faith communities got together, the dialogue they enacted was one of collaboration in civic affairs. They assumed that theology was what divided, so it was bracketed. Protestantism or Judaism or Catholicism could go public most successfully when they stood up for the American Way of Life. And politicians were able to articulate religious themes in the same manner.

While Herberg developed an argument about a shared American Way of Life that had a truncated transcendent dimension, and indeed seemed to subtly undermine a transcendent orientation in America's traditional faiths, in the 1960s Robert Bellah made the argument that in fact Americans shared more than mere secular aspirations. In "Civil Religion in America" (1967)
he traced elements of what he argued was a transcendent frame of reference for making sense of the experience and destiny of the nation. At the outset of this essay he announces, as if it were news, what is now taken for granted, that "there is every reason to believe that religion, particularly the idea of God, played a constitutive role in the thought of the early American statesmen" (p. 6). Drawing on themes from the Bible and evangelical insights conducive to democratic society, statesmen from Franklin, Jefferson, and Washington to Lincoln, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson, rallied Americans to a higher purpose.

The status of the "civil religion" they articulated—the extent to which it existed as a tradition independent of Bellah's own construction of it, whether it continues to "function," and so forth—have been hotly debated. Bellah's article unleashed a torrent of discussion and scholarly reflection. Bellah provoked the academic community to take seriously the proposition that America, the nation that pioneered disestablishment and created a national government with a resolutely secular frame, is in some sense a fundamentally religious entity. In developing this argument, Bellah took classical Durkheimian categories, categories tailored to traditional societies of the totalistic-organicist sort, and he convincingly applied them to a modern, structurally differentiated, liberal nation state.

In sum, social theorists reflecting on the experience of religion in American society were repeatedly forced to move beyond the assumptions and categories of classical sociology, rooted as it was in the history of Europe. They had to take into account the dynamics of civil society, a sphere in which all kinds of energies are unleashed independent of any controlling governmental oversight. They had to move beyond the notions of a church was caught up in the supervisory role of an organicist government and sect as minority group formed in deliberate opposition. And they had to grapple with the reality that multiple religious traditions could simultaneously take

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27 Two bibliographic articles (Hammond 1976; Mathisen 1989), published thirteen years apart in Sociological Analysis, review of these debates.
ownership of society, thereby erecting a pluralist regime that was more than separate communities existing side by side.

Bellah's work on civil religion then brings the discussion full circle. He raised the issue not just of *religions* playing a role in the life of the American nation, but of religion. While Herberg argued that in his day the pluralist regime in which Americans shared had a decidedly pragmatic and utilitarian, secularist orientation, Bellah responded that the American people have, or once had, a quasi-official common, guiding vision, and a vision with religious depth. America had its religious mythology. In an era when Protestant Christianity dominated the American religious imagination, its images and symbols painted the horizon. Even in the era when Catholics and Jews made good their claim to an authentically American identity alongside Protestants, something of this transcendent imagery, caught up as it was in the sometimes facile optimism of "American Way of Life" motifs, remained in place.

That raises the question about the present day. In the decade after he wrote "Civil Religion in America," Bellah published *The Broken Covenant* (1975). There he argued that America had betrayed the vision that had guided it since its founding. Following upon an uneasy decade when many lost their faith in America, Bellah's account voiced the disillusionment of a generation. And not coincidentally, during the decade to follow the torrent of discussion surrounding the question of America's civil religion virtually dried up. The issue seemed to become a non-question. What had been a plausible suggestion, one deemed to touch on an important issue, no longer seemed relevant.

Whether or not America had ever possessed a civil religion in some substantive sense—a unified nation tradition rooted in a transcendent vision—it is clear that American statesmen were regularly able to call upon religious symbols and ideals in public life, and this served to rally the nation. In the aftermath of the sixties there was a hiatus in this practice. Since that time individual politicians have increasingly resumed it. Certainly, politicians know that they neglect obeisance
to religion at the peril of their careers. However, today bringing religion in resonates differently. It bears an air of controversy. There is no consensus on whether it is correct to do so, or how to go about it. Something has changed in the interim.

The problem is not simply that America is religiously and culturally diverse. America has been blessed with such diversity from the founding of the republic. In Herberg's day religious diversity cut deep divisions in the American polity. Yet America was not just an empty structure, an empty container in which Protestants, Catholics, and Jews merely existed side by side. Mutual engagement was weak, but all shared in a common American identity in some meaningful way. Diversity did not forestall the emergence of a regime of shared values, values that not only "engaged" (if we are to be more charitable than Herberg) the traditional faiths of Americans, but also served as the consensus on which the public religion of the day built. In every era some regime, some normative set of rules, has guided how religion could be brought into public life. These norms were often contested, rarely just taken for granted. But they existed. And at different historical moments their configuration has shifted.

In the present day, we see religion play a public role, sometimes successfully, sometimes not so successfully. On what does that success depend? Arguments that refer to the Constitution or the nature of democracy or relationship between the public and the private only get at the surface. The Constitution, democracy, and the distinction between public and private life have been factors in American life since the earliest days of the Republic. Referring to these constants does not tell us what has changed. Why are some arguments about religion in public advanced today when they would not have been in the past? Who now finds these arguments cogent, and why? In other words, what about the context and about the subtext has shifted? Is there some consensus vision which guides this process, one suited to the diversity of the present day?

The next section reviews contemporary perspectives on religion in civil society, paying particular attention to the link between diversity and the privatization of religion. In reviewing
what a political philosophers, legal scholars, and other public intellectuals have to say on this question it probes the contours and the contested terrain of such consensus as presently exists.

C. Theories of Civil Society and Proper Role of Religion in Public Life

Thinking about religion and its public role in contemporary America requires locating it in the social order in a different way than classical theory did. It requires looking at civil society. However, the notion of civil society is a multivalent one. And for a time it fell into neglect because it lacked rigor, and because the harder realities of political economy seemed more pressing. In recent decades, interest in the cultural basis of democratic society has been rekindled, and with it interest in civil society. Now some speak of civil society as if it will prove to be the philosopher's stone of social life. Myriad possibilities are attributed to its amorphous powers. Civil society is advertised as the place where religion can thrive. And it is the place where citizens debate their public life. How then do these two functions go together? In particular, is religious rhetoric appropriate in public life? How does religious diversity complicate the matter?

Though in Greco-Roman thought "civil society" originally referred to government and the realm of politics—Aristotle apparently coined the term and used it synonymously with the word πόλις (Beem 1999a:44)—as has been noted above, with the revival of a robust sense of public life in the early modern period the notion of civil society came to be defined over against the state. Tocqueville saw the institutions of civil society as playing a crucial role mediating between individuals and the state, one that protected the individual from the excesses both of monarchy and of unmediated democracy (such as was unleashed in the wake of the French Revolution).²⁸ Since the bourgeoisie, who fostered modern civil society, were intent on shielding economic affairs from intrusive interference on the part of the state, many earlier conceptions of

²⁸ For a discussion of the vulnerability of individuals to state coercion in the absence of intermediary associations, especially in light of twentieth century fascist and communist regimes, see Kornhauser (1959).
civil society included the institutions of the market. However, by the turn of the twentieth century it had become clear that the rise of the economic corporation had made it a threat to human freedom on a par with the state. As a result, more recent conceptions set civil society apart from both the state and the economic sphere.29

During the course of the twentieth century theoretical interest in civil society waned, but in the 1980s two sets of concerns favored its revival. The first had to do with the perception in North America and Western Europe that big government had failed,30 leaving not only inefficiency but also pervasive alienation in its wake. In these circumstances, a healthy civil society was viewed as the antidote to the corrosive effects of state failure, the reduction of social life to economic utility, and the forms of anomic individualism these inculcated. To remedy such anomie, politicians and leaders in the public debate looked to revive the institutions of civil society, and this meant institutions which built social solidarity, especially the family, neighborhoods, communities, churches, and synagogues (Beem 1999a:18-29).

The second set of concerns that fostered the revival of civil society derived from the decline and fall of the Soviet Bloc. There during the twilight of Soviet domination advocates of civil society at first maintained a relatively undifferentiated conception of civil society which included everything they wished to liberate from state domination, including the market. In that regard they resembled the early proponents of the liberal order in the West. Then as Eastern European societies contemplated reconstructing the social order, they reflected on how the institutions of civil society could serve as bases for fostering democratic culture. They weighed the institutions of civil society in light of their potential to cultivate the virtues of citizenship and the institutions of democracy, and in this light voluntary association and republican ideals became

29 Habermas (1984-87), and following Habermas, Arato and Cohen (1992) distinguish between the institutional logics of civil society, "political society" (directly concerned with state power) and "economic society" (directly concerned with production).
30 See Norris (1999) for a survey of this dissatisfaction. Hirst (1994) and Keane (1998) are representative of the many discussions for rolling back government.
Thus throughout its history, the range of concerns associated with civil society has led to
developing the notion in very different, sometimes contradictory directions. In some historical
circumstances the economy was central to its definition, while contemporary theorists see
economic forces as anathema to the processes it is meant to foster. Some have seen it as a buffer
against state power, others as a medium for tutoring the populace in democratic virtue. Some
have defined it as an arena of citizen initiative, mutual aid (in the sense of people banning
together for shared interests), and advocacy for social justice. Others are concerned that
partisanship has become divisive to the point that it has eclipsed a sense of the common good.

Some argue that imposing a normative definition of civil society is neither useful nor
seen as "a project of projects." A number of theorists maintain that because even non-political
organizations build cross-cutting ties in society and the capacity to work collaboratively, they
create "society capital." As a result, because they strengthen the overall fabric of society and
redound to its common good, they should be considered part of civil society. (Putnam 1995;
Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti 1993) However, this threatens to reduce civil society to a catchall
for everything from neighborhood associations to bird-watching clubs to professional societies.
Andrew Arato and Jean Cohen (1992) resist the notion of civil society as a residual category for

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31 To add to the confusion one might also note that in German the term "buergerliche Gesellschaft" means
both "civil society" and "bourgeois society." In other words, it has both the sense of the realm of
associational life and of capitalist society as a whole. The latter usage is found in Hegel's Philosophy of
Right ([1821] 1952). It runs through the line of thought about civil society stemming from his work.
32 In his discussion of partisanship and its negative impact on American politics, Beem (1999a:38-41) cites
not only identity politics but also the bottom-line mentality of political parties doing what they have to in
order to win an election. One characteristic voice criticizing this trend and making an appeal to rise above it
has been that of Jean Bethke Elshtain (for example 1995).
33 Not everyone agrees that social capital of the kind Putnam measures readily translates into citizenship.
As one review put it, "In reality voluntary groups of the sort listed here have readily coexisted with a
variety of authoritarian movements, parties, and governments[.]" (Boggs 2001:285) Admittedly, "social
capital" is such a vague and ambivalent concept—even the Mafia creates social capital—that church
participation does not automatically translate into civic virtue.
all aspects of social life once economic life and political life have been cut away. Though they would include the family ("the intimate sphere"), they highlight the importance of the formal institutions of associational life ("relations of conscious association, of self-organization and organized communication").

Thought concerning the place of religion in civil society has been equally varied. Enlightenment thinkers originally considered religion to be an adjunct to the state establishment to which they opposed civil society. Antonio Gramsci (1971:235-239) argued that in Italy the Church constituted the primary obstacle to the rise of a liberal, bourgeois order, yet because of its myriad institutional and cultural forms he also treated it as civil society's most entrenched power. The European Left has remained ambivalent about including religious organizations in its conception of civil society. Even in the context of disestablishment and a liberal, democratic order, as noted earlier because most people are born with their religious identity, the primordial character of religion contrasts with the notion of voluntary association said to characterize civil society. And in both America and Europe religious groups do have a history of partisan politicking, despite varying degrees of disestablishment (or maybe because of it!).

In a sense, it is fitting not to simply reduce religion to an institution of civil society. After all, religion did not first appear in history with the rise of civil society. It predates civil society, and it is found in societies where civil society is restricted or nonexistent. Moreover, religious institutions have their own purposes and raison d'être. Some explicitly eschew concern with the social order. While religion has its Confucian side, where the social order is viewed as the primary arena in which it works out its transcendent purposes, it also has its Taoist side; then it flees to the mountaintops. Therefore measuring religious institutions in terms of social capital or any other form of social utility represents the imposition of an extrinsic criterion. The point here

34 “Civil society in fact represents only a dimension of the sociological world of norms, roles, practices, relationships, competencies, and forums of dependence or a particular angle of looking at this world from the point of view of conscious association building and associational life.” (Cohen and Arato 1992:x)
is to acknowledge that religion is something of a unique player in the civil society, and sometimes an unpredictable one.

On the other hand, religious institutions serve many of the functions associated with civil society. Tocqueville insisted that religion is the very school of democracy, and hence the first of Americans' political institutions. In society today religion still serves to inculcate a sense of justice, community, and responsibility, virtues stressed especially by the communitarian school of thought on civil society. And from Manila to Warsaw religion has provided a collective arena of resistance to state power. While in some struggles religion has been accused of being partisan, often by standing up for the rights of a particular constituency, it has broadened the inclusivity of society and thereby served the cause of justice. Finally, as a number of commentators have noted, in many societies religion is one of the few remaining loci of social capital (Putnam 2000) and truly democratic experience (Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 2006).

The concern here is not to adjudicate among the various notions of civil society or resolve the debate about the role religion plays or should play in its precincts. Rather, it is to acknowledge that the meaning of "civil society" can range from a forum for all manner of independent "projects" to a normative model of voluntary associations concerned with the fostering democratic culture and the common life of society. This study takes these latter norms as the benchmark for what it means to play a constructive role in public life. Despite the European left's neglect of role religion in civil society, it is clear especially from the American context that religion has considerable resources to play such a role. Nonetheless, it should also be noted that this study is not concerned with all the roles the potential roles of religion in civil society. Rather, as noted at the outset, it is concerned with the contribution that religion makes in the arena of public debate and discussion of the common life of citizens, the arena dubbed the

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35 One classic instance of this is the involvement of the Black churches in the American Civil Rights Movement, as Morris (1984) ably demonstrates.
public sphere. Here "public religion" then refers to religion's participation in the public sphere.36

Yet in many crucial arenas in society, including the academy, law, the news media, and entertainment, mainstream elites systematically ignore religion. Frederick Gedicks (1995:2-3,27ff), an authority on religion and Constitutional law, offers one standard review of such complaints. He notes the inconsistency of legal rulings on religion, and a steady trend of shoring up consistency at the cost of the progressively excluding religion from public life (Gedicks 1995:2-3, including a long list of court cases and commentary in notes 16-20, pages 140-141). He refers the reader to books by Stephen L. Carter (1993) and John Richard Neuhaus (1984) that make this case more broadly. And he cites a range of discussions on the sidelining of religion in American culture in general (Bradley 1986; Smolin 1988)—including an article by Peter Berger (1986); in the academy (Sandoz 1990); in the legal world (including Greenawalt 1988:5-6; Perry 1988); and in the news media (Benson and Williams 1986; Dart 1981:19-21; Neuhaus 1984:97-98). The trends and anecdotes reviewed in these accounts flesh out what people mean when they claim that religion is systematically sidelined in public life.

More than isolated instances, the cases Gedicks and others cite constitute a pattern. Despite the inherently polymorphous character of civil society and the wide-ranging discussion over the proper role of religion as an institution in its ranks, a relatively stable pattern of norms governing the place of religion in public life does exist. This patterns might be called a regime, or considering how it sponsors its own common sense, a paradigm. It is not paradigm in the full

36 José Casanova distinguishes three senses of the term "public religion." The first pertains to religious players or institutions participate in the role of the state (for example, an established church). The second has to do with participation in "political society." That entails influencing the laws and resource distribution of the state through such activities as social movements, lobbying, or elections. The third is religion in the public square, where it contributes to discussions of the res publica. (Casanova 2003:111-112) I find this way of bifurcating the public square from lobbying, social movements, and elections somewhat specious. It suggests in a normative way that public religion of the sort which participates in the public square is supposed to talk away without really intending to influence any particular outcome. Sometimes religious actors do introduce considerations simply to enrich civic discussions, as in the case of the Columbia River Pastoral. However, in most cases the distinction is impossible to maintain. Certainly, it is not one which U.S. law sees as possible or appropriate to maintain. I do not maintain such a distinction in this study.
sense in which Kuhn (1970) developed the notion. For Kuhn a paradigm was largely implicit, whereas throughout American history the level of contention over the place of religion in society has meant that while often a given regime setting the relevant terms existed at the level of implicit common sense, just as often it had to be explicitly defended.

That current paradigm is often described as "liberalism."37 Liberalism here refers to more than the philosophy of liberal government. Liberal government is government that is limited, tolerates some dissent, and respects individual rights. Philosophical liberalism goes beyond a mere pragmatic philosophy of government. It is a broader orientation that generalizes this starting point. It may be defined as a general social philosophy which takes individual autonomy, rights, and dignity as the fundamental basis for thinking about the entirety of human social existence. Principles extrapolated from this starting point, rather than cultural values or concrete beliefs about what it means to be human, then serve as the bases for adjudicating an appropriate social order. They serve as "bases" in that when a conflict arises, they trump other considerations. Among these principles are a fundamentally contractarian approach to obligation and a sharp distinction between the public and the private. The first chapter opened with religious groups bringing their environmental message public. Those developments are noteworthy precisely because they represented a break with the reigning form of liberalism and its common sense concerning the relegation of religion to private life.

To its proponents Liberalism indeed represents common sense, and good sense at that. To its critics it contains institutionalized norms biased against religion, norms which legal scholar Stephen L. Carter claims "trivialize religious devotion"—to quote the title of Carter's The Culture of Disbelief: How American Law and Politics Trivialize Religious Devotion (1993), the book cited by Gedicks. Carter complained that American academic and elite circles were so jaded and

37 Sociologist of religion Rhys Williams (2007:53) states it this way: "A common argument among scholars of American politics is that [the public square's] main language is that of liberalism, in a basic Lockean form." Liberalism supplies not only the vocabulary, but also the grammar, the rules.
myopic that they could not really hear what religion had to say; as a result, to bring up religion in such circles became a conversation stopper. And more broadly, the cultural norms of liberal democracy seemed to dictate that when people of faith make public arguments, they must cast them in secular form; in the process, they are forced to act publically as if their faith were of no consequence. In this way, liberalism treats religion as a mere private avocation.

Nonetheless, even Carter upholds this paradigm because he operates within it. While challenging that aspect of liberal common sense that would treat religion as irrelevant to public life, he does not really have any robust alternative to propose. Carter essentially points out the inadequacy of the liberal paradigm and makes the case that the barriers to participation it erects place undue burdens on believers, one to the detriment of society overall. But so long as this paradigm remains in place, his plaint seems little more than an appeal that it treat religion a bit nicer. In other words, to people operating within the paradigm, he seems to be engaged in little more than special pleading. In order to make sense of current concerns surrounding public religion and diversity in the public sphere, it will necessary to review what proponents of the current paradigm and their critics have to say about religion in public life. Again, the point will not be to adjudicate the debate, but to reveal its parameters, and in the process lay bare the ways in which liberalism does indeed functions as a paradigm.

One way to get at the workings of a paradigm is to cite the work of some of its more "pronounced" proponents. One of those, the social philosopher Richard Rorty, had penned a very revealing response to Carter's The Culture of Disbelief. Rorty is often cited as the quintessential liberal. Admittedly, his position may not be representative of the best of liberalism. Beyond that, while he advocated social policies often viewed as liberal, he was a philosophical pragmatist—he denied the objective character of truth—while philosophical liberals generally take their paradigm and its foundations very seriously. So while the way he grounded (or failed to ground) his position placed him at the fringes of liberalism, the centrality of individual autonomy and rights,
along with the notion that the primary role of the state was to safeguard that autonomy, do place him within it.

In his reply to Carter, "Religion as a Conversation Stopper" (1994), Rorty turned Carter's complaint around: "The main reason religion needs to be privatized, is that, in political discussion with those outside the relevant community, it is a conversation-stopper." (Rorty 1994:3) Here the problem is not so much the myopia of elites as the idiosyncrasy of religion—all religion—and that by definition. Religion belongs to a circular universe of meaning; it is an inherently closed code. Religion supplies "premises" that one tacks on to one's claims, and when speaking with people outside one's religious community those premises appear arbitrary. He gives the example of stating in public that "Christian discipleship requires that I oppose abortion." Here "Christian discipleship" is treated as an utterance virtually meaningless to someone who is not a Christian; it functions as little more than window dressing. According to Rorty, such an utterance can only deservedly elicit the response, "So what? We weren't talking about your private life." And so he argues that there should be a normative ban on all religious reference in public discussion.

However, in a subsequent article where he "reconsiders" his position, he discusses citing Psalm 72 as warrant for justice for the poor. There he admits that doing so must be allowed, since he cannot think of a law or custom forbidding it that would not also forbid him from citing John Stuart Mill. (Rorty 2003:142-43)

An avowed atheist, Rorty makes no secret of his contempt for religion. In his view, not only should religion be excluded the public square; "the claims of religion need, if anything, to be pushed back still further." (Rorty 1994:2) In his discussion of citing Psalm 72, it is clear that he would forbid doing so if he could think of a way to that did not undermine free speech as such. The reason he gives is that "putting political convictions in religious terms gives aid and comfort to ecclesiastical organizations, and thus to religious exclusivism" (Rorty 2003:142).

"Ecclesiastical organizations" "maintain their existence by deliberately creating ill-will to other
such organizations, and toward people whose behavior they presume to call immoral…Secularists of my sort hope that ecclesiastical organizations will eventually whither away." (Rorty 2003:141-42) If Carter is upset that religion is relegated to private life, Rorty is of the opinion that in fact this, the Jeffersonian compromise on the Enlightenment's critique of Christian faith, is more favorable than the alternatives.

Rorty's debate with Carter illustrates several points. First, he assumed religion to be inherently exclusivist. The behavior of religious groups, especially Christian groups, both past and present, lends plenty of warrant for making that assumption. However, the utter lack of nuance in Rorty's rhetoric indicates that his position did not derive from a careful review of history. It was simply a dogmatic assumption, part and parcel of the same portrait of religion painted by Enlightenment *philosophes* and taken up whole cloth in classical sociology. Nowhere does Rorty betray the slightest appreciation that religion might involve a substantive line of reasoning, that it might provide a perspective that sheds insight on an issue, that the larger perspective it reflects might make connections to other issues of importance, or that any of this might be accessible to a person outside a given faith community. His utilitarian pragmatism reduces religion to little more than a slogan chanted at a pep rally. It provides some moral "umph," but no real content, at least not any that is accessible to someone outside a given faith community. Given such presuppositions, it is easy to see why Rorty saw no useful function for religion in public life.38

In the second place, the tenor of Rorty's argument reveals how contempt prevents any real engagement. His inability to hear religion as anything more than an arbitrary appeal to fictitious authority actually captures quite nicely how religious groups have failed to hear one another in the past. And ironically, so does his desire to use any practical means to exclude

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38 The further question, of course, is how much such presuppositions inform liberalism more generally, at least by way of unstated prejudice.
religion should they be available.

Finally, Rorty assumed, until educated otherwise, that the "Jeffersonian compromise" meant that religion be completely relegated to private life. In fact, for most of U.S. history the First Amendment was taken to mean that government simply *not favor any one religion*. With several Supreme Court rulings beginning in the 1940s, the gloss on the First Amendment in which Thomas Jefferson (1802) wrote of a "wall of separation" gained greater currency. Still, the thrust of those rulings was only to avoid entanglement between *government* and religious *institutions*. The idea that there exists some "Jeffersonian compromise" that would exclude religion from public discussion or public life altogether goes beyond those rulings. It certainly does not reflect the position of the author of the Declaration of Independence. Nor is it representative of the various forms that common sense on this issue has taken over the course of U.S. history. It seems to reflect a new moment in American "common sense," at least in certain segment of the population, and one that may well be in retreat by now.

Rorty represents something of the high water mark when it comes to hostility to religion under the rubric of principled neutrality. Two other academics, John Rawls and Robert Audi, are more representative of liberalism on to the question of religion in public life. In *Political Liberalism* (1993) Rawls outlined what he believed to be the norms appropriate for governing a modern, democratic, liberal society. He factored in that such a society might be pluralistic, and at the same time that any effective conception of justice must rest upon ideas that are latent in the general public political culture. For democracy to succeed the pluralism must be "reasonable;"

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39 While Jefferson figures both as the darling of defenders of liberalism and "secular neutrality" and as the evil Deist in the screenplay of those who would "retrieve" a Christian America, he was no zealot about removing religious symbolism or reference from public life. In point of fact, writing in his official capacity as President he opened the very letter in which he used his famous "wall of separation" phrase with a *theological argument* in favor of governmental non-interference in religious matters, and he closed it with "prayers for the protection and blessing of the common Father and creator of man." (Jefferson 1802) Jefferson was not so much concerned with erasing all traces of religion from public life as providing the assurance that minority views and free discussion, religious and non-religious, would find place.
participants must be open to the project of building a society based on principles of freedom, equality, and justice. Rawls then argued that his notion of justice as fairness, which he first developed in *A Theory of Justice* (1971), would be the most adequate for such a society. "Justice as fairness" means that the standard for policy and law is that a person stripped of gender, socio-economic status, race, history, or religious creed would agree to it; if a policy looks fair from the perspective of a person as a person, then it is just. Whereas *A Theory of Justice* was criticized because it set itself up to be an ahistorical, comprehensive philosophy in its own right, one trumping culture and tradition, *Political Liberalism* is more modest in its scope, thereby opening a space for diversity in society and its larger cultural history.

At the outset Rawls (1993:1) announces that legitimate public reason entails that citizens restrict their participation to discussion "within the framework of what each sincerely regards as a reasonable political conception of justice, a conception that expresses political values that others as free and equal also might reasonably be expected reasonably to endorse." This means that views rooted in any "comprehensive doctrine" must be bracketed, since one cannot presume *a priori* that they will receive the endorsement of all participants in public debate. A comprehensive doctrine is one that "covers all recognized values and virtues within one rather precisely articulated system" (Rawls 1993:15), that is, any comprehensive notion of the good life or the good society, such as most religious and philosophical systems.

Robert Audi, who has written widely specifically on the question of religious speech in the public square, and he has consistently drawn a nuanced analysis for thinking through what is and is not appropriate. He has noted that an argument can be religious in different ways, based its content (the most obvious criterion), its warrant (reasoning traced to revelation of some similar ground), its motivation (the goal being tied to some religious value), or its history (ultimately being rooted in something religious in one of the other senses). (Audi 1993:677-80) Thus he provides a list of ways an argument can be gauged to be religious. He also distinguishes between
the purposes and circumstances for which such arguments may be rallied. In the end, while he admonishes people to be judicious and ethical in how they proceed, he would only declare religious arguments to be out of bounds when they support laws or policies that restrict liberty. In his opinion, such restrictions may only licitly be based on grounds that any rational person could accept. (Audi 1993:687-99)40

Other authors bring forth similar concerns: Allowing religious reasoning into the public square will exclude nonbelievers from meaningful participation in public discourse. Arguments must be made which people can accept as citizens, not co-religionists; otherwise people are asked to make to ask a leap of faith based on appeal to an authority they cannot acknowledge. This runs the risk of violating the First Amendment by legislating faith into law. (Greene 1993:1614-15) Add to that the concern of numerous observers that religion can introduce unacceptable divisiveness, ultimately poisoning the public square.

Kent Greenawalt (1993:647-60; 1995:23-50), a professor of jurisprudence at Columbia University, has argued that the key criterion is not religious warrant or religious content per se, but accessibility. That does not reduce to the notion that any potential hearer must be able to find a given argument plausible, but it does underscore the responsibility to address one's audience and make one's reasoning available to the greatest extent possible. Like Audi, Greenawalt (1993:680-82) also gives careful consideration to cases where law or policy might be viewed as coercive. In the end, he is clear that the basic principles of liberalism cannot determine the proper range of public reasoning; history and culture must be taken into account. While he argues that there are times when some form of self-restraint or bracketing of religion are necessary, he does not categorically rule religion out of the public square. He does not find religion of itself to be inaccessible, nor does he consider religious diversity to be sufficient warrant for restricting

40 Audi has been fairly consistent. He comes to a similar conclusion in a later book where he updates these ideas, Religious Commitment and Secular Reason (2000).
religion from the public square.

Citing Rawls and Audi, another legal scholar, Suzanna Sherry (1998) has proposed that "all laws should be justified by secular reasons accessible to all citizens, whether religious or not," (p. 501) apparently even to the point of disqualifying accommodations (such as days off for religious holidays). But rather than cite theories of reason and accessibility, she cited what she considers to be the potential or even inevitable consequences of "allowing religious reasons to justify public policy" (which, incidentally, she equated with "favoring religion in general over non-religion"): "In America, such a policy will always have the effect of favoring Christianity over other religions," and that "will have a negative effect on minorities, especially Jews." (p. 502)

Here the presupposition is that religious communities would not be able to work out any reasonable accommodation of one another through the operation of the public square, so therefore religion should be completely excluded from public life to prevent tyranny of the majority. She was quite explicit: There are times when democracy cannot be trusted.

These arguments have been met with a number of responses. For brevity sake I divide them into three categories. The first has to do with the nature of religious arguments. In the first place, many commentators observe that there is more to religious arguments than some arbitrary appeal to authority or leap of faith, and hence the claim that religious arguments are inherently inaccessible is specious (Idleman 1994, in response to Greene 1993). Others note that when you actually compare religious and secular reasoning, the radical epistemological divide repeatedly presumed by liberal critics simply does not exist (see arguments in Alexander 1993; Hollenbach 1993).

The second set of responses that have been made have to do with what is reasonable and just to ask of people. On the level of one's reasons—in the deep sense, one's reasons of the heart—it may do them violence to try to pry them loose from their grounding context. In many instances the proposal to do so will make no sense to the religious person who, precisely on
religious grounds, denies the cogency of compartmentalizing religion (elaborating on Carter 2000:25, 72-73). Furthermore, insofar as religious issues touch the core of one's personhood, a further issue is involved. Is it right to ask people to bracket a dimension of their selfhood before entering the public square? Increasingly the answer is "no" for other groups in society (for example, ethnic minorities, gays, and lesbians), and there is a growing tendency to likewise view religion as an equally cogent aspect of identity (Rosen 2000:42, 45).

The third set involves the claim that rather than add rancor to the public debate, religion will improve it, both in terms of civility and in terms of enriching its content (Carter 2000). As noted above, civil society advocates concerned about the health of that arena currently look to religion as one of its most important participants, and presumably they would not deny religious persons the capacity to bring their resources, including religion itself, to that role. Legal scholar Michael Perry (1991; 2003) has eloquently argued that any society requires a far fuller notion of the good than liberalism can provide, and historically religion has a long record of supplying the gap. That is in large measure because any long-running tradition has resources for engaging human existence that go beyond the exigencies of the moment. All other things being equal, one would expect that any human religious tradition would garner respect on that basis alone. And finally, some participants in the debate point out that diversity in and of itself may not be a problem at all. Jeremy Waldron (1993) makes the point that being exposed to alternative perspectives, even ones with which one fundamentally disagrees, can only lend one's own perspective greater breadth and depth.41

In sum, in moving to consider whether religious diversity reduces the role religion in society to social insignificance, it is necessary to move beyond theories of religion based on the

41 "The prospect of losing that sort of effect in public discourse is, frankly, frightening – terrifying, even, if we are to imagine its being replaced by a form of 'deliberation' that, in the name of 'fairness' or 'reasonableness' (or worse still, 'balance') consists of bland appeals to harmless nostrums that are accepted without question on all sides." (Waldron 1993:841-42) Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine reducing public life to a closed universe of vacuous liberal discourse as anything but a form of cultural suicide.
era of religious establishments to the actual experience of religion in civil society. At the same
time, civil society itself has been conceptualized many ways, and these in connection with a wide
range of normative concerns. Likewise, the role of religion in civil society has been described,
prescribed, and proscribed from a range of perspectives. Tocqueville painted a portrait of
America's churches fostering civic virtue and otherwise minding their own business, each within
some nicely self-contained sphere, its own "world apart." Yet the actual role of religion in
American life rarely fit so neatly into such a portrait. Throughout the nineteenth-century religious
groups in America competed furiously for members, resources, and influence in public life.
Sometimes partisan politics and questions of the common good were so entangled and vexed that
riots broke out. Moreover, while many theorists lionize the role of religion in civil society, the
fact is that religion has its own purposes, and these do not always coincide with a given, idealized
conception. Sometimes religious deliberately set out to play a constructive role in society, and
sometimes that may at best be an accidental and partial outcome of their efforts. Civil society has
always been a messy affair.

The discussions cited above are representative of the debate over the liberal paradigm
insofar as it relates to religion in the public square. The political philosophers, legal scholars, and
public intellectuals included are among its most articulate proponents and critics. They provide an
elite perspective on the contour of the debate. While the particular arguments made are certainly
of interest, what is most crucial here is the parameters of the debate, its underlying assumptions
and points of contention.

When it comes to religion, one set of concern runs throughout: whether religion is
inherently exclusive (unable to recognize the legitimacy of other views), dogmatic (unable to
really appreciate other views due to inveterate biases and rigid commitments), or inaccessible
(opaque to inspection by outsiders). Ultimately, these concerns are echoes of the arguments for
originally separating out religion from public life: They derive from an era of religious
competition in society, one whose tenor clashes with the ideals of democratic culture. Rorty averted to such competition in his denunciation of "ecclesiastical organizations" as exclusivist. Sherry voiced concern that allowing religion into public life would inevitably drown out the voice of religious minorities. Religious competition was one of the primary reasons liberal principles were advanced in the first place, to create a space free of interreligious conflicts. The questions that now emerge are the extent to which the principles of liberalism should be generalized, and whether the conflicts which prompted them reflect the intrinsic character of religion.

As it turns out, upon examination religious rhetoric reveals itself to be more like other forms of discourse than its detractors had claimed. At this stage, significantly, no informed observer has advanced an arguments based on some supposed absolute distinction between "faith" and "reason." It is now well established that reason and faith are analytic categories; they do not apply to actual lines of thought or forms of discourse. All reason involves some assumptions taken on faith, and all faith involves some form of reasoning. While there may be something distinctive about religious discourse, numerous scholars have argued that that does not entail that there exists a radical divide between religious discourse and other forms of discourse employed in the public sphere. Even Rorty was unable to make good the claim that religious discourse is somehow intrinsically different, different in a way that makes it inherently incompatible with democratic culture. Moving from the level of discourse to actual participation in public life, observers note that the record is ambiguous. Some cite the vital contributions that religion makes to public life; others are concerned about whether it coheres with democratic culture. But again, the debate has not surfaced anything intrinsic to religious participation in public life that differentiates it in some fundamental way from non-religious participation.

At the same time, in reviewing the historical record more people have been making the

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42 I have argued this may best be conceived as the presence of a frame with a transcendent referent.
case that there is something about religion that liberalism does not quite honor. Carter is not alone. People with a religious sensibility have repeatedly tried to articulate their sense that religion is being unfairly excluded from a just place in public life and a just allotment of public resources. Yet if they voice their experience that religion is treated as if it were illegitimate, unwelcome, or unappreciated, they are met with the dumbfounded response that no one is prejudiced against religion: Those are simply the rules of the game. If they argue within the premises of liberalism, they are not always able to articulate their position successfully. If they resort to another set of premises, they may not be heard at all. In precisely this way liberalism operates as a paradigm. Nonetheless, some such as Waldron have still been able to convincingly argue, and that in liberalism's own terms, that a society excludes the insights of religious traditions to its impoverishment. Meanwhile, other advocates of religion in public life have continued to remind all concerned of the benefits conferred by the participation in civil society of religious groups and religious individuals. These arguments have been taken up in such a wide array of social locations.

Alternative paradigms have been proposed. Catholic intellectuals have been proposing "third ways" since the turn of the last century and before; at least in America, they have not caught their wave, though among themselves and a few fellow travelers they form a lively subculture. And since the 1980s a new "communitarian" tradition has begun to form in certain academic circles. Its proponents are critical of liberalism's ahistorical, atomistic conception of human beings and its inability to commend even the most minimal notion of the good. They argue that the good for individuals and society is not something that can be deduced from first principles. It is a choice people make from among a range of possibilities. They make that choice together, so for that reason it requires trust. In other words, a shared vision of the good is not a deduction but by decision. It is born through dialogue, creative effort and shared commitment. Hence it is always a historical product. Such a notion affirms the value of tradition, and insofar as religion comes in the form of a variety of traditions it lends preliminary warrant for honoring

Communitarian proponents often cast the communitarian-liberal debate as one between empty, abstract, universal liberal ideals, on the one hand, and rich, concrete, character-building, historically embedded communitarian norms, on the other. Defenders of liberalism have in turn pointed out that communitarianism suffers from defects of its own. (Buchanan 1989; and Gutmann 1985) Not only can communitarianism fall into the snares of relativism and conservatism by locating the basis of the good too unreservedly in any existing community. It often shows itself to be little more than the mirror image of liberalism when it comes to the shortcomings the communitarians decry. In other words, it often arises as an antithesis, rather than as a full-blooded alternative in its own right, one that can transcend the polarities of the current debate.43

Nonetheless, defenders of liberalism do suggest that it can learn something from the critiques. For example, Amy Gutmann argues, "The critics' failure to undermine liberalism suggests not that there are no communitarian values but that they are properly viewed as supplementing rather than supplanting basic liberal values." (1985:49, emphasis added)

Accordingly, in the period intervening between *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and *Political Society* (1993) Rawls scaled back his own construct to allow greater room for the "epistemic baggage" that people inevitably bring to any public discussion (1993:56-57). Greenawalt (1995) argues that historical and cultural factors inevitably factor into any discussion of religion and public life because the very sense of such arguments always depends on their context. What we see is a

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43 Michael Walzer (1990:6-7), in offering his own version of the communitarian critique of liberalism, makes a similar point.
paradigm that is not being abandoned because in the eyes of its proponents it is more viable than the alternative. Nonetheless, it is being submitted to the kind of emendation to which paradigms are subject when they are found to be inadequate. While "liberal values" are to remain "basic," in light of communitarian criticisms other values could be brought in for some "supplementing."

There is something else worth noting about the debate. Its primary focus has been the nature of religious argumentation. This focus lends the debate an objective cast, as if it turned on the objective nature of religious discourse. But if religion does not constitute a closed universe of meaning, then there does not seem to be anything about religious discourse per se that is incompatible with public life in democratic society. In fact, the real issue at least up through the 1950s had not been something intrinsic to the nature of religious argumentation, but rather whether members of religious groups were open to listening to one another in the first place. The real issue had been the openness of religious groups, not the accessibility of their arguments. That raises the question of whether concerns about the compatibility of religious discourse and democratic culture are something of a red herring. In other words, it may be diverting attention from the realization that what had been the real problem with religious discourse—people of different faiths refusing to listen to one another—no longer is the taken-for-granted barrier it once was. Indeed, in the past interfaith relations were so "tribalized" that when clergy of one faith spoke publicly, those on the other side of a significant divide in American religious culture ignored what they had to say as irrelevant. That sort of tribalism seems to have significantly diminished.

However, the critics of liberalism seem to be suggesting that in the present day a new kind of lack of openness is afoot in society. While the religious tribalism of the past may have diminished, the critics of liberalism suggest that it is liberals themselves who are closed to religious discourse. Rather than try to pin the reason for religion being hindered from playing a constructive role in public debate on the inherent nature of religious discourse, these critics are
arguing that in fact the real reason is close-mindedness on the part of certain liberals. If fellow citizens speak from religious reasons, reasons of the heart, reasons that are accessible if one takes the effort to follow their logic rather than hide behind prejudices about religion, then listeners will be able to recognize the valid contribution that religion is able to make to the public debate.

In sum: Civil society is an informal and polymorphous arena. And while relatively stable, normative patterns, or regimes, do emerge in different historical moments they do not announce themselves in the same way that governments do when they publish laws. They are neither obvious nor uncontested. Nonetheless, the consensus seems to be that liberalism, in the sense of a social philosophy privileging individual autonomy, is at the center of the present regime for governing the presence of religion in public life and negotiating religious diversity, largely by mode of excluding all substantive notions of the good from too intrusive a place in public life. Certainly liberal presuppositions have informed public life and been a part of any regime for governing the place of religion in social life since the founding of the nation. However, in the past they were located in a larger, vaguely evangelical Protestant social philosophy. In that context they served as a mediating machine. Now liberalism itself is the operative social philosophy, one with truly paradigmatic status. It has gotten inside the way people think and see the world. That status as the philosophical basis of the present regime is also reflected in the way people constantly return to liberalism, to critique or defend it. It finds itself at the center of the social debate, whereas in the past Protestant and Christian values were constantly cited, criticized, and defended. Whereas this section has examined what intellectual elites have had to say in this debate, the next section looks at the popular debate and trends concerning religion in public life more generally.

D. Public Religion: The Popular Debate

In the academy, the controversy over religion in public life has been caught up in two
rather technical debates. The first has to do with whether religion as a closed, particularistic realm of discourse and meaning, and then religious diversity is something which can only divide public life. The second, in turn, is a debate over bases and inadequacies of the paradigm that would exclude religion, liberalism. In moving outside intellectual circles, analogous debates have been taking place, as well. However, the terms of these debates generally reflect a different cast.

One of the disadvantages of academic treatments is that they sometimes bury their real concerns under a mass of abstractions. In the mid-eighties then Lutheran Pastor John Neuhaus published a book responsible for bringing questions of religion and public life before a wider audience. That book, *The Naked Public Square* (1984) made the case for the contribution of religion to public life, drawing on sociology and political philosophy but popularizing the concepts. And right up front, Neuhaus articulated clearly what prompted him to write. The Religious New Right had become quite active in American political life, scoring a number of victories, and this was provoking an indignant reaction decrying the involvement of religion in politics. Neuhaus took on the unenviable task of writing to convince liberals that allowing the fundamentalists into the public square was preferable to attempting to exclude religion from politics as a general proposition. While he agreed with many criticisms of the Religious New Right, he adamantly defended their efforts to bring religion into public discussion and the decision-making process.

Neuhaus made an eloquent appeal on behalf of religion as an essential participant in democratic culture. He reminded readers of the long track record of religious actors on behalf of the very causes central to a liberal vision of society: Only now that it is critical of liberalism is populist religion being accused of being undemocratic. In addition, he warned that secularity too readily drifts into secularism, and that a secularist society could far more readily fall victim to intolerance and injustice than a religious, especially a Judeo-Christian, one. Better to acknowledge one's moral playbook and have it be one scripted in terms of accountability to the
God of justice than succumb to a public ethic of vacuous, ego-centric individualism. At the same time, while Neuhaus approved of the moral majoritarians for bringing religion back in, it is also clear that he was making an appeal to mainline Protestantism to pull back from the muddle of misguided liberalism that hobbled them and get back into the game. Neuhaus is unbalanced in one important respect—he was generally more charitable to the Religious New Right than to the "liberalism" he often dismissively caricatured. However, The Naked Public Square gained wide circulation precisely because it hit a responsive chord.

Despite the arguments Neuhaus had made for the capacity of religion to enhance the public square, by the turn of the next decade one sociologist of religion had published another best-seller contending that in fact religion in public life was part of a larger recipe that made civil society anything but a civil place to be. In Culture Wars (1991) James Davison Hunter popularized a phrase even more enduring than Neuhaus's title, one that seemed to capture well the dynamic of controversy enveloping the nation. Hunter argued that a new fault line had developed in American culture. On one side were the people he labeled the "orthodox." These included evangelical Protestants, traditional Catholics, and Orthodox Jews. In their rhetoric they tended to emphasize the objective character of revelation and religious authority, and they translated their religious views into public discourse with a fairly direct, undifferentiated logic. Truth is truth. On the other side were the "progressivists," into which category Hunter placed mainline Protestants, liberal Catholics, Reformed Jews, and the majority of secular humanists. Members of this camp reasoned pragmatically, primarily making use of "this worldly considerations" (p. 124), while at the same time emphasizing the prerogative of individuals to work out their own ethical life in the sanctity of their own consciences. Accordingly, they favored a social order with a more flexible logic, one that maximized individual autonomy. Each person must decide for him- or herself. (pp.

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44 "The moral logic of this position, as it translates into popular culture, has been described in numerous ways by social scientists in recent years, perhaps most commonly as liberal or expressive individualism." (Hunter 1991:125)
In support of his theory that two such hostile camps had indeed taken shape, Hunter listed a range of social issues in which certain representative organizations of each consistently lined up on opposite sides. (pp. 90-95) Moreover, he argued that since members of each operate out of very different conceptions not only of the issues but also of how to reason about them in the first place, debate between them inevitably dissolved into rancor. (pp. 128-132)

Hunter warned that polarization is threatening the very fabric of civil society, and religion was playing into this dynamic. The positions he cited reflect little engagement with the opposing "camp," except by way of caricature. Such polarization is perpetuated by people who, when unable or unwilling to hear what others have to say, simply retreat into enclaves of the likeminded, where they are free to reformulate their position ever more stridently. While that may make for lively and sometimes provocative contention, Hunter and others are concerned that in the long-run the overall depth of discussion in the public square will decline significantly.

One relevant sideshow that lends credence to the "culture wars" hypothesis is the "Christian America" debate. On the one side are the proponents of strict separation of church and state who make the case that America is a secular republic. They emphasize the First Amendment, Jefferson's gloss thereon, and a series of Supreme Court decisions affirming non-establishment and eschewing entanglement between church and state. They also fret about the consequences of ignoring these precedents. These positions, as far as they go, are accurate enough, but they also only tell part of the story. And indeed, the bias of the "secularists" lies in their utter silence regarding the religious dimensions of American history. That is, they take bracketing to be a norm not only for the public square and apply it more generally. A number of studies have shown how pernicious and distorting such silence is, especially when it comes to how American history is portray in public school textbooks.45 Through selective silence and constant but equally

45 There is extensive literature on this issue alone. Numerous public intellectuals raised this point (Carter 1993:208; Marty 1989:29; Wills 1990:15, all cited in Young 1995:196). Paul Vitz (1985), a professor of psychology at New York University, performed a study under contract with the Department of Education in
selective challenge of any legitimation of religion in public life they censor religion without actually falsifying the record. But some do go further and read contemporary liberalism back into opinions of the founding fathers, arguing either that such represent the obvious implication of their deliberations or that there is a direct line of development leading from the one to the other.46

On the other side are the proponents of what Mark Weldon Witten (1999) calls the "Myth of Christian America." They call attention to other obvious facts: the place of Christianity not just in the life many Americans as individuals but in the life of the nation; the role that Christian values and presuppositions played or continue to play in American public institutions, including the Constitution and U.S. law; and selected Supreme Court decisions that favor their position. They decry the way religion is stripped from public education, the academy, and public life. More that that, they argue that there is a liberal conspiracy afoot to hide the fact that America is in fact a Christian nation. For example, one book in this genre, tellingly entitled America's Christian History: The Untold Story (DeMar 1995), announces on its back cover as if revealing some long lost secret that "America was founded as a Christian nation. You weigh the evidence." DeMar wrote to make up for the omissions of religion in American history he saw all around him. Insofar as that was his purpose, he was not setting out to write a balanced account. Instead it is a contentious rebuttal of contemporary claims about America, hardly a basis for "weighing the evidence." More blatant is an early book by David Barton (1992, cited in Whitten 1999:39ff) which includes quotes of dubious authenticity attributed to some founding fathers, as well as a

which he actually surveyed 60 American history textbooks. Boyer (1996) and Young (Young 1995) discuss his results, and while they point out that Vitz's work reflects his ardent support of the Reagan agenda, Young (1995) reports: "I do not question the general accuracy of Vitz's data for the early to mid-1980s. While the intervening decade may have seen some improvement, I suspect the general pattern he describes still exists. Religious history is, indeed, only slowly filtering into the textbooks and the survey courses. This is especially true of high-school textbooks and courses, but impressionistic evidence suggests that college-level texts and survey courses reveal the same deficiency, though perhaps to a lesser degree." 46 In an opinion piece for Time entitled "Why the Religious Right is Wrong" (1992), Barbara Ehrenreich provides a statement of the liberal credo on religion and separation of church and state as typical and concise as any. In it she goes so far as to claim, "Homosexuality was not unknown 200 years ago; nor was abortion. But these were matters, like religion, that the founders left to individual conscience."
blatantly false account of the Constitutional Convention resorting to daily prayer until it completed its final draft (at the prompting of Ben Franklin, no less!).

In these debates there is a certain asymmetry. The secular camp does not really appear to be much of a camp at all. Instead of a camp, there seems to be a broad and pervasive tendency in many arenas of public life to avoid or bracket reference to religion. In reaction, efforts to address this deficiency have emerged, and one constituency that emerged in their midst was the "Christian America" group. Some of the rhetoric of this latter group suffers from a decided lack of nuance and sophistication. It has attracted reactions from those who reject the agenda with which it is associated. A debate formed, one that became polarized, one that was increasingly circular and impoverished because neither side really engaged the other. Certainly, there really are many senses in which America is a Christian nation, even a Christian evangelical nation. And likewise there are important senses in which it is a secular nation, and some senses in which it is an Indian, a Catholic, a Jewish, and religiously diverse nation. At the same time, there are also important senses in which it is decidedly not a Christian nation. The issue, as are most, is subtle and polyvalent. What the "Christian America" group fails to appreciate is that there can be more than one sense in which a proposition can be true (or false, for that matter). But more to the point, to portray these debates as a battle between a militant left-wing secularist camp and a militant right-wing evangelical camp would not be at all adequate. There is no concerted secular camp with anything like a coherent agenda, and while there might be a "Christian America" camp, it does not come anywhere near to exhausting the ranks of those who argue that acknowledgment of the role of religion in American history is currently inadequate, even negligently so. They are just one constituency critiquing the existing consensus; not everyone who does agrees with their approach or conclusions.

The debate over "Christian America" adumbrates in miniature something of what a number of studies have shown to be true about the "Culture Wars" hypothesis. It turns out that
there is something to the hypothesis, but in reality how Americans think about various issues is far more complex, and the vast majority of Americans do not consistently inhabit either of the two camps Hunter sketches. In the wake of Hunter's thesis, one attempt to find empirical evidence of increased polarization an public opinion found "no support for the proposition that the United States has experienced dramatic polarization on social issues since the 1970s." Only on one issue, abortion, has the range of opinions increasingly clustered in two distinct and opposed positions. And the gap between Republicans and Democrats grew. Otherwise differences between most groups defined by age, race, gender, level of education, geographic region, and faith have actually declined. (Evans, DiMaggio, and Bryson 1996)

The above data reflect individual opinions. One could look to another level of social reality, the level at which positions are articulated by elites representing or attempting to mobilize larger constituencies. These "positions" are the constructs which in a (Durkheimian) sense then crystallize to take on a life of their own, looming over individual social actors. In a retrospective essay, Hunter (1996:248) himself writes, "It is at this level, and only at this level, that the term 'culture war'…takes on its greatest conceptual force." Hunter's comments with a series of studies that explored the applicability of his theory to specific conflicts. In most cases the fit was imperfect at best. For example, a "battle of the books" concerning multiculturalism included a progressive faction advocating a vision of a pluralistic basis for American identity. However, those who opposed them did not fall into a unified camp upholding a single, orthodox, "under God" American identity.47 (Yamane 1996) Even if one takes Hunter's "orthodox" and

47 This example actually serves to bring out one major conceptual shortcoming of Hunter's model. He defines his two camps in a fundamentally ambiguous manner. On the one hand they are supposed to cohere with the Gramscian categories of traditional intellectuals (those who "present themselves as heirs to the truths of the past") and organic intellectuals (those who "present themselves as the new and dynamic sources of progressive reform"). (Hunter 1991:60-61) Those are historically relative positions: The progressive reforms of one era become the tradition of the next. At the same time, Hunter wants to define the orthodox and the progressivists in quasi-substantive terms, the former affirming both tradition and absolute norms, the latter affirming both progressive adaptation and individual autonomy. Thus the progressivist position is a bit like pragmatism and a bit like liberalism. Hunter lumps them together. But
"progressivists" to be "ideal types" (1991:107-08), it is not clear that they illuminate more than they obscure. The "Christian America" debate is one apt to manifest culture war-style polarization, since the question of how to conceive of America is cast precisely in the terms of the orthodox-progressivist debate. And even there the reality is more complex. Some of the "positions" that got constructed and took on a rhetorical life of their own did reflect the orthodox and progressivist ideal types Hunter sketched. But under the surface the reality was more complex. And it involved some important asymmetrical features that his model missed.

When it comes to the debate over religion in public life and how to negotiate religious diversity, perhaps the best way to make sense of the present moment is to view it as a contest over the proper extent of liberalism. It may not be so much that there are hardened camps of progressivists and orthodox, but rather the pervasive common sense of liberalism and specific constituencies who have formed in opposition to it.

Liberalism constitutes the principle discourse frame in the academy, the courts, and other important social arenas, and its spokespersons are often establishment leaders in those arenas. Its vocabulary supplies the language of legitimacy. Currently, it serves as the basis for government interaction with religion and the negotiation of diversity. In itself such a role would merely entail serving as the practical basis for working out relations between the faith communities and the government, the rights of citizens as individuals, and so forth. It could exist in a larger moral or philosophical order and need not ground itself. That is, it could exist as a set of practical

when it comes to liberalism, though historically it has often played the role of the progressive, it is particular social philosophy with certain premises. It is not simply a philosophy of perpetual change. This contradiction reveals itself in the debate over multiculturalism. If anything multiculturalism is as much a critique of the universal claims of Western liberalism as it is a critique of the universal claims of any other traditional synthesis. In fact, multiculturalism, if not "done right" can completely undercut liberalism by relegating it to be one option among many. There are many liberals who oppose multiculturalism for the same reasons they oppose communitarianism: It could support positions on personal autonomy issues (relating to homosexuality, abortion, the role of women, and so forth) that run counter to liberalism. To them that does not seem very progressive.

As for Hunter's thesis, this contradiction in the way he defines both the orthodox and the progressivists ultimately threatens it with conceptual incoherence.
arrangements within a larger regime or set of norms for thinking about religion in the life of society. That would be a limited role, one that I would describe as serving as a "mediating structure." However, as numerous commentators have noted, currently the role of liberalism extends beyond that of a mere mediating structure; it is a social philosophy with its own mythology, ideals, and dynamism.

At the same time, liberalism is found to be inadequate by many people in many circumstances, as any reigning paradigm will. There are communitarian critics; there are neo-conservative critics; there are traditionalist religious critics. Ethnic minority communities find its individualist logic a threat to their community values and survival. Postmodern critics contest its universalizing pretensions for various reasons. Which critics come to the fore often depends upon the issue at stake. It would be an oversimplification to lump all these critics together as the "orthodox." Even among the conservative religious groups there is considerable diversity. Catholics and Evangelicals converge on abortion, but go their separate ways on the death penalty. Yet often what these groups have in common is not so much opposition to the basic premises of liberalism, but opposition to the extent to which those premises are allowed to trump other considerations. Liberalism lacks a normative vision of the good for human life or human society, but when serves as a comprehensive social philosophy, rather than as a pragmatic mediating mechanism, it tends to positively exclude any such vision from public life.

However, there is something to the perception that on the one side you have the individualist-pragmatic-progressives and on the other the normative-religious-orthodox. When a dispute arises, in theory there can be many sides to it, but in practice two often get defined over against one another. Those who view the issue in terms of the dominant paradigm will use its terms to argue their case, and even if fellow travelers do not find its terms completely amenable, they will be in no position to advance a separate framework and vocabulary; at best, they may be able to moderate the militancy of the argument. Those opposed to standing arrangements can
argue their case in terms of the dominant paradigm, or they can draw their terms from some alternative comprehensive vision. There are people like Harold Bloom, who in the dispute about higher education could call to arms all those who were versed in classical philosophy, but when it comes down to it, religion supplies the only real alternative paradigm for most Americans. So as far as public debates goes, liberalism and religion are the paradigms ready at hand. They provide the grist for constructs most able to rise the level of macrosocial entities, social phenomena that can stand on their own legs.

Gedicks (1995) links the rise of the current paradigm to a dramatic shift in church-state jurisprudence in the United States beginning in the 1940s. What had been common sense in legal theory before that period came to be viewed as anachronistic as the decades progressed. The only way he is able make sense of this shift is to view it as the result of a larger shift of what I have been calling paradigms and he tends to call "discourses." In his terms, the discourse in which the earlier approach to jurisprudence was embedded was that of "religious communitarianism," while the discourse which replaced it he terms "secular individualism." He is clear that by discourses he does not mean actual historical traditions, traditions that social actors themselves referred. Yet he does attempt to relate them to social history. He argues that religious communitarianism "incorporates the interdenominational conservative religious beliefs and practices described by Hunter [as 'orthodox']" (Gedicks 1995:11). Meanwhile the secular individualist discourse corresponds to Hunter's progressivists (Gedicks 1995:12). Gedicks (pp. 22-23) adds that it bears a close affinity to the historical discourse of liberalism.

During the nineteenth century, when "religious communitarianism" was the dominant social, legal, and Constitutional discourse, the Constitutional compromises that established the

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48 Drawing on a distinction made by Robert Cover (1983), Gedicks (1995:26) argues that discourses are more normative universes that define right and wrong than Kuhnian paradigms which literally make an alternative unthinkable. Rather than get too deeply embroiled in the technicalities of the sociology of knowledge, I will leave these fine points undeveloped.
federal government were understood to be that, compromises. Many of their terms did not extend to the states. And at all levels of government not only did the moral and religious values of Protestant Christianity supply the implicit logic of law and government; often they supplied the explicit language which propped up both. In the terms developed in this study, liberal government was a mediating structure, but Protestant Christianity was the basis of the larger regime governing not only relations between religions, but also the larger moral life of the nation. Evangelical Protestantism was the cultural establishment of the day. And it was precisely the basis on which the mediating structure of liberal government rested.49 In this saga, one crucial turning point was *Everson v. Board of Education of the Township of Ewing* (1947), the case in which the "wall of separation" decision was made. The history of Supreme Court rulings on religion since represent a hodge podge of compromises and ad hoc reasoning that make no sense from a communitarian point of view. Instead, it reflected the inroads of the increasingly dominant logic of "secular individualism."

As for how we got ourselves into this situation—why the paradigm shifted in the first place—Gedicks is not completely sure. At one point he lists an array of possible causes: "the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* in 1859, the professionalization of American higher education, and the rise of legal realism" (p. 18). "For whatever reasons, the de facto establishment had become problematic by the 1940s." (p. 19) And so it was. Gedicks then applies this insight to a review of a number of areas of Constitutional law, and he probes the new logic "secular individualism." At the same time, he is also clear, "Religious communitarianism is not a viable alternative," nor is it a desirable one for a host of reasons that he lists (p. 123). And not only does he not see any other alternative to either religious communitarianism or secular individualism; he argues that proposals such as Carter's, which would find a place for the

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49 This point cannot be stressed enough. In mid-nineteenth-century America, the Protestant majority understood its faith to be the foundation of democracy. In their view, there was a natural affinity between its values and democratic culture. So bringing Christian values into public life was hardly undemocratic.
standing of corporate religious groups amid the current discourse, would lead to a chimera. It
would be like trying to trying to incorporate a little relativity into Newtonian mechanics (p. 124).
Any more satisfactory approach would have to await the emergence of a new common sense, a
new paradigm.

Gedicks wrote *The Rhetoric of Church and State* in 1995. To scholars commenting
several years later it seemed clear that the wall separation was under extensive repair. Some legal
scholars have even argued that in retrospect the high point of separationism came in 1971 with
*Lemon v. Kurtzman*.50 In 1984 Neuhaus had argued that recent trends were
challenging the common sense about religion in public life.51 In 1994 Casanova's *Public
Religions in the Modern World* placed these developments in sociological perspective: There does
not seem to be any necessary correlation between modernity and the privatization of religion.52 In
this debate Peter Berger, whose theoretical work had so often been cited to confirm the
supposition that religion was inevitably consigned to private life in the modern world, found it
necessary to announce that the contemporary world "is as furiously religious as it ever was, and in
some places more so than ever" (Berger 1999:3). That statement appeared in the introduction to
an anthropology which he edited with the telling title *The Desecularization of the World*. And on
the level of individual opinion, the Brookings Institution published a study arguing that in the last
three decades of the twentieth century the United States has witnessed a "diminishing divide
between religion and politics" (Kohut 2000:9). According to a number of measures, from public

50 In that case, the Supreme Court struck down Pennsylvania's law aiding private education not because the
law endorsed religion in any explicit sense, but because it had the practical effect of advancing religion.
51 At the outset, Neuhaus (1984) announces: "If the myths of secularism are collapsing, and if there is a
resurgence of publicly potent religion, we need to look for quite unprecedented ways of relating politics
and religion. Our question can certainly not be the old one of whether religion and politics should be mixed.
They inescapably do mix, like it or not. The question is whether we can devise forms for that interaction
which can revive rather than destroy the liberal democracy that is required by a society that would be
pluralistic and free."
52 In his analysis, however, he did note that different religious groups have different "styles of
participation" in public life, and echoing Neuhaus he affirmed that some played a more constructive role in
democratic culture than others.
opinion favoring religious figures commenting on public affairs to religiously affiliated political activism, the pendulum seems to be swinging in the direction of more religion in public life (pp. 96–121). More recent studies echo these findings (Green, Rozell, and Wilcox 2006).

The standing common sense that would relegate religion to private life has been criticized on a number of levels, within the legal profession, by public intellectuals, by academics, by sociologists, in the population at large, and not least by religious leaders themselves. But we seem to be at an impasse. Many of these critics cite liberalism or secular individualism as the culprit, and they have provided insightful critiques of the shortcomings of each. In particular, they argue that neither provides a vision of the good for human existence, and while competition among different such visions can rack a society, the expulsion of all such visions from our common life is hardly a solution. Since it is precisely in community that such visions are fostered, then the good society, while not resorting to coercion, must provide some authentic opportunity for such communities to flourish. Echoing Gedicks, others have also suggested that we need a new paradigm, a completely new common sense. However, most of these analyses misunderstand what has led to this impasse. Neither secular individualism nor liberalism drove religion from the public square. Religion did. The trend of court decisions and institutional reforms which brought about this result extend back to the period just after World War II, the very time when religious institutions and religious participation to record heights in America expanded. There was no militant, secular, anti-religious camp to foist liberalism upon the public unawares. When liberalism as a comprehensive social philosophy stepped in in the wake of the 1960s, it was able to do so because public culture had already been eviscerated.

At this juncture, it may not be necessary that a completely new paradigm arise. Liberalism, for all its shortcomings, has many strengths, strengths upon which communities of character can build and to which they can contribute. However, for that ideal to be realized, for a new regime governing the place of religion in society to emerge, two things would probably have
to take place. First, liberalism's proponents would have to scale back its pretensions, being content to allow it to serve as a mediating structure, rather than as a self-evident philosophy of live or an imperious paradigm which sees itself in competition with genuine, substantive visions of the good. Second, one assumption about religion would have to be shown to be false, the assumption that each faith is inevitably a closed system, and therefore intolerant, unable to engage in public discussion, and locked in competition with other such closed systems. That very supposition was the original premise for excluding religion from public life. And the history which gave rise to it is very real. It remains the source of some inveterate prejudices to this day. The question then is whether religious groups have been able to overcome that history.

The next chapter examines what internally grounded pluralism really entails as a form of religious culture. Then the the two chapters which follow review the changing place of religion in American public life. There it becomes apparent that the relations between religious groups in American history have played a significant role in promoting regimes for accommodating religion in public life, and also for denuding public life of religion. And internally grounded pluralism is a development that not only responds to the crucial question about the role of religion in public life. It also enters as a new factor in the relations between religious groups, one which is already transforming those relations.
Chapter III. Religious Pluralism: Unpacking a Complex Notion

A. Prefatory Remarks

Religion can potentially make a very positive contribution to civic life in liberal democratic societies. In particular, it can link issues to the concerns and frames of reference of ordinary citizens. However, in light of the fact that more than one religious group may exist in a given society, the question emerges of how to negotiate a plurality of religious frames of reference, as well as the possibility of a plurality of substantive notions of the good that that might entail.

The preceding chapter reviewed what a range of social theorists, political philosophers, legal scholars, and public intellectuals have had to say about religious diversity and its implications for religion in public life. To this point, discussions concerning the structural arrangements appropriate for the just society have begun with the premise of diversity as an objective feature of the social order. In other words, for the most part we have been looking at religious groups from the outside and considering the appropriate way to accommodate them. The present regime for doing so in the United States prioritizes personal autonomy and leads to the relative privatization of religion. From a number of perspectives it has been found wanting. I have argued that one central warrant for the shape the present regime has taken, that is, for the extension of liberal principles from serving as a mediating mechanism to taking up a role as a broader philosophy of social life, is the supposition that religion is inherently closed. As a result, the notions of the good proposed by various faith communities necessarily compete with one another to the detriment of any constructive social existence. Containing that competition as far as possible then becomes an overriding consideration.

The possibility of internally grounded pluralism then emerges as a phenomenon of central importance because it serves as counterevidence to the earlier history of religious competition
that seemed to make the exclusion of religion from public life, if not desirable, at least necessary. Of course, how persuasive that counterevidence is remains an empirical matter. An aberration here or there does not really provide sufficient warrant for rethinking the entire regime governing religion in society. Nonetheless, the issue it raises points us from what can become circular discussions about religion "from the outside" toward looking at religious culture itself and the difference it makes for the relations between religious groups in society. That is vital, especially if any regime governing the place of religion in society really does depend on the nature of such relations. In a democracy it stands to reason that that is the case, since no imperial or monarchical power exists which can impose such arrangements from above. Even when the Supreme Court is cited as a protector of minority groups or an autocrat imposing this or that principle upon society, in the end the Supreme Court remains an institution within democracy. The Constitution it enforces and the common sense within which it operates have been shaped by the dynamics among religious and other groups in American society.

Ultimately, so long as religion remains a central institution of American society, the structural arrangements governing the place of religion in society will depend on the relations between its faith communities. Again, that last is admittedly a rather vague principle, one that can quickly be reduced to tautology. Insofar as it usefully serves as a heuristic device, it points to these questions: What is happening in those relations? And what difference does internally grounded pluralism make?

The section which follows is a review of what contemporary sociology has to say about pluralism. Unfortunately, recent shifts in the focus of American sociology have meant that many such macro-level questions—questions concerned with matters such as the integration of the social order—have gone relatively unattended. Much contemporary sociological work on "pluralism" has in fact been theoretically sparse, at least when it comes to the issues raised here concerning integration and public life. One trend in the American sociology of religion takes its
cue from the very nature of a liberal society. It focuses on the rise of religious individualism; in this school of thought "pluralism" is viewed from perspective of individuals in their spiritual quest. Another recent trend in the sociology of religion has simply been to gain some conceptual grasp of the diversity and change that has seemingly risen dramatically in recent decades. Connected with this perception, a new model for understanding religion in the modern world, dubbed the "New Paradigm," has emphasized the positive implications of this diversity for religious vitality. In this paradigm, discussion of pluralism has been caught up in a veritable celebration of diversity itself.

Subsequent sections then explore the significance of pluralism as one way that institutionally based religious actors themselves constructively engage religious diversity. In order to gain greater insight into pluralism as a cultural form, the notion itself is analyzed. Then recent developments in anthropology, social history, and even comparative theology are reviewed.

B. The Eclipse of Pluralism in Recent Sociological Theory

A number of trends in sociology contributed to a decline in the appreciation of pluralism in a robust sense of the notion. One has been the focus on religious individualism and voluntarism which emerged in the mid-eighties. That trend is reflected in the work of Wade Clark Roof and William McKinney (1987). At that time, they were studying the changing fortunes of mainline Protestantism and the religiosity of the Baby Boomer generation. In "Denominational America and the New Religious Pluralism" (1985) they note that "the nation has become much more pluralistic in its religious life" (p. 26). However, while they refer to Herberg and are well aware of his analysis of pluralism relating three faiths to one American identity, in their usage "more pluralistic" simply means that there are more groups than in Herberg's day. It is not a comment about how they relate to one another or to how the larger society accommodates their participation. Rather, Roof and McKinney simply proceed to catalogue this diversity (also
offering some analysis of the nature and status of these groups). They do not explicitly grapple with the dialectic between this diversity and some larger unity. Certainly the question hovers in the background, but throughout greater pluralism simply means more diversity. From the perspective of their problematique, the question of religious voluntarism, religion was increasingly becoming an affiliation that individuals chose, rather than one in which they remained from birth until death. The question of the relationship between these faiths as corporate actors in their own right or the question of their integration into some larger order is marginal.

Roof later went on to write a well-known analysis of Baby-Boomer spirituality, *Spiritual Marketplace* (1999), a work which further documented the theme of voluntarism in American religion that he had popularized. However, it is another school of thought, one employing a rational choice paradigm, that is more well-known for viewing religious diversity in terms of a market. Proponents of that school, especially Rodney Stark, William Bainbridge, Roger Finke, and Laurence Iannaccone, argue that in religion like in economics, the more distinct providers (or "firms") there are in "the market" the more overall participation increases; that is so because the differences between firms supply a wider range of tastes. (For representative presentations of their hypotheses, see Finke and Iannaccone 1993; Finke and Stark 1988; Finke and Stark 1989; Finke and Stark 1992.; Stark and Bainbridge 1985; Stark and Bainbridge 1987) In their work, as well as in that of those who engage it, "pluralism" typically refers to the simple fact of diversity. For example, Finke and Stark (2000:284) write, "Pluralism refers to the number of firms active in the [religious] economy; the more firms there are with significant market shares, the greater the degree of pluralism." Daniel V. A. Olson (1998; 1999), countered that in fact a proper analysis of the very data that Finke and Stark draw on reveals a negative association between such religious "pluralism" and church membership. And in "Religious Pluralism and Participation" (Voas, Crockett, and Olson 2002), the authors begin: "Does religious pluralism undermine or promote religious involvement? Some secularization theories contend that diversity breeds loss of belief
and lower participation." Here, as throughout the debate, "pluralism" and "diversity" are clearly taken to be synonymous.

Pluralism has this diminished sense because the model these sociologists employ conceives of religion as an object, a product consumers choose to suit their tastes. The choosing behavior (innate preferences) and the relationship between faiths (firms in a market) is given by the model itself. Religions are not worldviews that shape how people conceive reality or make sense of other faiths. Pluralism in any deeper sense than mere diversity is not relevant. But the model of religion implicit both in Roof's new voluntarism and even more so in the work of the rational choice school has deeper implications. These conceptions cohere with the privatization implications of secularization theory. "In a consumer society [religion] becomes just another consumer good, a leisure-time commodity no longer affecting the centers of power or the operation of the system…Religion becomes a matter of choice, but whatever religion is chosen is of no consequence to the operation of the social system." (Wilson 1976:27) In conceiving of religion as an individual preference or a consumer choice, these theorists were primarily concerned with addressing the role of religion in connection with private life. Such conceptions are not useful for making sense of religion as a force in public life. And their dominance may help explain why public religion crept up on the field almost unnoticed.

Another trend in the scholarship on religion in American society took its cue from the marked increase in diversity that arose in the wake of the sixties. Prior to the sixties religion had seemed little more than a prosaic font of moral platitudes, the era that soon dawned introduced bewildering variety. The anti-traditional ethos of the sixties apparently provided opening for Eastern spirituality, often adapted to American-college-student tastes. New waves of immigrants brought with them faiths that seemed new and exotic. And Americans' own religious creativity was also unleashed. Fundamentalist preachers began to wreak havoc with carefully scripted election campaigns; religious views on abortion mobilized vast numbers of Americans; Sikh
temples rose amid the cornfields of Iowa; feminists reworked traditional faith in light of new insights; and Wicca made its improbable appearance. Religion, the one-time quiescent backwater of pious conventionalism, had become positively riotous.

In sociology interest in this diversity then dovetailed with a larger turn from the grand, unifying schemas of Parsonian structural functionalism to the particularities involved in conflict, diversity, and change.¹ In this vein, for example, the focus of one collection of sociological studies, first published in 1990 (and updated in 1996), was to "highlight some emerging patterns [in religion in America], with particular emphasis on change and conflict" (Robbins and Anthony 1996:3). The anthology is entitled *In Gods We Trust: New Patterns of Religious Pluralism in America*. Yet while the many excellent articles in the book paint a picture of diversity and change, none deal with pluralism in the sense of a larger pattern for accommodating diversity. Again, "pluralism" is often used as a mere synonym for diversity.² That is not surprising. The theoretical concern with conflict and change provoked by the new and the exotic preoccupied much of post-sixties religious sociology. Theorists taking up diversity from this angle were not attending to how diversity can be contained within a larger order, but rather how it challenged the same.

On the popular level rapid change on all fronts and the social dislocation that accompanied it led to a concomitant discomfort with the new and the diverse. That was reflected, for example, in the exaggerated anxiety over "cults" that characterized the seventies and eighties.³ However, as professional fascination with diversity and change grew routinized, and as popular anxiety over new religious movements and the religion of new immigrants subsided, sociologists settled into the more mundane task of tracking and cataloguing this diversity. Scholarship in this vein followed two disciplinary approaches. Religious historians pursued social history, while

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¹ For an overview of this larger transition see Alexander (1987:111-126).
² For example, the editors simply oppose the growth of "moral pluralism" to "moral consensus" (p. 31). Pluralism is not understood as the dialectical engagement of diversity with some larger consensus.
³ At the time sociologists were able to provide a more objective assessment of new religious movements, their actual size, and their dynamics (for example Bromley and Shupe 1981).
One social history representative of the former approach is Charles Lippy's *Pluralism Comes of Age* (2000). Lippy wrote to place the current diversity into historical context. The pattern that seems to have asserted itself so conspicuously in the present day was in fact there from the outset: the breakdown of existing churches into various subcultures, sub-movements, and splinter groups, along with the arrival of new religious groups on the American scene. Lippy suggests that there is something intrinsic to American culture and circumstances that prompt and enable this process. In a free society immigrants can import their traditions with impunity and long-term residents can exercise initiative in creating new ones. Lippy's narrative then recounts what seems an almost chaotic expansion of diversity. This suggests that moves to synthesize this diversity under the rubric of a unified culture or system of meaning often only partially capture the social reality they seek to describe. That may explain why Lippy himself is never able to articulate what that pluralism is, despite his announcement that it is more than diversity, that it is an experiment in religious culture. Throughout the way Lippy routinely uses the term boils down either to increased diversity or to internal diversification. The balance decidedly tips from the one to the many. That may explain why at the outset Lippy admits, "Some might argue that what I present is really simply a portrait of increasing diversity[.]" (Lippy 2000:ix)

Over time the cumulative weight of these trends in scholarship emphasizing religious diversity led to a significant shift in how diversity was viewed in the sociology of religion. Whereas in the past, under Durkheimian assumptions, diversity was seen as bad for both religion and society, increasingly it was being understood in terms of creativity and vitality. In the early nineties one sociologist, Steve Warner, published an essay in which he essentially canonized this trend. In that essay Warner (1993) proposed a "New Paradigm" for thinking about religion. According to the "old paradigm" (one whose lineaments have been traced above in slightly different terms) religion was either a property of the whole society or, failing that, a "socially
insignificant" preference of private individuals. (pp. 1046-47) Such a model, which had its roots in Europe, was not helpful for making sense of religion in American. "The analytic key to the new paradigm is the disestablishment of the churches and the rise of an open market for religion" (p. 1050). Warner was not so much concerned with the question of the participation of religion in civil society, but simply with the question of religious vitality. And while the New Paradigm he outlined acknowledged the economic metaphors of religious market, evangelical entrepreneurship, and consumer preference that were in vogue, Warner himself was not overly dogmatic about how all this worked. However, he did argue that disestablishment relocated the dynamism away from a society-wide institutional base to an arena of groups operating within civil society, and within this arena these groups were forced to compete: sink or swim. It also meant groups that would serve the needs of those alienated by existing churches were free to organize, in the process often empowering those who were otherwise disenfranchised.⁴ In his treatment, diversity is a boon to religion, and pluralism refers to the general aura of legitimacy that such diversity enjoys in American society.

By the mid-nineties a shift in sociological thinking about religious diversity had settled in. This has paralleled changing trends in popular thought. In the fifties The Christian Century had published an editorial labeling pluralism a "menace" that threatened the country with Balkanization. In the seventies rapid social change and increasing diversity were cause for anxiety. But by the nineties, proponents of multiculturalism were advancing an argument about diversity in general that ran counter to such common sense, namely that diversity was not only good for particular communities but also for the larger society. In other words, homogenization was not an ideal, as had been supposed earlier, and diversity was something to be celebrated. Once that is granted, then the question of how diversity and the common good are related takes

⁴ He cites both the role of churches in the Black community and that fact that churches are often the most important centers for legitimating the gay movement in America today. (pp. 1067-68)
on a completely new cast. This new perspective on diversity, this pluralism in the sense of a
general advocacy of diversity, has been gaining a hearing both in American faith communities
and in intellectual and academic circles.

Nonetheless, any deeper theoretical reflection on pluralism has remained relatively spare.
Referring to the historical and ethnographic studies associated with the "New Pluralism" that
appeared in the past decade, David Machacek (2003:45) writes that "we learn little from this
literature about the impact religious diversity has had on the social system or the mechanisms that
make pluralism possible… In brief, the research on the new religious pluralism is unsystematic
and theoretically wanting." Machacek offers a proposal of his own. And in fact a number of
others—including Richard Wentz (1998), William Hutchinson (2003), Diana Eck (2001), and
Barbara McGraw (2005)—have all offered insights about religious pluralism, some before
Machacek wrote, some after. After opening up the notion in the next section, the section which
follows reviews relevant points of their proposals.

C. The Meaning of Pluralism: Some Soundings

In contemporary America "pluralism" is now such a ubiquitous terms, and in some
quarters it rallies such ready affirmation, that there seems little need to explicitly define it or
analyze it. However, that imprecision comes at a cost. In contemporary sociological usage, this
has lead to a failure to maintain a clear distinction between diversity and pluralism. The point is
not merely semantic; it leads to a conflation of the senses of these terms. Does pluralism refer to
diversity? arrangements for accommodating diversity? an attitude about diversity? or a theory
about diversity? Is it an objective fact or a subjective appreciation of that fact? Is it there some
normative dimension to that appreciation? On the part of who? Social actors, or social theorists,
or both? Here ambiguity can actually serve as a cover for importing biases.

In the social sciences one sometimes resorts to a dictionary to excavate the sense of a
term used by social actors. Rarely is such an exercise helpful when it comes to a term employed by social scientists themselves; then the pertinent technical considerations escape the ordinary dictionary. But the term "pluralism" is used by both ordinary citizens and social scientists. And a good dictionary will prove helpful in illuminating aspects of term glossed over by all parties.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* (2008) lists a number of fields in which "pluralism" is used. It defines pluralism in the philosophical sense as: "The theory that the world is made up of more than one kind of substance or thing; (more generally) any theory or system of thought which recognizes more than one irreducible basic principle." On the one hand, there is an irreducible diversity; thus the OED opposes pluralism to monism, a philosophical approach that attributes everything to a single underlying cause or essence. On the other, this circumstance is noteworthy insofar as this diversity is nonetheless caught up in some larger whole. While the term "pluralism" immediately directs our attention to diversity, implicit in the notion is the understanding that this diversity is held to be characteristic of some one thing, be it a political system, a theory of the cosmos, or some school of thought. The term entails that this diversity pertain to some encompassing unity. In other words, properly understood the notion of pluralism involves a necessary dialectical relationship between unity and diversity, between the one and the many. Moreover, this irreducible diversity then provides entrée for thinking about how some system in question may be more a dynamic set of relations than a merely static whole; indeed, depending upon the field in question those relations are often cited as "tensions" in the system.

Sociologists in particular are apt to focus on the dynamic tensions of a plural social system. When analyzing the unity-in-diversity that pluralism signals, some discussions have been more concerned with the diversity, others with the unity. In many contemporary sociological discussions of forms of "pluralism," diversity has been so emphasized that what unifies the system has gone unattended. The dialectical aspect of a unity-in-diversity is muted or missing altogether. On the other hand, some cultural anthropologists and religious historians have tended
to search out larger principles or trends in order to bring all this diversity into a meaningful and coherent story. They highlight the underlying unities which integrate diversity into a larger order, in the process running the opposite risk of simplification.

When narrowing consideration to society and culture, the OED defines pluralism as: "The presence or tolerance of a diversity of ethnic or cultural groups within a society or state; (the advocacy of) toleration or acceptance of the coexistence of differing views, values, cultures, etc." This definition calls attention to a further ambivalence in the usage of the term: an oscillation between the "mere" presence of diversity, its toleration, or even the advocacy of this diversity. The distinction between these senses is unique to the social sciences. When one advances a pluralist theory in the cosmology or metaphysics, one need not factor in the question of subjective states. We do not think of such systems as striking a posture or making a decision about how they are to be constituted. However, when the term is used in connection with social groups it does arise because the people who are members of those groups can take up an attitude with regard to the diversity they actually encounter or might choose to foster. So while diversity, its toleration, and its advocacy are all in fact established usages of the term "pluralism," as noted in the previous chapter, in this study I eschew the first of these so as to maintain the distinction between "pluralism" and "diversity." As for the latter two sense, it is one thing for social actors to make institutional room for diversity—to tolerate diversity grudgingly; it is quite another to profess that diversity is a good thing in itself. Determining whether social actors or social observers are advocating something about diversity when they employ the term "pluralism" often requires taking a closer read; and even then the ambiguity may remain.

An example from contemporary political life will be of help in drawing some further distinctions. Robert Bellah (1970) argues that there are certain high-profile events in American public life that capture the ethos of the nation and re-present it in ceremonial form. Presidential inaugurations are certainly representative in this, as well as other, senses. With that in mind, I cite
an article in the New York Times, America's "newspaper of record," which describes the 2005 inauguration of President George W. Bush. That article, entitled "References to Pluralism Try to Establish an Umbrella for a Spectrum of Faiths" (Goodstein 2005) illustrates several approaches to accommodating religious diversity in contemporary America.

Laurie Goodstein, Times religion writer and author of the article, notes that President Bush "made a reference to religious pluralism when he said the nation was sustained 'by the truths of Sinai, the Sermon on the Mount, the words of the Koran and the varied faiths of our people.'" The sense in which Goodstein is using the term pluralism is not completely transparent. The President was doing more than pointing out that diverse faiths exist within America society. They do more than exist; they sustain the nation. They contribute to the larger community, and insofar as they do the implication is that they deservedly have a place of honor. At the same time, the President was not advocating religious diversity, despite the obviously appreciative cast of his remarks. Pluralism here seems to refer to an appreciation of the relationship between the one national community and the many faiths that participate in America's national life.

It should also be noted that the President was speaking as a civic leader, not as a religious leader. He was not making a religious evaluation of any of these "faiths of our people." Rather he was presiding at a civic event, and so referred to the contribution of these faiths to the larger community and the quality of its civic life. He articulated a rhetorical structure and norm for including diverse faiths in the life of the nation. This was a brief an instantiation of structural pluralism. At the same time, it is worth noting that he was not simply commenting on some adjunct function that these faiths serve. The President did not reduce these faiths to some merely civic function, including them with the PTA and the chamber of commerce. They sustain the nation precisely by being the faiths they are.

Goodstein also notes the prayers offered at the inauguration, citing these as further references to pluralism. These prayers are of interest because they instantiate two different ways
that clergy themselves might approach the religious diversity of the larger national community. One clergyman, Episcopalian Father Luis Leon, presumably representing a more liberal Protestant perspective—he was identified as pastor of a church that favors blessing gay unions—stated that he sought to "offer a broad prayer as inclusive as I can make it." Meanwhile the Rev. Kirbyjon Caldwell, pastor of Windsor Village, a large United Methodist congregation in Houston, closed his blessing saying, "Respecting persons of all faiths, I humbly submit this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, amen." Thus one minister took it upon himself to offer a sort of consensus statement prayer. The other prayed in accordance with the norms of his own tradition, while at the same time acknowledging other faiths. Each minister enacted a form of internally grounded pluralism, and each took a different approach to doing so.

This single event revealed a number of different dimensions of pluralism. Not only does it entail making room for diversity within some larger unity. How that is done differs according to the social location from which it is articulated. And even then, different social actors can take different approaches. The "common sense" of pluralism is in fact complex.

**D. Retrieving Religious Pluralism in an Age of Diversity**

While much sociological reflection on pluralism in the post-Parsonian post-sixties has highlighted diversity and diversification—thus tending to engage the notion on a one-sided basis—more recent writing in the field has moved in the other direction. In this literature, themes of engagement between particular religious groups, and the struggle of groups to find their place in the larger culture as well, have received greater attention. And reflections on religious pluralism in America in social history and anthropology have also attempted to address different aspects of the quasi-philosophical issues that pertain to pluralism's unity-in-diversity. In doing so they provide examples and ideas that engage the larger debates taking place in society. Thinking with some of the theorists who have produced this work will help to raise key issues connected
with the implications that pluralism has for religion in public life.

Richard Wentz, founder of Religious Studies at Arizona State University, wrote a brief but thoughtful volume, *The Culture of Religious Pluralism* (1998), a work that has since been frequently cited by others treating that theme. He draws on the insights of cultural anthropology, sociology, theology, and literature in developing his approach to religious pluralism as a cultural form. At the center of his approach is his understanding of religion as that part of culture concerned with the ultimate order and meaning of existence.\(^5\) And insofar as making sense of diversity involves attempting to order differences within some larger construct—some meaningful arrangement—when that diversity involves fundamental issues and categories, making sense of it necessarily takes on "religious" overtones. "Pluralism denotes the acceptance of diversity; and this acceptance, we have observed, always works within some perception of ultimate order and meaning not confined to traditional religions." (p. 2) Wentz unpacks the full implications of this proposal in his final chapters.

As Wentz proceeds, he offers a range of insights into what really is at stake when religious groups encounter one other. When one engages the other, in the process one's categories are challenged, and one's own identity is problematized. Confronting the other raises the question of another possible self. The point then is that taking in culturally significant diversity is never a process purely external to the people involved; it implies the possibility of self-transformation, as well. Thus, for example, the import of denominationalism for Christians is not just that it is a statement about other Christian groups "out there," but that groups who take up this language can no longer think of themselves as "the one true church." (One might add, the integrity of one's conceptual universe is at stake precisely because, as Wentz's examples make clear, religions are not self-contained; rather, for various reasons, it is people who try to contain them.)

\(^5\) This formulation reflects the analyses of Clifford Geertz and Peter Berger, as Wentz himself makes clear.
Just as denominationalism established a "larger" meaningful framework in an earlier day, Wentz sees today's pluralism as the new schema of meaningful order for our day: "The culture of religious pluralism is one in which the diversity of American life is accepted and affirmed as the ultimate order and meaning of existence." Accordingly, he asserts that pluralism is a religious form in its own right. It rests on a bedrock religious affirmation that diversity of itself is good. (pp. 110-11) To further ground this claim, Wentz argues that it resonates with H. Richard Niebuhr's (1960) insights concerning the nature of monotheism, Harvey Cox's (1965) proclamation of the arrival of secularism as the new context for religion, and the "death of God theology" of the early sixties. All these theological movements emphasized that the transcendence of God implies that not historical religious form can ever be taken as absolute. Hence: pluralism. (pp. 86-94) Wentz then proceeds to argue that in the coming religious order people will celebrate their own local constructions of meaning without asserting their universal relevance. He predicts the dawn of what he calls a new religious tribalism. (pp. 112-13)

A recent work by William Hutchinson, professor of the history of religion in America at Harvard University, proposes to tell the story of how the consensus on the degree to which to include "other" religious groups developed in American history. In the Introduction to Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal (2003), Hutchinson is clear that by pluralism he is not citing simply the fact of diversity, but rather pluralism "understood as the acceptance and encouragement of diversity" (p. 1). He distinguishes different modes of pluralism: pluralism as toleration (analogous to the notion of a modus vivendi, but from the point of view of the dominant elite), pluralism as inclusion (where some form of engagement takes place, though on unequal terms), and pluralism as participation (where former outsiders are given a voice in society, and in theory no one voice can presume to moderate the conversation) (p. 6). He argues that in American history pluralism developed in successive stages, as one of these modes gave way to the next. Pluralism as toleration largely characterized the nineteenth century,
when Catholics and Jews arrived on America's shores from abroad without being accorded any real voice at the table. (pp. 30-58) Pluralism as inclusion characterized the regime of the mid-twentieth century, when Catholics and Jews were given roles in the larger society, but as a junior partners. (pp. 111-38) Then, he argues, another pattern began to emerge in the late sixties, one which would allow each group to retain its own integrity and speak in its own voice. (pp. 219-40) Hutchinson observes that this final pattern really is a win-win situation for everyone because in an ethos where many other groups demand recognition of their corporate identity, Protestant groups can do the same. Freed up from being guardians of the culture, they can speak in the distinctive vocabularies of their own religious idioms.

At the same time, Hutchinson admits that not everyone affirms this trend or feels included. He discusses the difficulty that the "counterpluralists"—members of the religious right and those wedded to the notion that America is a Protestant (or at least a Christian) nation—have with pluralism understood as equal participation (pp. 226-30). They protest, with some justification, that in the American context not every view and tradition is equally relevant. Yet the often shrill tenor of the protest suggests that these people are not part of the "us" defining the current consensus.

When one scratches below the conceptual surface of Hutchinson's work, a number of contradictions emerge alongside its helpful insights. For one, Hutchinson tells us at the outset that he does not intend to write Whig history, but then a recurrent "march of progress" motif constantly resurfaces. In part that is a function of his own recurrent tendency to introduce comments judging each period of history by a yardstick not entirely its own. It is clear that the ideal he has in mind is more than what is historically present in any given period. As a result, a teleological normative thrust permeates the story he tells; every development is measured against a standard of participation and fairness that awaits in some promised future. This obscures adequate appreciation of the dynamics of any given period. The story of the evolving regimes for
accommodating religious diversity in America is not just the story of overcoming bigotry and widening the radius of inclusion (though that was certainly part of the story). Insofar as there were other substantive issues on the table apart from mere bigotry, issues which affect the very character of any regime of pluralism established, the image of an expanding circle or a linear march do not adequately capture the story of pluralism in American religious history. In this story, inclusivity sometimes expanded, sometimes shrank, sometimes changed in character as particular religious groups in America worked out their very real differences and built up mutual trust.

Any history of pluralism as an ever-widening circle in fact turns out to be inadequate for one glaring reason. If a large segment of the Protestant evangelical community believes itself to be outside the present consensus, that signals that the larger consensus has undergone a transformation which involves a paradoxical result. Somehow the "founding ideal" of pluralism has bypassed many Bible-believing Protestants, the people who were once at the self-confident center of the majority of America's institutions. Such a decentering means that the history of pluralism in America evidently has entailed more than simply expanding and deepening the circle of inclusion from Protestants to Catholics and Jews and beyond. Indeed, upon further reflection, reconciling the present-day "encouragement of diversity" with the cultural entente of the early days of the Republic, one which deliberately deemphasized religious particularity, would be no mean feat. More has been at work in the story of religion in America than the unfolding of a founding ideal, at least if that is to be understood as the linear progression of a single logic.

In the end Hutchinson himself argues that we have to find some medium between the

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6 Indeed, the irony of our day is that many evangelicals are subject to prejudicial misunderstanding and exclusion. A number of sociological studies (see especially Shibley 1998; Smith 1998) have explored both the culture of contemporary evangelicals and contemporary misperceptions about them.

7 This "widening circle" thinking is embedded in Hutchinson's use of "us" throughout his discussion. In some places it seems to refer those who represent the consensus of society. But that begs the question. Early in American history it was a British and Dutch Protestant elite, later a broadly Protestant evangelical elite. And today, from a pluralist perspective, who does speak for society? More significantly, does the rhetoric of pluralism sometimes obfuscate who is speaking and from what point of view?
extremes of either having pluralism serve as "the only remaining common value for society at large" or returning to one religious tradition (or group of traditions, for that matter) imposing its vision as the basis of American common values and culture. Here he joins a growing chorus. Citing Bellah's (1975) later work on civil religion, he argues that America needs a new "civil religion," in the sense of a renewed moral consensus or "covenant," and religious pluralism must be a part of it. (pp. 233-36) However, as for the form pluralism is to take, he also notes that current thinking on pluralism has moved beyond the demand that all religious groups must respect the religious commitments of other groups. That formulation, as he hints, has been the source of untold exasperation because it does not take seriously that a given group might have serious commitments of its own that may led it to reject particular commitments of other groups. Instead, he proposes, "Pluralism in its contemporary meaning—support for group identity and the integration of competing beliefs—emphatically does not imply lack of 'conviction,' either for the historical dominant American faiths and their adherents or for the society at large." (Hutchison 2003:235)

Finally, echoing what Wentz had to say about no religious symbol or institution being ultimate, Hutchinson argues, that in fact religious pluralism coheres with good theology:

Advocates of pluralism can rely…on the argument that such a stance is mandated—not merely permitted—by any thoroughgoing theism. Those who confer Godlike status on particular institutions or scriptures may well disagree, but the pluralist is on firm ground in pointing out that in the Judaic, Christian, and other traditions "only God is God"; all apart from God is penultimate—less than absolute. Given that theological stance, neither 'we' nor 'others' can claim our institutions embody final truth. (Hutchison 2003:236)

One scholar, Diana Eck, is particularly well-known for highlighting the religious diversity that has overtaken America with the immigration of many non-Christians since the 1960s. She is a professor of comparative religion and director of the Pluralism Project at Harvard. Her *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Became the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (2001) investigates at this new diversity and endeavors to place it in the context of
American history and values.

Eck begins by inviting her readers to survey the religious architecture springing up across the land. In the farm country surrounding Minneapolis rises a Cambodian Buddhist monastery, while in the suburbs of Nashville a Hindu temple brightens the landscape. The verbal images are arresting, and Eck proposes that the cultural and religious implications are equally momentous. The American experiment honoring religious freedom is entering a new phase. There are some who respond that the new faiths that Eck cites are not really that significant numerically. Yet for the brief time that these developments have been in progress, the numbers are impressive. But more than numbers, the presence of these newcomers is in and of itself significant. Established communities must make sense of their presence. As President Bush's inaugural address attests, the legitimacy of this new religious diversity is already gaining acceptance in mainstream rhetoric.

From the outset Eck is aware that these developments make many people profoundly uneasy. Some are concerned that America, an America defined in their terms, is in jeopardy. Wentz would probably agree. Eck acknowledges that many Americans argue that America is a Christian nation (p. 4). Her response is twofold. First, she notes that as a bald description of the matter, such a characterization of America is factually incorrect. Non-Christians have been present in American society from the very beginning. And in three successive chapters on "American Hindus," "American Buddhists," and "American Muslims" (emphasis added) she shows that these new immigrants already are, or are becoming, American. She looks at the history

8 In support of this view, observers note that many Koreans who come to America are already Christian or are invited to join Christian congregations by other Koreans Americans, and the conversation of Chinese immigrants to Christianity is rapid and accelerating. Some studies indicate the one third of American Chinese are Christian (Dart 1997; Hurh and Kim 1990). One ethnographer explains how contemporary circumstances have broken down traditional barriers to Christianity and made evangelical Protestantism, in particular, an attractive faith for Chinese (Yang 1998; Yang 1999).

9 At the time of her writing, Eck (2001:2-3) noted, for example, that the number of the Muslims in the U.S. equaled the number of Jews and exceeded the membership of the Episcopalian Church and Presbyterian Church USA. And while many Chinese, Koreans, Filipinos, and Vietnamese who have immigrated were or have become Christian, the remainder of the five million plus immigrants from Asian who arrived between 1960 and 1990 were not (p. 28).
of their communities, visits their neighborhoods, and listens to their voices. They struggle with what it means to be American, where they fit in, and the place of their faith in this story. This is a process that each community has to undertake given its own resources and history, but it is process well under way.

Second, Eck spends considerable energy casting a further response, one that goes beyond demographics to get at the values question: When people refer to "Christian America" they have in mind not just what faith the majority of its individuals profess, or even the degree to which their corporate communities participate in the larger culture. They also have in mind Christianity as the source of values that makes America America. Eck does not undercut this point by counterpoising it to the Enlightenment or other sources of American values. Instead, she argues that welcoming religious diversity, fostering a pluralist culture which finds a place for non-European faiths, is in keeping with the very form of Christianity that has blossomed on America's shores. To make her case, before looking at the various communities of her study, she examines the philosophical and religious roots of the constitutional guarantees of religious liberty that made this development possible.

In addition to grounding the potential for religious pluralism in America's existing religious traditions, Eck offers a perspective that does acknowledge the interreligious dynamics that it necessarily entails. In other words, not only does the assimilation of faith communities into American society entail their engagement with its larger culture and a reciprocal process of legitimation. How faith communities engage one another is also an important part of the concrete history of pluralism. And so Eck herself stresses that pluralism is not an idea or ideology but such a process of engagement. Unpacking this dimension of pluralism, she writes that "pluralism goes beyond mere tolerance to the active attempt to understand the other, like the step taken by Milwaukee's Christians and Muslims when they signed that covenant pledging themselves to the process of mutual understanding" (Eck 2001:70).
Eck began mapping the arrival of non-European religious groups to America in the early 1990s. Her own encounter with other faiths began even earlier, when as an undergraduate she spent a year abroad at Banaras Hindu University. Her award-winning *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras* (1993) draws on her own experience, Christian theology, and insights from the discipline of comparative religion to address the implications of religious diversity as a specifically religious challenge. These all convince her that the encounter with other faiths can deepen and enhance one's own. In *A New Religious America* Eck is not engaged in a specifically theological project. Nonetheless, she brings in relevant matters of faith and theology as she invites her fellow Americans to survey developments that some might find threatening or alien. Drawing on her own experience, she reassures them that these developments will enrich America, not just "culturally", but also religiously.

At times, Eck seems relentlessly upbeat in her confidence that this new phase in America's long-term experiment in religious diversity is off to a successful start, one that will progress to fruition. Yet there are complications that she occasionally glosses over or underestimates. For example, she constantly writes about how diversity will strengthen America, as new groups "articulate principles like equality and freedom in their own voice and in their own key" (Eck 2001:7). What if freedom and equality are not core values in their traditions? How will they resolve conflicts between those values and other values their traditions contain? The assimilation of Catholics into American society was a long process, and one that continues to unfold. So while Eck may indeed be correct in bringing to our attention that a new phase in America's experiment with religious freedom has begun, what this really entails for American society and for the faith communities that make there home there is a story that remains to be told.

Despite these caveats, Eck calls our attention to a very significant new development in America's religious history, one which has implications on many levels. And her discussion is rich in insights. She views pluralism not merely in terms of a strategy for coping with diversity, a
philosophical resolution to complex issues proposed from outside. Rather, she argues that if it is to succeed, it can and must be understood as fulfilling the promise and potential of some of America's existing religious and civic commitments. She also looks at the implications that participating in a pluralist society holds out not just for society but for the faith communities undertaking such a challenge. And she sees a deeper engagement between and among these communities as an essential part of the project of pluralism.

Not all observers are overly sanguine about the level of engagement actually taking place between established Jewish and Christian communities in America and the newcomers. For example, subsequent study published by the Brookings Institution reveals that the presence of non-Christians in the United States continues to raise serious questions for the majority of Americans uncomfortable. (Easterbrook 2002) In America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity (2005), Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow notes the lagging pace at which religious groups themselves have advanced a culture of pluralism in American society. At the same time, he does not trivialize the challenge this represents. On the one hand, the respect for religious freedom is deeply embedded in American political and cultural traditions, and for that matter, the very self-understanding of Americans themselves. On the other, the new diversity presents a challenge to the understanding that many Americans hold that America is in some sense a Christian nation. (pp. 34-35) Thus the challenge that religious diversity presents to Americans is a profound and complex one.10 In the end, Wuthnow warns that the failure to meet the challenge of religious diversity in America today could only lead to an impoverished civic culture and the increasing relegation of serious religious reflection to private life. (pp. 286-314)

His study combines both survey data, which gets at the opinions of individuals, and site visits, where he conducted interviews and gauged institutional culture. The surveys revealed that

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10 Here Wuthnow's discussion lacks some of the depth of Eck's. He seems to lay out freedom and Christianity as two separate trends of thought, but that misses half the paradox. He fails to bring out clearly how the two are related, how Christianity grounds and coheres with American respect for religious freedom.
23% of Americans were "Christian inclusivists" (people who are committed to Christianity but open to the notion that there is religious truth in other traditions), while 34% he classed as "Christian exclusivists". That is, they disagreed with the statement, "All major religions, such as Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, are equally good ways of knowing about God."\(^\text{11}\) Among the exclusivists there was greater resistance to religious diversity in American society, sometimes even outright hostility to the prospect of its increase. (Wuthnow 2005:190-94) The interviews Wuthnow relied on took place at sites where interreligious encounters were likely to take place—for example, churches in neighborhoods with worship centers of non-Christian faiths. There he uncovered only slight evidence of in-depth engagement and many examples of polite avoidance. (pp. 230-58)

Wuthnow's more systematic empirical research balances the anecdotal and qualitative reports of people like Eck. Moreover, his concern about engagement and its implications for civic life are indeed cogent. At the same time, given the magnitude of the challenge that diversity represents, a challenge that Wentz in particular unfolds with apt perception, the real openness the majority of Christian Americans demonstrate and the progress they have made toward a more inclusive orientation in society should not be underestimated. Wuthnow himself acknowledges that in the general population, in addition to the inclusivists and exclusivists, there is also a significant block which he classes as a third type, the "spiritual shoppers", people who have their own preference for a religious tradition, but who are quite open to the religious truth of other

\(^{11}\) As the reader may note, this example also shows why survey data is often clumsy. It is not clear that disagreeing with the given statement really entails that one is "exclusivist" in a strict sense. One can believe that there is truth in other religions without subscribing to the notion that they are all equally good ways of knowing about God. And of course, when it comes to Buddhism, it is undoubtedly the case that Buddhists themselves would hesitate to describe their tradition in terms of knowing about God. Indeed, many devout Christians would also protest that Christianity is not a way of knowing about God, but rather a way of coming to know God, of entering into a relationship with God. Since the issues at stake when it comes to pluralism are quite sophisticated, the nuances do matter. Wuthnow himself is quite aware of this. He simply used the responses to two relatively simplistic questions to create an initial set of categories. Then he worked with a the fuller range of questions to provide a more nuanced view of the respondents he placed in each of these categories.
traditions. And they make up 31% of the respondents to his survey. So while Wuthnow encountered resistance to religious diversity, Americans’ overall willingness to accept such diversity is in fact quite impressive. It certainly represents an advance over the anxiety-prone period following upon the sixties, as well as a marked shift from standing American attitudes that preceded that decade.

One attempt to chart what might be the consensual ground for negotiating religious pluralism in American society has been advanced by legal scholar Barbara McGraw. In *Rediscovering America's Sacred Ground: Public Religion And Pursuit of the Good in a Pluralistic America* (2003) she returned to the philosophical and theological roots of the theory of liberal government in the thought of John Locke. Locke grounded his theory of government in natural law, a theologically informed understanding of how the natural and human world works in its own terms. He proposed that government be limited to safeguarding the essential rights of citizens relating to life, liberty, and property, while religious matters be left to the individual conscience. In turn, he argued that any influence that God would have on society would be mediated through individual consciences. Based on this assumption, McGraw proposes a two-tiered normative account of public life. On the one hand there is, or should be, a Conscientious Public Forum, where all variety of ideas and discourse may be introduced, both religious and non-religious, insofar as they are relevant for and ordered to the good of democratic society. In addition, there is the Civic Public Forum, which operates at the level of law. At that level no one vision of the good, religious or secular, may be favored or disadvantaged. She criticizes both the religious right and secular humanism for at times attempting to establish their views as legally normative. A subsequent collection of essays edited by McGraw, *Taking Religious Pluralism Seriously* (2005), a series of authors engaging such notions from the perspective of a number of American faith communities.

A number of sociologists have also begun to engage questions of religious diversity and
pluralism at the level of the broader issues raised concerning religion in public life in a pluralistic society. David Machacek (2003) has endeavored to think beyond the alternatives offered by classical sociology: one religion as public culture versus many religions as privatized faith. Yet he concedes that in fact much of classical theory does capture how traditional religion functions in society, and (with Casanova) he concurs that in the modern era structural differentiation has meant that the various institutional spheres no longer require a religious system (presumably in the traditional sense) in order to operate. (p. 153) However, he argues that society does operate on the basis of some moral consensus, which he labels its "civil religion." It is not religion in precisely the sense advanced in Bellah's (1967) original discussion of the concept (symbolic forms used to place national life in a transcendent frame), but neither is it purely law and pragmatism. Rather, it exists a "cultural system" or "operative religion" behind specific laws and institutions, one which grounds them as a "higher law." (Machacek 2003:156) In a contribution to Taking Religious Pluralism Seriously, Machacek (2005) further develops this notion to argue that since the 1940s this civil religion has been grounded in a "recovery" of the Bill of Rights which the courts undertook to address contemporary debates over civil liberties and civil rights.12

A collection of papers—published as the July 2007 edition of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science under the title of "Religious Pluralism and Civil Society"—includes a range of sociological approaches to religious diversity, pluralism, and public life. Some hew closer to the empirical data than Machacek, illuminating different aspects of the controversy, while others grapple with the larger themes raised in public debate. Some, such as the analysis of an experiment in Christian-Jewish dialogue (Landres and Bolger 2007) or an inquiry into American Islam (Moore 2007), examine the experience of particular groups and their participation in American pluralism. Others take up such questions as the language and logic of the public sphere (Williams 2007), pluralism and the Constitution (Jelen 2007), and pluralism

12 Thus he concurs with Gedicks in dating an emerging discourse centered on individual rights to the 1940s.
as a form of culture (Wade Clark Roof 2007). But while there are differences in approach, overall this anthropology demonstrates the degree to which a deeper engagement religious pluralism is emerging in the social sciences. Wade Clark Roof (2007:247) still holds *pace* Casanova (1994) that the dominant trend of religion in America is toward voluntarism and privatization. Yet overall this volume reflects a larger shift in sociology toward considering religion not simply as a private preference, but as a public and corporate commitment. And that then raises myriad questions concerning the relationship between the local community and the larger society, various visions of the common good, and the vitality of public life.

All these authors raise a number of important issues. Some include assessments, predictions, or proposals that invite critical reflection. One that constantly recurs concerns whether and how "pluralism" might serve as part of a larger order for negotiating religious diversity in public life.

With that in mind, Wentz has argued that a self-standing ethos or culture of pluralism is emerging which can serve as an ultimate schema for order, a sort of religion of religions wherein "the diversity of American life is accepted and affirmed as the ultimate order and meaning of existence" (Wentz 1998:110). Such a "pluralism" would constitute a freestanding, self-legitimating form, an overarching philosophy, one which in turn would legitimate a subordinate religious tribalism, where each community would retreat to its own enclave to dream of the good life, without asserting the universal relevance of that dream.

Such a vision is not at all likely. In the first place, to dream a religious dream is to dream something universally valid. So in the ancient world, while the Jews understood that their God had made a particular covenant with them, they still understood that that God was the God of all humanity, that God's justice was universal, and that the laws of the Roman Empire did not trump the laws of God or God's covenant with Israel. To put it another way: To place a religion in some larger frame that claims transcendent status is to make it something less than a religion. That is
one clear implication of the definition of religious given at the outset. A religious frame is ultimate; it admits no further contextualization.

If that is so, then pluralism can never be what Wentz proposes. At best it is the intuition that human beings are best left to devise their own religious vision. Pluralism as an intuition knows that imposing any religious vision, no matter how lofty an ideal, is always an exercise in alienation. So pluralism backs off to let people articulate what their own lives are to be about. Pluralism recognizes that this takes place in communities more local than the national one. However, there are limits to this intuition. In particular, since pluralism affirms in a preliminary way that this process should be relatively autonomous, it cannot simultaneously affirm that particular outcomes will cohere in any constructive way with each other or the standing consensus of society. In other words, if the process is truly autonomous—if the other is truly other—then the outcome is truly open. Wentz's tribalism would only be possible on one of two conditions. Either every tribe coincidentally dreamed a dream that accorded with the dreams of others and the standing consensus of society, or no tribe dreamed anything of any real social consequence. Tocqueville had already tried to interpretively apply this schema to his America. It stumbled over the fact that people in their separate tribal religions also have to work out a common life together. People in real tribes do not have such a larger common life. The raw diversity Wentz proposes would be antithetical to any functional social order. It would be the "menace" cited by the editors of The Christian Century back in 1951. So religious pluralism cannot be a religion affirming of religious diversity (an oxymoron), nor can presume the convenient fiction that somehow all religious communities could just decide to confine their religious lives to some meta-realm, "a world apart."

McGraw attempts to ground pluralism in something more substantive than a purely formal concept. Her starting point holds greater promise. She argues that her proposal bypasses the current stalemate between seculars and religious by returning to the notions that are
foundational to American democratic culture. In particular she does so by arguing that the question of separation of church and state is grounded in a theological view. Hence the title of her proposal, "Rediscovering America's Sacred Ground." It supports the place of religion in public discussions. At the same time, it may run the danger of relegating the role of religion to mere rhetoric. The notion that God operates solely via the individual conscience is a classic formula for the privatization of religion. In advancing such a vision, McGraw bypasses any appreciation not only of what Tocqueville and recent communitarians have been saying about how any vision of the good life is developed within community. In this return to classic individualism McGraw also misses the thrust of contemporary pluralism: Minority groups are seeking a legitimate place in American society for their corporate traditions and identity.

Moreover, while McGraw's proposal may cohere with some of Locke's views, which did indeed influence the founders of American democracy, she explicitly omits Locke's own presupposition that participation in public life be limited to believers (since non-believers cannot be trusted as having a conscience open to the work of God's Spirit). That requirement was integral to his own proposal, so omitting it mitigates some of its "sacred" integrity. Nor does McGraw's notion of how God works necessarily cohere with the actual theologies of most religious groups in America. For example, most Christian and Jewish theology understand God to be at work in the religious community, in history, in the social order, and in the natural order. All the world is God's. In that light, it is difficult to see how McGraw's proposal can serve as a basis of consensus. Nor does her proposal cohere with the views of America's founders. They engineered a practical compromise among a number of competing religious and secular views of the good for society. The Constitution is not simply Lockean theology codified. Thus McGraw makes the case for the secular-cum-theological ground of a reasonable entente for public life. It is one that allows for fuller public discussions, yet one that does not establish any single vision of the good. However, McGraw's reliance on Lockean premises may not support a real role for religion in American
public life, only a role for religious individuals. And the civil religion they would ground may not be as consonant with the range of American traditions as she supposes. Machacek proposes that pluralism is already a part of the "civil religion" of contemporary America, in the sense of an emerging cultural consensus grounded in a normative social vision for society. That vision may not be explicitly transcendent, but it transcends the merely legal. He sees that being incorporated into the order supporting individual liberties and autonomy that has unfolded in America since the 1940s. Gedicks had argued that corporatism could not be grafted into the present order. So if pluralism can become part of the present moral consensus of society—in whatever form it is able to take—either Gedicks is right. Then this pluralism will really mean that there is room for many religions in America so long as they all subscribe to religious individualism and privatization. Or Gedicks is wrong, and pluralism means that different traditions have a place in the life of the nation.

Hutchinson, too, argues for a new civil religion that includes pluralism. But in reflecting upon the content of such a pluralism, he realizes that making room for the convictions of others cannot proceed on the basis of denying one's own convictions. Perhaps that is the point. Pluralism may not be so much a consensus on what to agree about, but an agreement on what to argue about. In other words, pluralism exists when people in communities with genuine autonomy are nonetheless able to engage one another. The there is some larger conversation they all participate in. What pluralism should look like is a conversation of conversations.

Indeed, pluralism—like communitarianism, in many ways a kindred strain of thought—cuts in two directions. It points us to look at the genuine depth of any process that would give rise to a vision of the good. That is a conversation which takes place in a particular community over time. But that cannot reduce the national community to a merely formal shell in which these conversations take place side by side. The national community is also a community. What this may mean is that pluralism is at best an intuition and the basis of a practical set of arrangements.
allowing people to construct what their own lives are about. Beyond that, it is purely formal; it has little to say about what the good life consists in. Nor can it adjudicate among such visions. People have to do that themselves.

In that respect, pluralism may be like liberalism (in its more modest guises), but at the level of the local community, rather than of the individual. Both liberalism and pluralism affirm that a vision of the good life should be worked out apart from government coercion. Both uphold autonomy, but at different levels of social life. Neither contains within it a substantive vision of the good. Neither is a full philosophy of society. So while philosophical and theological grounds are often offered in support of liberal or pluralist principles, perhaps these are best thought of as residing in the local communities that participate in a pluralist, liberal society, not in some autonomous, self-grounding civil religion. That is why both liberalism and pluralism cannot accommodate just any personal philosophy or any community tradition. They require local communities that are open to liberal and pluralist principles. Thus to say that liberalism or pluralism are the equivalent of relativism is incorrect. While one way to think about what non-establishment means may be that liberalism and pluralism endeavor to make room to greatest extent possible for local and individual visions of the good, they make demands on people and groups that hope to participate in the life of the larger society. The extent of those demands is not given by either formal system. It has to be worked out in history. And the more these are imposed, the more they risk alienating particular communities within society.

This realization places the religious and civic future of America in the hands of Americans and their various faith communities. Not only is the construction of any larger substantive vision of the good dependant upon an actual historical process. So too will be the emergence of any consensus on some mechanism for negotiating religious diversity in society. For such a mechanism to be successful, it will have to cohere with the intuitions of a substantive majority of the population. It will have to cohere with how individuals and particular faith
communities make sense both of their participation in American life and of religious diversity itself. A pluralist regime will not take root in a population that is overwhelmingly exclusivist.

Thus Eck and Wuthnow note that the engagement between groups in society is absolutely crucial if trust is to be built and some robust conversation about the good—one which transcends particular religious communities—can be sustained. Eck also points us to the necessary process of engagement that has to take place between each group and the standing consensus it encounters in the surrounding culture. In America this means "articulating principles like equality and freedom in their own voice."

By like token, Eck, Hutchinson, Wentz, and McGraw also take pains to argue that pluralism does cohere with Americans' deepest religious and philosophical traditions. Wentz and Hutchinson argue that pluralism accords with the understanding of classical theism that no finite form takes the place of the God who transcends space and time. McGraw argues that pluralism is consonant with the Lockean theological-philosophical synthesis at the core of the American experiment. Eck reminds us that a Christian America means a tolerant and welcoming America.

However, it must be remembered that these are at best suggestions, suggestions which may or may not find ratification in conversations that committed members of a faith community undertake among themselves. That is because a vision of the good is inert unless it is a decision, a decision people undertake together. As much as Wentz and Hutchinson might be right about the true nature of theism, the fact is that pluralism precisely means that each faith community will have to come to its own decision regarding what that means and how that applies to their own faith. When it comes to the Koran, would Muslims adopt Hutchinson's suggestion that no finite form is ultimately significant? Would Christians be willing to affirm that of Jesus of Nazareth? How particular faith communities work through their religious intuitions with the insights grounding pluralism is a process whose outcome will depend on the substantive matters at hand.

In the end, pluralism would not have been possible were it not for the trends in theology
taking place within America's faith communities. Pluralism has to be internally grounded if it is to have any future. For that reason, both Hutchinson (2003:222-24) and Wuthnow (2005:19-29) look at theological developments in American faith communities, especially American Protestantism. The next section offers a brief preliminary look at what is entailed in articulating a theology of pluralism. Chapter three reviews moments in the history of the changing religious regimes in American history in light of the evolving engagement between Catholics and Protestants. Chapters four and five then look at the history of Catholic participation in American public life and how this corresponds to the progressive development of internally grounded pluralism in American Catholicism.

E. Pluralism in Theology: How Religious Groups Make Sense of Diversity

In this section the focus shifts to faith communities themselves and to gaining some basic conceptual grasp of what pluralism and dialogue look like from their perspective. Internally grounded pluralism must first be distinguished from mere toleration, which does not acknowledge that other traditions have specifically religious value. Toleration is granted on other grounds. Internally grounded pluralism must also be distinguished from strategic cooperation. One can imagine all kinds of alliances forming among religious groups—for example to oppose the death penalty or religious persecution—without their having regard for one another's faiths. Internally grounded pluralism bespeaks a willingness to take seriously the religious value of other traditions.

Moreover, internally grounded pluralism is an orientation to other traditions, not just to individuals. In other words, it is not simply the affirmation that God loves Christians or Hindus or Buddhists irrespective of their faith. Nor is it the affirmation that all people can appreciate truth and goodness because of some inner light or rationality or spark. It is an affirmation at least of the possibility that other traditions, insofar as they are living conversations, have a value in the religious lives they foster and the religious message they have to convey.
Even granting that other traditions have religious value, there are still a number of orientations one can take. Here I distinguish three: internally grounded pluralism as subordination, internally grounded pluralism as metanarrative, and internally grounded pluralism as dialogue. The latter two are perhaps most important for appreciating the changes taking place among religious groups in contemporary American civil society. The first coheres most closely with the classical sociological model of religion.

Internally grounded pluralism as subordination refers to one faith tradition affirming another, but doing so only in its own terms. The other tradition is mapped using one's own coordinate system. One's own truth is still Truth as such, and the truth of the other is true insofar as it can be rearticulate in one's own terms. The other has no independent voice.

Harold Coward (1985; 2000b), who has written about pluralism in the context of comparative religious studies, offers the an account of Hindu scholar named Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan that can serve as an example. Radhakrishnan taught Westerners about Hinduism while at Oxford during the 1930s. He argued against religious exclusivism and for the necessity of a wide variety of paths to God. He affirmed Christianity, many of the sayings of Jesus, and even the divinity of Christ. However, he did so in traditional Hindu terms. Christ could indeed be an incarnation of God, but not in the sense that Christians understand this; he might be an avatar, one among many. The truths of Christianity are true insofar as are helpful in leading one on a journey of self-realization; they are true to the extent that they are true in Hindu terms. That is, their "truth" consists primarily in their instrumental value as measured by Hindu standards. "The reason that Hinduism can be so tolerant of other religions is that it assumes religion is a matter of personal realization." (Coward 2000b:118-19) Thus Radhakrishnan was able to dismiss much of the substance of other faiths with a nominalist wave of the arm. They are not true in their own terms.

Subordinationism is not necessarily an absolute position. It is perhaps inevitable that
people begin their understanding of other faiths in terms they already understand and profess, but they can be open to further development. Coward (2000b:131-33) supplies the example of a contemporary Buddhist monk named Buddhadasa that exemplifies this. Buddhadasa pursued a comparative analysis of Christian and Buddhist teachings on a number of central themes. In so doing, he had to grapple with the rejection of theism in Buddhist teaching. Such as stance would seem to mitigate the potential validity of Christianity, Islam, and Judaism in the eyes of Buddhists. However, the theism specifically condemned by the Buddha was that of Makkali Gosala. The grounds for rejecting this version of theism were that it undermined an individual's appreciation of the role of freedom and moral responsibility in determining the course of one's own destiny. Buddhadasa maintains "an open approach to religions, including theistic religions" so long as they are able to sustain non-attachment (overcoming attachment to the ego) and compassionate action. If Christianity can further one's attainment of non-attachment and compassion, then it can indeed serve as a true spiritual path. Here we see both an openness yet also a standard of judgment based upon the internal meaning structure of Buddhism itself. This perspective moves beyond the rote critique of theism from an earlier historical context. it applies traditional Buddhist standards in a way that makes possible a deeper encounter with contemporary religious traditions. Some might object that the Buddhist standard of non-attachment misses the point of Christianity (which affirms God's love of the individual). Nonetheless, while Buddhadasa did not engage in a wholesale reevaluation of central Buddhist doctrines, even the stance he took required revisiting established Buddhist teaching and recontextualizing its "meaning."

These examples show that even when religion operates as a comprehensive worldview it can sometimes find a place for other faiths. It can evince a moderate amount of openness. Commentators on religion have often pointed to the religious openness of the East. This openness is the fruit of deploying a flexible notion of truth, a capacity to see truth as perspectival. Something can be true "for you," and in our interactions I can leave it at that. Such a perspectival
appreciation of truth has allowed for the development of great variety within many Eastern faiths. In the West such a notion of truth was not normative. In Judaism truth was often tied to the demands of justice or national unity, which did not allow for such equivocation. The underlying logic of Greco-Roman philosophy assumed the univocity of truth, and that was imported into Christian thought. Such a notion of truth also underlies Enlightenment Reason and Western science. Both assume something either is or is not the case and that meaning can be pinned down within some comprehensive frame.

Nonetheless, historically Christian thinkers did deploy pluralist frames, at least in the subordinationist mode. They were able to view other traditions as having a value, but in Christian terms. To the extent that they inculcated moral values and opened the heart to God, at least on an implicit level, they were of genuine religious value. But often their truth and their value consisted in the degree to which they manifest an orientation to Christ. For example, they might be viewed as a *praeparatio evangelica*, a stepping stone to or preparation for the ultimate reception of Christianity. Or they might be viewed as containing a promise whose fulfillment is finally manifest in Christ. (Knitter 2002:63-108) Such perspectives then did not obviate the need to witness to the fuller and more adequate truth of Christianity.

At the same time, it should also be noted that the pluralism that results from a multifaceted understanding of truth is not always overwhelmingly satisfactory. Cynthia Keppley Mahmood (1994, as cited in Coward 2000:122-24) argues that traditionally Hinduism's expansive toleration functioned to subvert independent perspectives from arising. It either absorbed traditions that tried to set themselves up in opposition to the Hinduism, in a sense co-opting them as really being about the same purpose as Hinduism. Or else it ostracized those traditions that, by refusing to take their place within the Hindu pantheon, asserted their own right to self-interpretation. In theological circles today subordinationism is not the normative model for interreligious dialogue. Participants in interreligious dialogue uphold the value of allowing people
to speak in their own voice.

One model that has been proposed as the basis for interreligious dialogue is what I label internally grounded pluralism as metanarrative. This is basically the proposal that all faiths are "essentially" forms of some one larger truth. Denominationalism originated as the articulation of an analogous proposal among like-minded Christians. And in the mid-twentieth century some spoke of the Protestant-Catholic-Jew synthesis along these lines. However, the more one expands the circle of inclusivity the more abstract that one truth of which all are a form becomes. In recent decades, the most prominent proposals of this sort, at least in the English speaking world, have been put forward by John Hick (1973; 1989) and Paul Knitter (1987). Hick, who began teaching at Birmingham University in 1967, was concerned that in Britain members of other faiths who had migrated to Britain were treated as second-class religious citizens. This concern was one impetus for his attempts to conceive a pluralism which would accommodate all on some basis of equality. He adopted a Kantian approach, arguing that the God behind all religions was an ultimately unknowable noumenal reality, which he called "the Real". Each religion then necessarily expressed its own experience of "the Real" in its own historically and culturally circumscribed categories. He then proposed a "Copernican Revolution" of religion in which all faiths should view their particular formulations as revolving around this great, transcendent, noumenal sun.

In a sense what Hick did was take the common sense of liberal society, which was originally advanced as a logic for mediating between faiths in civil society, and import it into theology itself. From the perspective of liberal society, all forms of religions are legally equivalent; in some technical sense they all exist side by side on some basis of equality. Because Hick's proposal coheres with the presuppositions of liberal society—in fact, the two are isomorphic—many observers find the model attractive.

However, Hick's proposal betrays a number of short-comings that shed light on the
metanarrative approach more generally. First, such approaches always import cultural and theological assumptions that are more congenial to some traditions than others. No matter how abstract a proposal, its terms have to be abstracted—pulled out—from somewhere. But that involves self-contradiction with the self-understanding of the approach itself insofar as it purports to be a proposal formulated on the basis of the equality of faiths. For example, Hick's own formulation of the essence of religions—expressing their experience of and fidelity to "the Real—might in some sense accord with the monotheistic faiths, yet members of other traditions such as Buddhism have objected that his way of putting it does not really capture what they are about. At the same time, it turns out that Jews, Christians, and Muslims, too, have found Hick's abstractions reductionistic and patronizing. That is to be expected. Subordinationism has been found inadequate in interreligious dialogue because it refuses to allow others to speak in their own voice. By determining in advance what all religions are about, the metanarrative approach preempts everyone's ability to articulate that for themselves. It is egalitarian in that it undercuts that capacity for everyone, but that does not necessarily make it desirable.

What may be more promising than importing the liberal paradigm into theology itself is to point out that for an increasing number of people liberal society is the shared context in which they must do their theologizing. In Western democracies it is a social reality of which all have to make meaningful sense, not a metanarrative to be imported into each religion as its own self-understanding. If they are to gather to talk, it is at the free and (relatively) spontaneous initiative of all parties; no one is in a position to force the conversation or set its terms in advance. Such an appreciation serves as the basis for any common project of mutual engagement, and it is not without its implications.\(^{13}\)

The favored model for interreligious engagement today is dialogical. It corresponds to the

\(^{13}\) Environmental issues serve an analogous function. They set a common context for mutual engagement. That is a circumstance this study explores. See also John Berthrong's (1999:113-34) discussion on the ecological crisis as a common context for theology in the "North American cultural Mosaic."
third option listed above, internally grounded pluralism as dialogue. We constantly hear about interreligious dialogue. And there are many normative models of this exercise, many importing lofty ideals. For example, John Cobb (1972:4), one well-known Protestant theologian argues the inner impulse of dialogue points parties to a higher truth or synthesis which affirms all parties basic convictions. Another argues that the primary purpose "is for each participant to learn from the other so that he or she can grow" (Swidler 1990:3). People may indeed enter the process with such ideals, or they may be imparted by the magic of the process itself. However, the dialogical model presupposed here prescinds from larger claims about the motivations or shared goals of participants. It simply assumes that dialogue involves speakers, listeners, some topic of dialogue, and the fundamental goals of communication (understanding, being understood). But that turns out to be enough for some significant sociological implications.

In the first place, in dialogue the speaker is engaging the other, and that implies the concomitant requirement to locate him- or herself. In other words, the speaker immediately finds that he or she is speaking out of his or her own tradition, as a Jew or as a Presbyterian, and so forth. An adequate grasp of that simple fact means that those claims are implicitly, and hopefully explicitly, prefaced by "in my tradition…" The speaker then has to locate the other. That is important because, assuming successful communication is the goal, it means that some attempt must be made to frame statements in a way that is accessible to the partner in dialogue. That inevitably affects the meaning of what one has to say, insofar as the meaning of communication is inherently related to the larger frame in which it resides. Thus one may gain a new perspective on one's own beliefs in and through this simple process. Dialogue does not deny that one has convictions. Quite the opposite; it is the sorry dialogue partner that has nothing to bring to the table. It is also evident that the partner is in some sense "other." That means a willingness to allow the other to speak in his or her own voice. It means that one has to be prepared to hear that for which one is not prepared. Its results cannot be anticipated \textit{a priori}. Hence dialogue is open.
Here "open" simply means that one party entertains the possibility that other traditions have religious truth and religious integrity in their own right. It does not require bracketing one's own claims except *insofar as one makes those claims from a located stance*, and it does not require affirming the truth of another tradition in advance. Prior to dialogue one cannot know what to affirm or deny about the other precisely because the other is other. The insights of another tradition may repeat the insights of one's own, though perhaps from another perspective. They may add a further dimension, in a sense building on what one already affirms in one's own tradition. They may supplement it in the sense that they address a topic that had not even been raised in one's own tradition. And perhaps the claims of one tradition will turn out to be radically incompatible with another, radically in the sense that they defeat the impulse Cobb cites, to affirm the basic convictions of all participants. (However, Cobb argues that participants in dialogue should avoid assuming that that is the case or retreat from the process prematurely!)

Internally grounded pluralism as dialogue does rule out the *a priori* claim that one has a monopoly on religious truth. And it also rules out what Bernard Lonergan (1972) calls the "classicist" mentality. This was a style of speaking and thinking apodictically, one rooted in a univocal sense of truth. Lonergan identified it with a stance inculcated in Greek philosophy, and passed on to scholasticism, but also found in religious pronouncements "from on high." A person speaking within a classicist frame does not think in terms of context and contingency. He or she takes up the very position of truth and makes pronouncements. Facts are plotted on a grid of absolute space and time, to which the classicist mentality presumes access. It sneers at doubt and holds up truths as if above the fray. It idealizes truths which are uttered in as timeless a manner as possible. It is the voice that speaks from the void, like the Cartesian "I think therefore I am," or the "Reason" idealized by Enlightenment *philosophes*, or the pronouncements nineteenth century Europeans anthropologists were wont to make about other cultures. Its mode is the mode of pronunciation. Speaker and audience recede before the classicist utterance that, in its failure to
acknowledge social location or historical context, seems to deny their possible relevance. Many Roman curial documents were classicist in this sense, especially during the latter half of the nineteenth century, when the Catholic Church was on the defensive and neo-Thomist scholastic philosophy was revived. This modality dominated Catholic theology up until the Second Vatican Council. It made bringing religion into dialogue and into public life difficult. This modality, to be sure, can indeed be a conversation stopper.

While at present the effort to make theological sense of religious diversity is a major theme in most mainline American faith communities, as well as in Western theology more generally, that has not always been the case. In fact, while Christian theologians have struggled to come to grips with the religious significance of "Reason," the latest philosophical trends, breakthroughs in natural science, and the implications of archaeology and scriptural analysis, only lately have they seriously considered the religious significance of other religions. For much of Western Christian history, other faiths were simply a problem to be endured or overcome.14

However, over the last four decades the prominence of interreligious dialogue and of theologies affirming religious truth beyond Christianity have increased dramatically. One observer notes that for many Christian theologians religious diversity and pluralism are not simply additional considerations for Christian theological reflection; rather they constitutes the very context in which all theological reflection must be done. Harold Coward writes:

In the rapidly expanding body of literature resulting from the encounter with other religions, many Christian theologians are concluding that Christian theology cannot continue to be formulated in isolation from the other religions, and that, in fact, future developments in Christian theology will be the direct result of serious dialogue with the other religions. (Coward 2000b:16)

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14 For most of the history of Christianity, two very telling archetypes loomed large in its lore: martyr and the missionary. The term "martyr" derives from the Greek word for "witness". A martyr is a witness to what he or she has seen and knows to be true. Early on the word took on the added sense that, because the world as we know it does not know or recognize truth, bearing witness in this world necessarily entails trial. The missionary (a term derived from the past participle of the Latin verb "to send") was also entrusted with the gospel message of truth and "sent" afar to share it with those who did not yet know this truth. Often such people were depicted as living in unmitigated darkness. The guiding imagery associated with both these terms emphasized the possession of truth within Christianity and the poverty surrounding it.
He goes on to list some twenty significant works that explicitly address religious diversity and how to integrate pluralism into theology.

Since this study focuses on Catholics in American society, and especially their relations with Protestants, the terms used by Christians to categorize dialogue should be noted, especially since some differ from how terms have been defined here. In the first place, Christians use the term "ecumenical" to refer relations among themselves and "interreligious" to refer to relations with non-Christian traditions. Here I use "interfaith" to encompass both.

In addition, when it comes to orientations to other faiths, three standard positions have taken shape and are cited in the literature. These are exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. These positions have been defined in terms of a specific Christian concern, soteriology, the doctrine of salvation. In brief, exclusivism is the position that salvation is only found in Christ, and one must explicitly be Christian to be saved. Inclusivism also holds salvation is only in Christ, but this salvation is also available to non-Christians through the grace of God and the implicit desires placed in their hearts. And pluralism is the position that there are paths to salvation apart from Christ; Christ is the path for Christians, but for others there are independent and equally valid paths available.15

Since this study is concerned with bringing the insights of faith into public life, and not with interreligious debates over the specific question of salvation, I do not make use of these terms as they have been defined in the context of the Christian theology of religions, as it has come to be called. In particular, "pluralism" as it is used in the theological literature refers to the positive affirmation of salvation available through other faiths, whereas here internally grounded pluralism merely refers to an openness to the authentic religious significance of other traditions. It

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15 For a more complete presentation of these basic positions see Knitter (1985:145-65). For more sophisticated typologies, see Dupuis (1997) and Knitter (2002).
should also be noted that while Christian exclusivism has often been cited as a basis for a
dismissive attitude toward other faiths, traditionally the focus of the "exclusivist" position has
been a particular doctrine—whether Christ is the sole basis of reconciliation between God and
humanity—not whether Christianity has a monopoly on all religious truth or validity. Technically,
one could hold the exclusivist position while still affirming that other faiths have a religious
validity (just not such as leads to salvation\textsuperscript{16}). That is, the exclusivist position does not exclude
the possibility of internally grounded pluralism (though it makes it fairly unlikely).

Finally, for Catholics the official position of the Church toward other faiths was often
charted with reference to either the exclusivist or the inclusivist position: Could people be saved
apart from explicit membership in the Church? From the nineteenth century on that question was
increasingly answered in the affirmative. In post-Vatican II era, exclusivism is no longer an
option for Catholics, but at the same time many high-level statements have come out against
various pluralist proposals. That is, these statements have not ratified the proposal that the
Christianity is merely one salvific path among many. However, it should be clear that these
statements have not condemned internally grounded pluralism \textit{as here defined}. Rather, internally
grounded pluralism as dialogue best describes the Catholic orientation to other faiths at present.

In recent decades internally grounded pluralism has made significant inroads among the
principle religious traditions of Western nations, especially those traditions designated "mainline"
or "liberal." Often it has made inroads in high-level arenas, especially the academy and certain
high-profile dialogues. That does not guarantee actual engagement on the level or ordinary
people's lives or of American public life. However, it does seem to set parameters for such
engagement when it does take place. In that respect, it is reflected in contemporary Catholic
participation in American public life.

\footnote{For example, some Christian views of Judaism fit this pattern. Likewise, so have some Muslim views of Christianity and Judaism.}
Chapter IV. Religious Diversity and a New Social Experiment

A. Religious Diversity and the British Colonies

[T]hey have freely declared, that it is much on their hearts (if they may be permitted), to hold forth a livlie experiment, that a most flourishing civill state may stand and best bee maintained, and that among our English subjects, with a full libertie in religious concernements. (Charles II 1663; see also Thorpe 1909)

When the British monarchy was restored and Charles II acceded to the throne, the residents of the Providence Plantations on Narraganset Bay sent delegates to England to secure confirmation of their colonial charter. The new charter they received affirmed the precedent of freedom of profession that the founder of the colony, Roger Williams, had initiated some three decades earlier. As the reference to a "livlie experiment" demonstrates, the colonists were well aware they were pursuing novel, forward-looking social arrangements. That was often the case for the early explorers and colonists who settled not just in this "New" England, but throughout this "New World." The Americas were terra nova. They represented the chance for a new beginning.

When the various American colonies were established, the British government—which throughout the seventeenth century was rarely was in a position to exert effective control across the Atlantic—often consented to terms adapted to the needs and demands of groups that might not so readily be accommodated back in England. Many colonists sought liberty for themselves and the chance to embark on some novel social experiment. Nonetheless, few were as bold as Roger Williams to put religious liberty per se at the center of their project. In most other settlements, the liberty they sought was limited: liberty from very specific forms of authority, and liberty for ordering society according to their own religious vision.¹ Even in Williams' Rhode

¹ Historian Chris Beneke (2006:17) writes: "Beginning students of American history often make the forgivable mistake of assuming that Britain's North American colonies began as cradles of religious freedom. It would be more accurate to say that many of the early colonies began as sanctuaries for religious dissenters, particularity those seeking to escape the impositions of established churches in northwestern Europe. Whether they protected religious liberty [as a general principle] was another matter."
Island, liberty was understood in specific sense; it was integral to a particular religious vision, and it was ordered to that religious end. Williams' own vision contributed the regime accommodating religion once the United States was founded, but insofar as not everyone shared his theology, it was not the sole ground of that regime by any means. In fact, given the history of the individual colonies of the preceding century and a half, the Constitutional order that emerged in 1787 on the shores of the Western Atlantic was not an outcome that many would have anticipated. It both drew on those precedents yet went beyond them. How it emerged from among a series of experiments based on competing creeds and rival visions of the good society is a complex tale, one that in a certain sense continues to unfold.

The Puritans who settled in New England established one of the most distinctive religious cultures of colonial America. That culture left its enduring imprint on the society which coalesced to form the United States. Settlers from England had been arriving there since 1620, when the Mayflower, authorized under arrangements with the Virginia Company, wandered off course and landed at what became Plymouth Colony. A turning point in these developments occurred in 1629, when on August 29th the General Court under Charles I chartered the Massachusetts Bay Company (the reconstituted version of an earlier enterprise) with a claim to land that eventually became the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Significantly, the charter omitted the usual requirement that the governing board of such ventures hold its annual meetings in England. That effectively cleared the way for an experiment in local self government. Once company oversight was transferred to the shores of America, John Winthrop agreed to sell his estate and cast his lot with the venture. He and about a thousand countrymen of Puritan sympathy set out for the New World the following year. Winthrop was elected first governor of the colony. Convinced that he was one of God's own elect, as well, he was a man imbued with a sense of destiny.

2 Ahlstrom (1972:123) refers to a "piecemeal empire" in which the English government encouraged "almost any kind of colony," welcoming "almost any interested person or group, however radical or eccentric."
Under Winthrop, the Puritans proceeded to organize Massachusetts Bay colonial life under a unified religious-and-civil social order, one they pursued with rigor born of the conviction that they were starting out with circumstances more or less akin to a blank slate, circumstances amenable to their own construction. While it is understandable that a small group dispersed among even smaller settlements might not attend to excessive formalities regarding the delineation of civil and religious affairs, especially given the Puritan tendency to de-emphasize traditional ecclesial institutions, in fact the Puritans lived in an age when both church and civil government were the subject of heated controversy. The arrangements of the governing order they instituted were deliberate and meticulous. They stressed participatory meetings, public arguments, and elected office. At the same time, the order they established did not simply aim to restrain human violence and sin, the signal purpose of government in Augustinian and Calvinist thought. They were endeavoring to establishing God's law and justice on earth. The Puritans were a people who took law, covenant, and the Hebrew Scriptures seriously, and they meant to apply the strictures they found in Scripture to their "Bible Commonwealth." As a result, at first they restricted citizenship on the basis of religious considerations. As early as 1636 Thomas Hooker tried to persuade Winthrop that eligibility to vote and hold office should be open to all adult males holding property, irrespective of church membership, but the latter insisted that these rights of citizenship be restricted to full Church members. Despite recognizing the distinction between the civil and the ecclesial spheres, the Massachusetts Puritans were determined to use the civil apparatus to enforce their religious vision on Massachusetts society as a whole.

In ecclesial affairs controversy erupted from time to time over questions of church order.

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3 Ahlstrom (1972:106-07,152) also applies this term to Connecticut.
4 Here it is interesting to note that Hooker, a minister, was trying to persuade Winthrop, a lay leader, to make civic participation open to all irrespective of church affiliation. After this disagreement, Hooker left with a hundred of his congregants from First Parish in Cambridge to found a new English settlement at Hartford. That settlement was one of the nuclei around which the Colony and later the State of Connecticut eventually took shape.
Issues that resurfaced a number of times concerned the nature of church governance and the requirements for baptism, communion, and full church membership. Was evidence of a conversation experience necessary for baptism, or could infants be baptized? And who could be admitted to communion? Since the rights of citizenship were tied to these questions, they had extensive implications for civil society, as well.

As for church governance, most Puritans rejected the role of king or hierarchy in church matters. Instead they understood the church to be a local phenomenon, the concrete church community, one which members created and sustained in an intentional manner. They did so by covenanting among themselves to one another before God. In this way they made themselves available for the work of God's kingdom, not only individually but corporately. The congregational model, where each local parish wrote up its covenantal creed which each member signed, became the norm in the "New England Way" of Reformed Christianity. It was grounded in a theology of covenant that looked to the various covenants that God had established, as recorded in Scripture. In Scripture a covenant called a people into being and defined the terms of their existence. The Puritan doctrine of covenant thus drew on quite ancient inspiration.

At the same time, "New England Way" left open the question of how each local church community related to the others. In the Scottish Presbyterian Church, a congregational model held sway, but then local communities were organized into larger courts and synods, so that a national structure emerged and regulated church order for all member congregations. In Massachusetts the Cambridge Synod (1646-48) was called to consider the Presbyterian option for maintaining doctrinal and disciplinary unity. In the end, that option was rejected, and instead the

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5 This theology of covenant also bore a clear resemblance to contractarian notions of civil society, which it anticipated. Before Thomas Hobbes or John Locke had ever penned a sentence, the Puritans established a social order based not only on original consent, but also on ongoing participation in government.

6 Here the notion of the community standing over the individual as a reality in its own right is very clear. The insight antedates Durkheim by a couple of millennia. It is no wonder that Durkheim then saw the creation of community as a fundamentally religious undertaking.
"Independent cause" was confirmed. Officially, what was to unite all local congregations was a bond of fellowship in the Spirit (and adherence to the Westminster Confession). At the same time, on a practical level, all were also united under a civil government that continued to operate as an ecclesial enterprise. At this level Puritan church order implicitly presupposed a theocratic form of government. That ultimately made disestablishment a wrenching process.

In the early days of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, uniformity of faith and morals was so rigidly imposed by religious and civil authorities that even Oliver Cromwell, who had successfully led a religious revolt in England based on broadly Puritan principles, was openly critical. (Littell 1962:5) The law recognized only Puritans as full, enfranchised citizens; serious religious dissent could result not only in excommunication from the church body, but exile from the colony, as well. Jews and Catholic were not welcome.7 And Quakers, Baptists, and other Protestants who challenged Puritan orthodoxy were banned, mutilated, or executed, as well.8 In all four Quakers were hung on the Boston Common, the last in 1661. Beneke (2006:15-16) writes that the horror of these executions confirmed the reputation that Massachusetts had gained for intolerance, and when Charles II came to the throne, he brought an end to the practice.9

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7 A famous law of 1647 provided for the expulsion of all Catholic priests, and especially Jesuits, from the Colony. Should they enter the territory a second time, they were to be put to death. (Cited, for example, in Hennesey 1981: 37.)
8 For example, when it was learned in 1656 that the newly founded Quakers intended to send missionaries to Massachusetts, a law was hurriedly passed providing that any colonist possessing a Quaker book be fined, and any Quaker coming ashore be arrested, whipped, and evicted from the colony without any chance to speak with a soul (Ahlstrom 1972: 178).
9 Some argue that the Puritans’ treatment of Native Americans was based in part on religious intolerance, as well. While John Eliot had achieved some initial success in setting up villages of Indian Christian converts at mid-century, those villages succumbed in the crossfire of European and Indian warfare. Many deemed the converts "lax Christians" to begin with, and the experiment itself came to be viewed as a failure. From that time forward most Puritan efforts were directed at clearing the land before them of those whom they believed could not be brought within the contours of their Christian civilization. (Littell 1962: 6-12)

However, Ahlstrom (1972: 156-58) stresses that "solutions to the Indian problem" crumbled with the surge of European immigrants that soon overwhelmed the New England settlements. Morrison (1995) sees the Native American converts as caught between a generation of settlers with whom they struck up an alliance based on faith and later settlers, who were more interested in commercial than religious pursuits. In this view religion actually moderated Indian-Puritan relations.
Given the egalitarian thrust and voluntaryism\textsuperscript{10} inherent in Puritan tradition, the intolerance of the colonial order they established seems paradoxical. As a number of observers have rightly commented, it was the union of that church voluntaryism with state establishment that proved a fatal contradiction. Because the standards for church membership were so rigorous, church communities never took in all who lived in the land. For one, people were born in this society did not always choose to be full church members; others immigrated for reasons apart from its religious institute. As a result, as early as the 1660s Puritans who were full members of their church, and hence enfranchised citizens, constituted a minority of the society, but they continued to dictate its religious and civil life. (Littell 1962:5-7) Thus in each congregation "the Saints" were all held to be equal, while in society at large they dominated the bulk of the citizenry. This system effectively exalted equality within the church alongside domination within society. The pressure then to belong to the church was enormous. Thus in spite of the Puritan theology of covenant, state establishment effectively eviscerated any real sense in which participation in the religious life of the colony was voluntary.

Beginning in the mid-seventeenth century Quakers and Baptists began appealing to English law, which was more tolerant of their faith than the Puritans. Finally in 1686 complaints and dissension led the Crown to revoke Massachusetts’ original charter. Shortly thereafter, the Glorious Revolution brought William and Mary to the English throne, and as part of the religious settlement which ensued, while the Church of England remained as the established church, religious freedom was also guaranteed to all Protestants who recognized the settlement. It set a precedent for toleration in England, at least among Protestants. In 1691 the crown then issued a new charter placing Massachusetts under royal government, and the Puritans had to make made

\textsuperscript{10} "Voluntaryism" refers to uncoerced participation. Citing the OED, Martin Marty (1987: 44) writes of this neologism: "It is not voluntarism…Voluntaryism, instead, is ‘the principle or tenet that the Church and educational institutions should be supported by voluntary contributions instead of by the state[,]’” “Voluntarism” can have that meaning, as well, but in its primary sense it refers to the centrality of will as a metaphysical or historical force.
room for religious dissent from their own establishment. In turn, they skillfully united with other dissenters to oppose the establishment of the Church of England in their own territory. At the same time, in a sense only after toleration was enforced by royal decree did the voluntaryism at the heart of Puritan theology finally come into its own.

In the eighteenth century the major sources of contradiction in civil and religious life in Massachusetts Bay had been scaled back, while the positive dimensions of Puritan religious culture continued to make their contribution to society. Congregational churches, which had been the very basis for inclusion in the larger polity, remained centers of civic activism. These were the models of responsible, free association in colonial life that so impressed Tocqueville.

Given the oppressive moral and religious seriousness that so silenced dissent in Puritan New England, the region's religious culture would not seem a source of American pluralism. In part that is correct. The cultural logic of seventeenth century Massachusetts certainly did not endorse diversity and dissent. Nonetheless, within the Puritan polity it included a structure that encouraged each community to come to its own faith. And the voluntaryism that went with this congregational model meant that ordinary people were expected to take responsibility for their faith, not to be passive spectators.

Voluntaryism and the congregational model are formal principles. Though they originally arose in connection with covenantal theology and the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, insofar as they are formal they can be abstracted from their connection with any substantive creed. In the abstract these principles have served as legitimating criteria for any religious group organized on the basis of autonomous, self-supporting, local religious communities. In other words, voluntaryism and the congregational principle eventually became two of the formal,

11 For more on the evolving relations between Puritans, Baptists, and Quakers, see Pestana, Quakers and Baptists in Colonial Massachusetts (1991).
12 Littell (1962: 60) observes: "The civic initiative and genius of organization for social good which characterized Puritanism at its best can be studied better today in Kiwanis, Rotary, the Optimists, [and] the Lions..."
structural norms for accommodating religious diversity in the context of a modern, democratic society. Herberg (1955: 20-22) observed that when other religious groups set up shop in the United States, they inevitably expressed themselves making use of American forms. The local congregation would constitute their most visible institution, and weekly gatherings, sermons, and committees of every type would mark their common life. While undoubtedly these forms do retain a certain valence for religious traditions whose theology and culture presuppose them as normative, to the extent that other American religious groups have adopted a local, participatory religious culture, they are all heirs of the Puritans. In that sense Puritan voluntaryism engendered a pluralism that had a wide embrace indeed.\footnote{For a discussion of the Puritan movement in the context of both English and American religious history see Ahlstrom, \textit{A Religious History of the American People} (1972: 84-98, 124-165). For a thoughtful collection of classic essays on the larger impact of the Puritan imagination on American culture, see Miller, \textit{The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century} (1939).}

At the same time, clearly religious liberty, in the sense of a general and abstract principle, was not at the heart of the Puritan experiment. In Puritan tradition the local congregation was the proper locus of the faith of the community, not an overarching church, and \textit{not individual conscience} formed in direct relationship with God, either. The Puritans understood religious liberty in a historically specific sense. Negatively, it meant freedom from the Anglican hierarchy (and church hierarchy more generally), freedom from Papal authority (not a real threat, but the very specter of the domination they opposed), and freedom from royal control. Positively, it meant the freedom to worship as they themselves desired, according to their interpretation of the Reformed tradition, and to set up a commonwealth based on their own religious vision. As a result the Puritans pit the religious liberty they secured in veritable opposition to religious diversity. For them religious liberty did not mean freedom of conscience, and it was not an ideal in itself; rather it was a means to another, quite substantive end.

While many of the American colonies were founded as havens of religious refuge from
oppression in the Old World, one, Rhode Island, was founded as a refuge from persecution in the
other colonies. In 1636 the authorities in Massachusetts banished the minister Roger Williams for
his controversial preaching and beliefs. The idea that brought about Williams' exile was that
government only had authority in civil affairs, and in particular it should not attempt to coerce a
person's beliefs. It was Williams who advocated freedom of conscience, or what he called "soul
liberty." His settlement provided another important example of religious culture in American
colonial life.

Williams' convictions sprang from a kind of extreme Puritanism: He held that in the
present dispensation all existing ecclesial and civil authorities were so fallen that they had no
right to regulate the conscience or the "spiritual Israel" (the true church). In this fallen context,
conscience was the sole place where some, the elect, did come before God, so that in trammeling
conscience a government employing force would "fight against God in some of them." (See his
77-79). Thus Williams took the Puritan ideal of a voluntary church and hypostasized the right of
private judgment at the center of it. "For Williams, religious voluntarism was so sacred a
principle because the individual's quest for the true church—even if that ultimately turned out to
be a church of one—was so pressing an obligation." (Beneke 2006:33) Such a church could not
be built on a foundation of mala fides. Yet while Williams religious ideals grew out of Puritan
principles, they clashed with the particular form of Bible Commonwealth that was taking shape in
Massachusetts. And so he was banished.

Two years later he and twelve others covenanted themselves to establish the settlement of
Providence. Their covenant stipulated that governing authority be based on majority consent for
the public good, and "only in civil things" (cited in Ahlstrom 1972:167). And though he was a
purist, Williams also recognized the expediency of having English law on his side, so he returned
to England in 1643 to have his purchase of land from the Native Americans confirmed by
Parliament. While in England he penned his most famous work, *The Bloudy Tenet of Persecution for the Cause of Conscience* (1644). He so impressed the authorities with his defense of conscience that Parliament readily granted a charter for what eventually become Rhode Island. When Charles II came to the throne, John Clarke returned to England to secure this grant, and a new charter (quoted at the beginning of this section) was issued.

Rhode Island soon became a haven for religious liberty, or dissent, depending upon one's perspective. Baptists took advantage of it as a stronghold. In Providence in 1639 Ezekiel Holliman founded what is considered to be the first Baptist church in America. Quakers, too, found refuge in the colony, despite William's own strong disagreements with their "heresies." However, to the Congregationalists of the surrounding colonies, Rhode Island was long considered the "sewer" of the region.

The legacy of the Rhode Island experiment was mixed. Certainly, Williams himself was intolerant in his own way. As a pastor he was no model of charity and compromise. Being an idealist, he was often deemed both impractical and imperious. But he was clear that the state should never use force to discipline heresy or secure religious uniformity. In the end, a number of historians dismiss the Rhode Island experiment as quirky and uninfluential. From the perspective of religious history, Ahlstrom (1972:181-83) contends that the theologies and religious life founded there were "eccentric," and the state a "composite dead-end for its founding churches." Worse, "long after its religious fires had cooled" the colony retained a propensity for the same separatism, intractability, and impracticality as its inspired founder. Moreover, Ahlstrom goes so

\[\text{footnote}14\] Rhode Island was eventually home to the first synagogue in America, as well, Touro Synagogue in Newport, built in 1763.

\[\text{footnote}15\] When George Fox appeared in Newport in 1672 Williams, then seventy years old, rowed thirty miles to Newport to engage the Quaker in a debate. He did not arrive in time to catch Fox, but he vigorously debated three other ministers, publishing the results in the book which ignited a controversy in print. (Ahlstrom 1972:179-80)

\[\text{footnote}16\] As one of his biographers put it, Williams was a man who drove others to exasperation, "not by opposing accepted ideas, but by pursuing them through their implications to conclusions that his contemporaries could not or would not accept." (Morgan 1967:5).
far as to add, "The Puritan mentality of Rhode Island's founding fathers, moreover, stands in almost polar relation to the Enlightened conceptions of the 'rights of man' which prevailed among the nation's Founding Fathers."

It must be admitted that the justification for "soul liberty" in Williams' own thought was not the doctrine that eventually underwrote religious liberty in the Bill of Rights. Williams was almost exclusively concerned with protecting conscience and the church from the state, not the problem of diversity in the good society. Nonetheless, while the particular regime of religious and civil culture which emerged in Rhode Island had its own crazy-quilt peculiarity, one grounded in a very particular theology, the larger intuition it reflected is one deeply embedded in Western and Christian thought. The notion of conscience and its liberty goes back to Roman Law, early Christian thinkers, medieval scholastic thought, and Canon law. Moreover, while the Founding Fathers may have advanced rational philosophical arguments regarding the primacy of conscience, those arguments were only successful because they resonated with this larger tradition. Indeed while many arguments have been given for primacy of conscience, the common sense of this principle is fundamentally a religious insight. It is a corollary of the importance of faith in the human quest, which principle Williams, and later many a Baptist dissenter, touted as paramount and inviolable, irrespective of any civic or secular considerations. Moreover, eccentric idealist and religious "dead-end" though he may have been, the example Williams gave of doing spiritual battle in words alone is nothing short of luminous. More than provide arguments, Williams and the Rhode Island experiment gave the principle of primacy of conscience concrete social expression.

17 As legal scholar John Witte (2000:39-42) notes, the Founding Fathers sometimes conflated several related notions concerning religious liberty and freedom of conscience because these had been woven together in a dense tangle of thought with a very long history. Our notions of religious freedom and privacy (the idea of some inviolable "inner space") are rooted in the theological notion that the individual must be allowed the freedom to work out his or her destiny with God uncoerced. 18 See Edwin Gaustad's *Liberty of conscience: Roger Williams in America* (1991) for a more detailed discussion of Williams' own life and thought.
The colony of Maryland set an important precedent for the accommodation of diversity in America. Maryland was chartered by Charles I in 1632 in response to the petition of a well-regarded former privy councilor, George Calvert, first Baron of Baltimore. Calvert and his eldest son and heir, Cecil, had been involved in colonizing ventures for over a decade. They were also converts to Roman Catholicism. Ahlstrom (1972:331) writes that Maryland was chartered "by the Protestant king of England to a Roman Catholic convert so that the founder's coreligionists might be free of the statutory disabilities they suffered in England." That is the popular wisdom.

Catholic religious historian Jay Dolan stresses that pragmatic interests, not religion, were the driving force behind the Maryland Design: "But it should be emphasized at the outset that the Maryland colony was not founded primarily as an asylum or refuge for Catholics. Maryland was established first and foremost as a commercial enterprise, with profit, not religion, the primary impulse." (Dolan 1992: 72). Ostensibly, the "Maryland Design" was in line with pursuits antedating the Calverts' conversation, and the charter and surviving official documents say nothing about Maryland being a religious experiment or a sanctuary for Catholics. Moreover, in Cecil Calvert's day conditions for Catholics among the aristocracy seemed to be on the rise in England itself, so that after he spent a year endeavoring to rouse support among Catholic gentry, not many showed interest in emigrating to Maryland. Most were more interested in winning a better place in England than fleeing the land. In the end, the Calverts had to secure the financial and political support of Protestants in order to pursue their venture. However, given the devotion of the Calverts to their adoptive faith, their continual efforts to recruit support primarily among Catholic aristocrats in England, their care to bring Jesuits on the first ships out, the ongoing deliberation given to the religious dimensions of the venture, and the name of the colony, it is clear that religion was a central if discrete element of the overall project. And in the end,

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19 While the colony was officially named after Henrietta Maria, the French Catholic wife of the king, the name of the capital, Saint Mary's City, betrayed its real eponym.
Maryland gave Catholicism a place in the heart of the British colonies that it would not have had otherwise. It also provided yet another socially instantiated approach to accommodating religious diversity: privatization.

When the Ark and the Dove set finally sail in November of 1633, passengers included sixteen gentlemen, their servants and laborers, and three Jesuits. While most of the gentlemen and ladies were Catholic, the majority of their servants and workers were Protestant. The instructions that Cecil Calvert gave the colony's governor, his brother Leonard, reflect his concern to avoid occasion for hostility between Catholics and Protestants. Catholic religious services were to be held as privately as possible, and Catholics themselves were to be silent regarding religious matters, so that "they suffer no scandal or offence to be given to any of the Protestants" (Hall 1910:16, as cited in Dolan 1992:74). While nothing in the original charter specifically affirmed religious freedom, Lord Calvert's instructions were explicit on this point. All Christians were free to practice their faith, but as far as possible religion was to remain a private affair. If one considers public space in this context that be those spaces that Protestants and Catholics shared together, then this meant keeping religion out of public life. Thus while the religious idealism of Williams was the basis of his affirmation of "soul liberty," religious accommodation in Maryland was more of a practical regime. John Krugler (1979:60, as cited in Dolan 1992:74) observes that religious toleration was not so much the purpose of the Maryland Design as its modus operandi. And privatization was especially advised for Catholicism because its legal status was merely implicit and hence quite tenuous.

The subsequent history of Catholicism in colonial America repeatedly demonstrated how precarious its status was. In 1642 the English Civil War broke out, and since the Calverts sided

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20 The Calverts and most of the Catholic gentry were determined to keep as low a religious profile as possible, even resisting the strenuous insistence of the Jesuits that Catholicism be given the privileges and exemptions that religion was commonly granted in other lands. (Dolan 1992:78)
with Charles I against Parliament, their lands were open to Puritan hostilities. Puritan forces from Virginia took the capital and led the Jesuits off in chains in 1645. The Calverts' authority was restored late the next year. It was in this context that Lord Baltimore and the Maryland Assembly passed the famous 1649 "Act Concerning Religion." The point of the act was as far as possible to diffuse religious antagonism within Maryland and belie the contention of those outside the colony that it served Catholic interests in any way that stood over and against English interests. The Act strictly forbade activities or speech which would offend the religious sensibilities of Protestants or Catholics, both those they held in common (such as belief in the Trinity) and those particular to either constituency. On the positive side, it provided that no one should be "discountenanced" because of his or her religion, prevented "in the free exercise thereof," or "compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion against his or her consent." The terms of the Act anticipate the United States Bill of Rights, and this is telling. On the one hand, they did provide the basis for an important precedent in Catholic and Protestant coexistence (Witte 2000:21). On the other, the full context reveals how urgent was the perceived need to keep different Christian groups from running up against one another in the same social space. While the impulse may have been practical rather than theological, the Act allowed for religious groups to coexist despite strong tensions, and it was ordered to the common good.

This experiment did not last long. In 1654 dissident Puritan adventurers from Virginia again invaded and overthrew the Maryland government. In 1658 the Calverts were again restored. When William and Mary came to the throne in England in 1689, Protestant forces once again overthrew the Maryland government, and the leaders appealed to the Crown to revoke colony's original charter. The new monarchs acceded, and as a result, Maryland became a royal colony. The Church of England was officially established in 1702, and a series of laws proceeded to restrict Catholic religious observance, and temporarily, also that of other non-conformists. The Act Concerning Religion of 1649 was reduced to historical memory. In 1704 the Mass was
proscribed and Catholic priests prohibited from exercising any office or ministry. In 1707 that law was relaxed to allow for the Mass to be celebrated in the homes of individuals. For the remainder of the eighteenth century until the American War of Independence, religious tensions in Maryland waxed and waned. During the French and Indian Wars, when Catholicism was associated with a hostile foreign power, repressive measures threatened to get so bad that prominent Catholic families considered emigrating to New France. Yet despite these tensions, overall in Maryland Catholic gentry were able to preserve their social standing and mutual ties in a way they were not able to do in England. As a result, Catholicism in Maryland was more than just the private practice of a collection of individuals. An English American Catholic culture took shape which was later incorporated into the early American Republic.21

In the history of Maryland religious privatization emerged as the main strategy for accommodating religious diversity in the context of acute religious tensions. When the Calverts ruled, the balance between Protestants and Catholics was relatively even-handed; later the mandate of privatization applied to Catholics. Under the Act of 1649 this strategy was not a comment on the intrinsically private nature of religion. In fact, it was precisely because religion was understood to be eminently public—a symbol of authority and meaning to be paraded before the masses to exact their assent—that public religion in precisely that sense was not possible.22 Rather, here privatization was a practical expedient adopted to keep two potentially antagonistic camps from stepping on each other's toes. In that respect, it reveals when privatization is a social necessity: It is necessary when two groups vie for the same position in society and are so mutually antagonistic that they cannot abide one another's presence. Moreover, when it came to

21 Further discussion of Maryland Catholicism in the context of American colonial religion can be found in Dolan (1992:69-100), Hennesey (1981:36-45), and Ahlstrom (1972:330-42). Also see the more recent English and Catholic: The Lords Baltimore in the Seventeenth Century (2004) by John Krugler, which investigates the environment which the architects of the "Maryland Design" had to negotiate and the way religious considerations were woven into their approach.

22 Dolan (1992:83) makes a similar point. See also Habermas (1989:5-12) on "representative publicness" in pre-modern society.
Protestant hostility to Catholicism, that hostility often did not reflect so much Catholic doctrine or practice as what Catholicism stood for. Protestant identity had been built over and against Catholic tradition, and especially the office of the Pope. Two hardened camps had formed, so any given characteristic of one could summon up a whole collage of prejudices associated with the camp of the other. That was especially prone to happen when political or military affairs in the larger world exacerbated Catholic-Protestant relations. Privatization thus was a function of religious tribalism. When such tribal tensions waned, Protestants and Catholics were able to accommodate the public presence of one another's religion without it exciting a visceral response.

To the north of Maryland another colony, Pennsylvania, established late in the seventeenth century, sustained a fourth model of religious culture in colonial America. Its founder, William Penn, had received the tract in 1682 in settlement of a large debt which Charles II owed his father. He quite explicitly intended Pennsylvania to be a "holy experiment" in the sense of a haven for persecuted Christians, especially fellow Quakers. But he also intended that "holy experiment" to be wedded to a practical enterprise that demonstrated religious and civil life could flourish together. Penn thought deeply about all aspects of this enterprise: the practical, the administrative, the economic, and the religious. He wrote up a draft constitution, the Frame of Government, and when it came to religion, he was committed to a pragmatic regime of toleration on both civic and religious grounds.

Penn was a convert to Quakerism, and he newfound faith had landed him in prison on several occasions. While in the Tower of London he wrote a minor Quaker classic, *No Cross, No Crown* (1668). Yet he was no fanatic. Instead, a wise and principled Christian, he won the friendship and confidence of the Catholic James II when the latter was still the Duke of York. While Pennsylvania did face trials in its early years, Penn's thoughtful and practical governance laid the foundations for a pragmatic, prosperous, and tolerant future. If any colony was a prototype in miniature of what the United States would become, it was Pennsylvania.
Penn's commitment to religious toleration had a long history. In 1670 he wrote *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience Once More Debated & Defended*. There he argued that government should not compel individuals to pursue worship against their own dictates. This position accorded with his own experience and with Quaker theology emphasizing the inner illumination of the heart of each individual. In the main Penn based his argument on Scripture and theology, but it is telling that he also adduced pragmatic considerations, as well.

When the first assembly of the colony incorporated his Frame of Government into its Great Law, it included the following provision:

[N]o person now or at any time hereafter living in this province, who shall confess and acknowledge one almighty God to be the creator, upholder, and ruler of the world, and who profess himself or herself to be obliged in conscience to live peaceably and quietly under the civil government, shall in any case be molested or prejudiced for his or her conscientious persuasion or practice. Nor shall he or she at any time be compelled to frequent or maintain any religious worship, place, or ministry whatever contrary to his or her mind, but shall freely and fully enjoy his, or her, christian liberty in that respect, without any interruption or reflection. (Cited in Witte 2000:21.)

Like Williams, Penn considered the conscience to be beyond legitimate compulsion. Thus the Great Law recognized the integrity of conscience. However, it did not affirm that every citizen would be welcome to the colony, only such as were able to live "peaceably and quietly" "in conscience" under its civil government. Those whose consciences could not abide the civil government of Pennsylvania were not welcome. So whereas Williams' first consideration was the good of the individual conscience and the true church, Pennsylvania's founders understood that they were writing a constitution not for a monastery, but for a civic enterprise, albeit one with a religious dimension that they explicitly acknowledged. Penn sought to integrate his religious vision into a vision of the good society that could accommodate a certain diversity.

Historically, Penn's "holy experience" did in fact provide a home for a wide range of persecuted people from Europe. Pennsylvania accommodated religious diversity under the rubric of liberty of conscience, but within certain broad civil and religious bounds. As for Catholics,
they were still a cause for concern. Oaths of allegiance and a religious test excluded them from the colonial assembly and public office. In 1708 word reached Penn, then in London, that a Catholic priest had celebrated Mass in Philadelphia, and he wrote his governor of the "complaint" that the latter allowed "publick mass in a scandalous manner." Here the issue was not the intrinsic nature of the Catholic rite, but its impact on public life. Even within the confines of a gathering of the faithful, the celebration of the Mass was considered a public matter, one that could be considered a encroachment on good order. Still, priests from Maryland continued to make their way into the colony to serve the Irish, the French, and other Catholics there. Many of the German immigrants to Pennsylvania were also Catholic. The first Catholic urban church in the American colonies opened in Philadelphia in 1733-34. By the time of the Revolution it counted some twelve hundred members. (Hennesey 1981:49-52) As in Maryland tensions with the Catholics waxed and waned, often in connection with foreign affairs. However, Catholics were eventually able to find a place within the order that Penn established, and a public one at that.

Pennsylvania was able to accommodate religious diversity, but as opposed to Maryland, where points of difference were banished from public life, the Great Law included some basis for thinking through how diversity could have a legitimate place in society. At the same time, the principle by which religious diversity was accommodated was not an absolute, as was individual conscience in the case of Williams' Rhode Island. While Williams was concerned with securing the sure foundations of authentic faith and the true church, Penn was concerned with a different question, that concerning the proper parameters for a just and workable social order. He made room for religion as a constituent dimension of the human good, but he considered it legitimate to consider the way in which conscience and creed orient individuals and religious communities to participation in the larger society. Penn predicated participation in society and the guarantee of its liberties upon the acceptance of its norms. In other words, diversity of conscience and creed could be tolerated to insofar as these could affirm the principles underlying the shared social order.
(including the very principles of their inclusion). Thus there had to be some resonance—some coherence—between a given creed and the larger regime of Pennsylvania society. At first, given the history of Catholic-Protestant conflict and all that Catholicism had come to represent to Protestants, it was not so clear that Catholicism met this criterion. However, by the early 1700s Pennsylvania proved more hospitable to the public presence of Catholicism than Maryland.

The religious situation of the New England Puritan colonies, Rhode Island, Maryland, and Pennsylvania stood out from the rest of early colonial America because in those colonies the Church of England was not established (though as noted above, in the case of Maryland that circumstance was reversed after the Glorious Revolution). In the other English colonies, the character and manner of establishment of the Anglican Church varied. Legal stipulations aside, the religious situation in the Anglican colonies shared some common factors. For one, the educated Anglican clergy willing to come to serve in the colonies were few, and those who came rarely reached out beyond established parishes and their official duties. There was no residing bishop anywhere in the colonies. Canon law, geared as it was to the reality back in England, was often unenforceable and irrelevant. Meanwhile, many who settled in the royal colonies were non-conformist in their sympathies or even confirmed dissenters. As time went on, this led to a pattern of polarization, with Anglican strength concentrated in the larger settlements and along the coast, and various stripes of non-conformists occupying the hinterlands.

The establishment back in England eventually undertook concerted efforts to promote the spread of the Anglican Church in America, especially after the Glorious Revolution. In particular, Anglican authorities promoted Church growth in those colonies which had been affiliated by their founders to other Christian traditions. Despite the provision in Pennsylvania's charter that an

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23 The circumstances of New York were also unusual. The territory was a Dutch outpost until 1664, when the English took control. It was next ruled a Catholic governor, Thomas Dongan, appointed by James, Duke of York. Religious diversity and complexity were part of New York's history from the outset.
24 Episcopal bishops only were only first consecrated for the United States after the American Revolution (Samuel Seabury in 1784, and William White and Samuel Provoost in 1787).
Anglican parish could be established when twenty or more people made the request, Christ Church in Philadelphia was only finally chartered in 1695. In New York, where even in the mid-1690s some eighty percent of the families were either Dutch or French Reformed (Ahlstrom 1972: 215), the first Anglican church in the colony, Trinity Church, was only finally erected in 1697. In the mid-1690s the royal governor of Maryland, Francis Nicholson, began the process of dividing the colony into parishes and building Anglican churches. He appealed to London for ministers, and in 1700 Thomas Bray, commissary of the Bishop of London, visited the colony to help coordinate the development of the Anglican Church there. After returning to England in 1701, Bray organized the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to coordinate the growth of the Church of England overseas. In the early 1700s, Bray's Society then made substantial headway, establishing parishes throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Though these efforts were modest, they attracted members from among the most prominent citizens. Once it became clear that England was a worldwide maritime empire in the making, being a member of the Church of England became an attractive proposition. More significantly, these initiatives went hand in hand with other efforts to promote Protestant diversity and break the hold of non-conformist traditions wherever they seemed particularly pervasive. And they were part of an effort to create a unified, cross-colonial elite culture in British America.

Overall, these developments resulted in a de facto pattern of religious coexistence which no single agent planned. Rather, at first colonies were planted, each with a commitment to its own fundamental religious orientation: Puritan, Catholic, Quaker, Reformed (the Dutch Colony of New Amsterdam), Anglican. Coreligionists set out to separate territories to create their own worlds, ones amenable to their own religious vision. Originally, one principle mediating all this religious diversity was a purely mechanical one, geography: Colonists chose the territory to which they would emigrate, taking into account its religious reputation, and in this way they could sidestep religious diversity and religious hostility. But as time went on, these separate
religious worlds became less and less separate. They were all part of one colonial empire under one Crown. For the most part, they shared a single language and a larger religious history, with all its controversies. And their mutual proximity meant that trade, movement, and missionary activity ultimately broke down the degree to which any one group was able to maintain a religious monopoly within its colony stronghold. In the course of time, the colonists then learned how to live with one another on a practical level, while simultaneously they developed a range of cultural forms for making religious sense of one another's existence. By the time of its creation, the United States inherited this legacy of religious coexistence as part of its very constitution.

B. Cross-cutting Trends

While each of the British colonies had a distinctive religious and political history, a history which informed local cultural presuppositions regarding the legitimate accommodation of religious diversity, other religious and intellectual developments crossed existing boundaries between colonies and even religious traditions themselves. These developments attest to the commonalities which pervaded colonial America. Three which gained force during the eighteenth century had a significant impact on the regime of religious accommodation that took shape when the United States was established. They are the Great Awakening, the Enlightenment emphasis on reason and the priority of the individual, and the republican notions associated with the Whig political tradition.

The Great Awakening was a religious revival which first took root in the Reformed churches of New York and New England. From there it spread throughout the Colonies, exciting members of a wide range of churches, and the unchurched as well. Religious historians commonly associate the beginnings of the movement with the ministry of Jonathan Edwards, a Congregationalist pastor in Northampton, Connecticut during the 1730s and 40s. Edwards was a highly educated theologian, well-versed in the intellectual currents of his day. In his preaching he
united strict Calvinist theology with ideas derived from the writings of recent thinkers, including John Locke and Isaac Newton. At the same time, he was committed to bringing home a heartfelt, rather than a merely intellectual, sense of God's judgment and mercy. The evangelical style he developed left a lasting stamp on American preaching and piety.

Another figure associated with the Great Awakening was an Anglican priest, George Whitefield. Whitefield first came to America in 1738 at the behest of John Wesley, a classmate from Oxford and fellow Anglican clergyman who was serving in Georgia. Wesley returned to England, eventually to work with the unchurched there, while Whitefield stayed long enough to develop an itinerant ministry in America. Whitefield returned to America seven times, circuit preaching until his death there in 1770. He went to whatever congregation would invite him, regardless of ecclesial affiliation. He preached in open fields and to crowds in the streets. Because of the emotional enthusiasm and fervor they inspired, which some in their day saw as fanaticism, Edwards, Whitefield, and others associated with the revivalism they fostered were widely criticized by the more staid establishment pastors of their day. (Finke and Stark 2005:44-54)

Whitefield and Wesley tried to bypass existing divisions between Christians, downplaying differences of doctrine. Their approach emphasized conversion, grace, and right relationship with God, matters of the heart. And indeed, one would be hard pressed to find a minister in any denomination who would disagree with the centrality of such themes. However, once one begins to talk about what conversion means, how grace is operative in Christian life, and how to recognize its operation, differences do indeed emerge. By declaring that doctrine was secondary, the proponents of revivalism were dismissing the many debates that divided Christians as mere nominalism. Such a claim strikes an audience as especially cogent when issues that once had seemed urgent were no longer very pressing. For the greater mass of ordinary people the basic evangelical appeal of the revivalists, along with their seeming disavowal of abstruse theology, had a genuine appeal. Yet established ministers of the day recognized this dismissal of
their theology and were put off by it. More to the point, the revivalists' rhetoric obscured the extent to which they themselves imported substantive doctrines into their "non-doctrinal" essentialism—pietistic assumptions about grace, conversion, and religion as an individual and interior response to God. Yet the importation of these assumptions was largely transparent to the masses because they capitalized on non-conformist assumptions most already shared.

Ultimately, the Great Awakening led to a piety that was ecumenical and divisive at the same time. Appreciating the depths of this paradox is essential for making sense of how religious diversity came to be accommodated in American religious culture. The progenitors of the movement claimed they were selflessly dedicated to God's work, unconcerned about ecclesial office or the institutional barriers which divided Christians. Whitefield operated according to a vision he shared with Wesley. Wesley held that what really mattered where the "common principles of Christianity;" these were the things that united all true Christians: "I…refuse to be distinguished from other men by any but the common principles of Christianity…I renounce and detest all other marks of distinction. But from real Christians, of whatever denomination, I earnestly desire not to be distinguished at all."(Wesley 1841: v. 8, pp. 332-33, as cited in Ahlstrom 1972:381 and Wentz 1998:30) Here Wesley adverts to the construct of denominationalism, asserting his unity with all who profess the common principles of Christianity and evince authentic faith. Of course, what constitutes that essence of Christianity—what was essential and who defines it—were the rub of the matter. The revivalists made arguments about what was essential, but since they sought to rise above particular differences, in the next moment they are reluctant to own that theirs is a particular proposal. Instead, they are making a case for what is self-evidently the "essence" of faith. Their use of a metanarrative-type paradigm served to naturalize their presentation of Christian life and faith, so that they could simultaneously own and disown what they were about.

The revivalists of the Great Awakening of that swept the American colonies beginning in
the late 1730s, along with those of the Second Great Awakening of the next century, effectively synthesized an American brand of Christianity, a faith that was populist, immediate, heartfelt, non-doctrinal, and individualist. It stood in explicit contrast to bureaucratic office, canon law, liturgical formality, sacramentalism, intellectualism, and any explicitly systematic theology. This articulation succeeded in uniting kindred spirits across the boundaries of a range of existing institutional churches because it did not tightly conform to any existing tradition per se; in that sense alone it was not "particular." However, in time it betrayed its own particularism by creating new divisions, setting "new lights" against the old. 25 Moreover, while creating a cross-cutting basis in American religious culture for Christian groups to recognize one another, it also steeled many Americans against seeing as authentic those churches which took order, office, and theology seriously, not only Anglicans and Catholics, but also even the established Congregationalists of the day.

The Great Awakenings helped to set in place the basic structure of American denominationalism. That denominationalism emerged as a limited pluralist paradigm in the American context—a way for Protestant groups to recognize a certain unity in their diversity—has already been noted. Moreover, from the point of view of those advocating a denominational paradigm, unity is its ostensible focus. The paradigm is a call to unity. It proposes itself as simply a way of getting at the "underlying essence" that unites a number of traditions. However, from a sociological perspective, which groups are excluded is as significant an issue. In the American context, those groups that were included in the larger denominational consensus came to constitute the religious mainstream. Denominations were (and still are) "those forms of organized religious expression that generally support the established social order and are mutually tolerant of each other's practices" (Encyclopedia of Religion and Society 2008). Meanwhile groups that

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25 It should also be noted that eventually such non-denominational revivalism did give rise to movements which crystallized into denominations in their own right, such as Methodism in England and the Disciples of Christ in the United States.
did not support this consensus were viewed as "sectarian," a term with the dual meaning of exclusivist, in the sense of narrow and intolerant, and particular, in the sense that as proponents of a "particular" doctrine they thus forfeited claim to public legitimacy.

In late-sixteenth-century England the term came to be used of those dissenting Christian traditions that had on some level accepted the legitimacy of the established Church. They then rejected the term "sect" not simply for its pejorative connotations, but also to signal they were not advocating sectarian exclusivity. But while in England being a "denomination" signaled a willingness to engage into a constructive dialogue with the established Church, in America the denominational paradigm served undermine the legitimacy of establishing any one Christian group over the others. "Beneath American denominationalism lay a large Protestant consensus, Reformed and Puritan in spirit, which further prepared American Christians to have done with establishments." (Ahlstrom 1972: 381-82) Not only did it serve to undermine the cause of Anglican establishment in the colonies. Despite being "Reformed and Puritan in spirit," the movement of Edwards and Whitefield ultimately undercut Congregationalism in New England, as well. In the place of an established church, the Great Awakenings promoted a cultural consensus concerning what constitutes authentic religion, one that dominated America throughout the nineteenth century. This consensus had a substantive theological core, one that derived from a pietistic, predestinarian, evangelical approach to Christianity. During the nineteenth century these presuppositions about the essential nature of Christianity (or indeed, religion as such) not only informed the larger culture; in myriad ways they also underwrote the law.

While the Great Awakening was one basis upon which a larger regime for religion in American life was established, it was not the only basis. A second was the intellectual currents associated with the Enlightenment. Of course, for some figures separating out such intellectual currents would be to import a distinction not their own. For example, as noted above, Jonathan Edwards drafted many ideas from the English Enlightenment into the service of his ministry. And
more generally, as the eighteenth century progressed American religion was increasingly imbued with a confidence in human ingenuity, democracy, education, and progress. This confidence was given further impetus by the new experiment in democracy that the American Revolution unleashed. And while today many view evangelical religion as fundamentalist, a commitment to certain fundamentals was a development that conspicuously arose only in the 1920s. In the eighteenth century, the ostensibly non-doctrinal character of evangelical revivalism only compounded the pragmatic, latitudinarian tendency that pervaded religious culture of the colonies at the time. Later in the century, some figures did openly break with Christian orthodoxy in the name of Enlightenment rationalism, most famously Ethan Allen ([1784] 2003), Thomas Paine ([1794] 1974), and Thomas Jefferson (2006). However, especially prior to the Revolution open profession of Deism was rare; instead a sort of Christian rationalism pervaded many educated circles.

Broadly speaking the whole tenor of Enlightenment thinking about reason had a democratic thrust. In classical thought—for example in Plato—the capacity to reason was the fruit of education; it was the accomplishment of the few. In medieval scholasticism, right reason was measured by the mind of God, and as a result the Church presumed certain proprietary claims in its regard; Faith measured Reason. However, in the Enlightenment tradition, reason was a common human faculty. If certain faculties of perception and reason were democratically distributed, that implied that "reasonableness" was to be measured by public scrutiny. In other words, in another era, the opinion of the learned or the judgment of the Church might determine the reasonableness of a proposal, but given its democratic assumptions about reason, in the age of Enlightenment the definitive test of reasonableness ultimately became participation in some public forum.

This had significant implications for the legitimacy of religion. At the same time, it was not a completely external principle. The precursor to this democratic understanding of reason was
the Reformation profession of the capacity of all believers to read and interpret Scripture. Perhaps not every interpretation was equal. But the interpretation of Scripture should be based on scholarship and take place before the community. It should not to be based on some abstruse and arbitrary prerogative. The question posed religion in an age of Enlightenment then concerned the extent to which it in itself is a reasonable and democratic thing. To be legitimately public, religion had to meet the criterion of being publicly accessible. Accordingly, John Locke felt compelled to make a public case for The Reasonableness of Christianity ([1695] 1989).

Contemporary liberalism finds its strongest resonance with this strand of early American thought about religion in public life.

Barbara McGraw rightly reminds us of the influence of John Locke had on American democracy and its religious settlement. Locke was not just a theorist of popular sovereignty, but of religion in democracy, as well. And he had a direct influence on, among others, Thomas Jefferson, a principle contributor to the American religious settlement. The link that Locke drew between religion and popular sovereignty was crucial, especially since in his day theology had typically been employed in the service of hierarchy and royal authority. In making the link he did, Locke drew themes prevalent in non-conformist, pietist, and evangelical Protestantism (such as the centrality of the uncoerced conscience) into his theological-political synthesis. In this respect, Locke's thought parallels that of Sidney Algernon, an influential contemporary and one who explicitly linked evangelical piety and democratic populism. Both evinced a similar impatience with authoritarian regimes. By the time of the American Revolution the idea of God working through the voice of the people ran through both religious and political thought in the colonies.

Republican philosophy constituted a third major contribution to the religious regime that

26 At the same time, Locke's significance should not be exaggerated. Locke was only one of a range of sources for thinking about the proper place of religion in society. A recent study of the American founders' writings shows that their most frequent citations came from the Bible (34%), Charles de Montesquieu (8.3%), William Blackstone (7.9%), and John Locke (2.9%). (Lutz 1988:139-149, as cited in Witte 2000:7) However, numbers asides, for some founders such as Jefferson, Locke was clearly pivotal.
eventually emerged in the United States and cut across tradition-bound loyalties. As the movement for independence from Britain gained momentum, the leading citizens of the colonies in particular cultivated the theory and rhetoric of republican government. In this context, republican ideals and notions of citizenship provided a common orientation for thinking about the place of religion in society, one that ran parallel to, and in some ways counter to, the evangelical ecumenism of pan-colonial revivalism and the democratic populism of Enlightenment thought.

Republican ideals underscored that society was a public thing (*res publica*), and hence not the subject to the personal prerogative of king or aristocrat. At the same time, that meant the national community constituted a common endeavor, one for which all were responsible and to which all were expected to contribute. In this light, to be civic-minded was not a supererogatory virtue, but rather an essential quality of citizenship. Such a view was thoroughly consistent with the Puritan understanding of society as formed by a covenant, dedicated to the common good, and able to make claims on its members. From a republican perspective then, religion was a good for society insofar as it inculcated the virtues of its citizenship and dedication to the common good.

George Washington offered a famous encapsulation of this perspective in his Farewell Address:

> Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. (George Washington, *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia, September 19, 1796.)

Civic republicanism poses both an opportunity for and a danger to religion. It asks whether religion fosters the morality necessary for a well-ordered society and the civic virtues that can sustain the common good. The opportunity lies in opening up a non-theological basis for participation in the life of the national. William Penn provided for such an opportunity in the way he worked out the basis of Pennsylvanian society. Especially when the common good is open to dialogue and debate, this means that a diversity of traditions can be allowed to contribute in a variety of ways. For example, a society that can sustain such a robust conversation will appreciate
that while pacifist traditions may not be able to promote participation in the armed services, there are other ways in which they can contribute to the common good, including their very witness to the virtues of peace. The danger of civic republicanism lies in its capacity to reduce religion to the national purpose. Then patriotism becomes a religious duty, and traditions are censured when they stand at a critical distance from the decisions of the majority.

In England assuming any significant public office entailed taking an oath affirming the headship of the Crown over the Church. Such a religious test disqualified Catholics (as well as low-church dissenters). In the view of many Englishmen this disqualification was valid insofar as Catholics "deliver themselves up to the service and protection of another prince[.]

27 Such a view was the common sense in the colonies. However, in the context of mobilization to secure independence from the English Crown and the Anglican Church, the most prominent Catholics threw in their lot with the cause for independence. Their service during the revolutionary era led many Protestant Americans to warm to the idea of Catholic participation in the new society on the basis of republican ideals. For their part, so long as such participation did not require them to disavow their faith, Catholics found republican ideals compatible with the traditional Catholic thinking about the common good. Throughout U.S. history, Catholics would continue to appeal to republican ideals of citizenship, emphasizing patriotism and their contribution to things civil as the most appropriate basis for their participation in national life. They found republicanism, rather than a democratic standard of the reasonableness of religion or the emergent denominationalism, to be the most promising basis for a national religious regime. During the decades immediately following the Revolution, republican ideals did dominate public rhetoric. This period was one of sustained engagement between American Catholics and Protestants, a flourishing of good will among new-found friends taking up the task of building a new society together. It was a

27 The quote is from Locke's *A Letter concerning Toleration* ([1689] 1963:91).
remarkable moment while it lasted.

C. The American Experiment: E Pluribus Unum

During the seventeenth century Crown and Parliament had chartered the British colonies quite liberally. To maintain its claim to territory across the Atlantic, England needed willing settlers. That urgent need and the tumult of domestic politics compromised the ability of the Crown to dictate the terms of the charters it issued. Later, with domestic stability secured after the Glorious Revolution, the mother country increasingly sought to regularize its control over the colonies, while also drawing them into its larger strategy for global empire. That trend did not win the hearts of the colonists, who had grown used to running their own affairs for their own ends. Boston was a perennial stumbling block to the assertion of royal control in the colonies, but Boston was by no means unique. When it came to religious affairs, England was never able to erect an American episcopate during the colonial era, even in states where Anglicanism was established. Bishops of the established church represented the assertion of royal control, and for that reason any such proposal met stiff resistance. (Ahlstrom 1972:361-62; Bridenbaugh 1962; Hennesey 1981:70) For that reason, it was only after the Revolution that setting up Episcopal sees in the United States was possible.

What lead to the American Revolution was a remarkable transformation not just in political allegiance but in mindset. John Adams writes that the real revolution had already taken place before the first shot was fired.²⁸ Historians trace the genesis of the American War of Independence to myriad specific events: The fallout of the French and Indian War, British mercantile policies, the Quebec Act and its implications for limiting western expansion, various

²⁸ Adams made this oft-cited observation in a letter of February 13, 1818 to Hezekiah Niles: "The Revolution was effected before the War commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people; a change in their religious sentiments of their duties and obligations. This radical change in the principles, opinions, sentiments, and affections of the people, was the real American Revolution."
taxes, lack of representation, and all sorts of miscues and mistrust. However, it may simply boil down to that the colonists could no longer really think of themselves as British *subjects*. They had become authors of their own destiny. The society they were creating was their own project, an exercise of their own initiative, an undertaking they understood far better than the British royal government on the other side of a vast ocean. Slowly the determination crystallized to bring the experiments in self-government begun in the colonies to fruition. There was no going back.

During the Revolutionary era, the leadership of the nation, both lay and clerical, was caught up in the grand project of creating a new nation. Taking control of the destiny of the colonies, declaring independence, fighting a major war, working through the deficiencies of a federation, and then elaborating a reworked federalism dominated the horizon of a generation and more, eclipsing other involvements. Participation in institutional religion fell to a low.\(^2^9\) One reason was that the War of Independence left the churches in disarray. In particular, the most prominent church in the colonies, the Church of England, had clearly been delegitimated. It also suffered from a dearth of ministers, most of whom had fled the country (along with many of their most faithful congregants). Some argue that the enthusiasm of the Great Awakening had already left Americans religion-weary, and that the religious enthusiasm it generated delegitimated existing churches without itself being channeled into sustainable institutional forms. In fact, not all religion was experiencing hard times. Some groups that had suffered under establishment, such as the Baptists, experienced notable expansion during this period. (Ahlstrom 1972:375-76)

So while religion was at a low, that was not uniformly the case. Institutional religion was facing a crisis, but in the truest sense of a moment of decision.

The U.S. Constitution was crafted in this context. It caught the populace in the fervor of yet another experiment, this one on a whole new level. But just as religion had been at the heart

\(^{2^9}\) Most historians and sociologists studying religion in post-Revolutionary America assume the proportion of "churched" to have been quite low, perhaps as low as 15% of the population. (Finke and Stark 2005: 22-27)
many a colonial experiment, it was also central to the design of this new project, though perhaps
in a different way. The Founding Fathers drew on the religious heritage and history of the
colonies, and in their deliberations they came up with something new.

The U.S. Constitution says nothing about God, God's will, Scripture, Revelation, or
ultimate accountability. Save for one line prohibiting religious tests for Federal office (in Article
Six), it contains no mention of religion, either. It reads as the quintessential secular document.
And that was precisely what was new. The Constitution stands in marked contrast to John
Winthrop's speech of 1630 when he launched a thousand colonists to settle Massachusetts Bay.
And it stands in marked contrast to every charter of every colony that preceded it. The Founding
Fathers had plenty to say about religion in their deliberations. And the first line of the First
Amendment addresses religion, underscoring how important a consideration it was. But at best
what it then says is simply a gloss on the silence of the Constitution itself: "Congress shall make
no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." To be
sure, statesmen and average citizens regularly understood and discussed national affairs in
religious terms. By contrast, the Constitution seemed relentlessly secular. But it was secular not
in the sense of being militantly secular. its silence was precisely that; the document was secular in
the sense that it exhibited the very bracketing of religion that it ordained. In that sense, it was
truly a pregnant silence.

The drafting of the first sixteen words of the First Amendment involved a long and
studied process. Today its two "clauses" are usually interpreted to mean that the government shall
give no aid to religion, nor (unduly) restrict its practice. However, such an interpretation would
import present-day concerns into the past. Both clauses were originally meant to protect religion.
The purpose of the "non-establishment" clause was to prevent Congress from promoting a given
religious doctrine or practice, and thereby intrude into religious affairs. It stood in line with
colonial precedents safeguarding the sanctity of conscience from state coercion. Apart from
establishment, however, it does not prohibit non-preferential, non-promotional religious activity (such as the provision of chaplains in the armed services). (Witte 2000:57-86) The second clause prohibits Congress from restricting religious practice. By implication, religious groups are free to assemble and worship as they see fit. They can also propagate their ideas, build their buildings, and pursue other activities, assuming they otherwise obey all the laws of the land.

Much of the literature on pluralism cites the First Amendment's non-establishment clause and the principle of liberty of conscience as the essential bases for religious diversity. However, the positive guarantee of free practice is just as crucial. During the colonial era, when rival faiths were tolerated, it was often because the enforcement of a religious monopoly was impractical. Toleration then meant ignoring religious non-conformity in "the hinterlands" (as in colonies where the Church of England was established) or allowing it so long as it was "private," that is, restricted to the interior life of individuals or the domestic sphere (as in the case of Maryland). But when it came to more public practice, even William Penn was concerned about the free exercise of religious liberty by Catholics. In this light, it is the free-exercise clause of the First Amendment that is the pivotal development for religious pluralism. It advanced the principle that despite the scruples of the legislator, religious practice has legitimate public existence, existence beyond the spheres of heart and home. That principle went beyond any existing precedent.

In commenting on the meaning of this clause in context, Witte (2000:82, see also 42-44) observes that free exercise "was conventionally understood to protect the religious speech, press, assembly, and other activities of individuals, and the actions respecting the religious property, polity, religious discipline, and clergy of religious groups" (emphasis added). Whereas the non-establishment clause provided for negative freedom—freedom from religious coercion—the free-exercise clause secured the necessary positive ground for religious practice in American society. In so doing, it implicitly affirmed the collective existence of religious groups, as well.

American religious historian Harry Stout (1990) points out what at first blush strikes the
observer as an incongruity. In examining how clergy in New England continued to speak and
write after the U.S. Constitution was adopted, he notes that their rhetoric of covenant and sacred
purpose was barely altered, except to transpose the ideals of a covenant before God to the new
nation as a whole. (pp. 69-72) If given the secularity of the Constitution, one expected discussion
of the life of the nation in post-Revolutionary America to be equally secular, at least in New
England that was not the case. In Stout's view this meant that two divergent rhetorical strands
continued to exist in American culture side by side, one neatly non-religious, the other regularly
employing Christian (and especially Protestant) moral categories; one inscribed in the "secular
enlightened naturalism" (p. 73) of the Federal Constitution, the other informing the rhetoric of
clergy and ordinary citizens at a more local level. These seem to be two competing paradigms.
"Logically speaking, the two worlds could not peacefully coexist. But in fact they did, proving
once again that America is a disproving ground of logic." (pp. 73-74)

Stout's analysis reflects two presuppositions that bear closer examination. The first is that
the rhetoric of New England's "Federalist clergy" and the tenets of republican and Enlightenment
thought were two separate, parallel, and ontologically equivalent logics. However, to view these
"logics" in such terms, would be to fundamentally misunderstand the paradox of their relationship
to one another. Historically, one grew out of the other. The embedded logic of Protestants trying
to work out their relationship to one another and of Catholics trying to work out their relationship
with Protestants was the seed ground for republican and Enlightenment thought. The religiously
inspired regimes of religious coexistence of the various colonies, and various denominational,
republican, and Enlightenment approaches to religion all arose in response to a common, concrete
problematique. All these logics shared many underlying concepts and assumptions, though often
developed from different vantages. Moreover, in thinking through the problematique of religious
coexistence most American statesmen did so while also maintaining religious commitments. As a result, both their actions and their political rhetoric were tailored to safeguard what they saw as essential religious values. Accordingly, proposals for accommodating religious diversity in early American society, even when cast in neutral republican or Enlightenment terms, retained a valence for particular views of the religious ends of life.

It is no coincidence that Protestant American statesmen did not develop political themes based on tradition, obedience, or office, all of which could be found in Christian tradition but which were more associated with the Catholicism over against which various Protestant traditions had come to be defined. Instead, American statesmen emphasized liberty of conscience, anti-authoritarianism, and social covenant, ideals which resonated with their own religious sensibilities. In many respects democratic theory represented the translation of the Reformation affirmation of the rights of all the faithful to the political sphere. So it is not a question of two mutually exclusive, competing logics, one intruding at the expense of the other. Indeed, Locke had drawn on contemporary Christian theology in developing his political thought. And in his observation that religion is among the "firmest props of the duties of men and citizens," Washington summed up myriad contemporary insights.

Stout's illustrations of the divergence between the rhetoric of New England's "Federalist clergy" and the tenets of American enlightened republicanism are revealing. For example:

In extending the idea of covenant to the nation, the Federalist clergy fastened on to three interrelated corollaries…The first, and all-important, corollary to the clergy's Christianization of America was the proposition that America originated ultimately not through social compact but by divine fiat. Arguments from natural law and the consent of the governed were not sufficient explanations for the meaning of America. In the beginning God created New England. (Stout 1990:69)

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30 Kramnick and Moore (1996:44) note that in 1787 contemporaries observed that the proposed Constitution was "coldly indifferent to religion." While endorsing its thoroughly secular character, they add the following typical observation: "The political convictions of the men who struggled to ratify a godless Constitution were not products of personal godlessness. Far from it. Almost everyone who participated in debates about the Constitution shared a concern about the health of religion."
Here Stout places natural law and God on opposite sides of some logical and rhetorical divide. But to do so exaggerates the case. Any acquaintance with medieval scholastic philosophy or the thought of John Locke reveals that natural law was specifically developed as a way of conceiving the natural and moral order as having an integrity in their own right, but from within the framework of a systematic theology. Natural law is itself a theological construct. And as for covenant theology and the social contract, it would be difficult to find two more consonant notions. What is a covenant, but a social compact understood from a theological perspective? They are not the same notion, to be sure. However, one might conceivably use each construct to describe the same historical circumstance without contradiction. That is simply because each aims at a different level of meaning and understanding. This example in fact betrays how the rhetoric of Puritanism is deeply resonant with, even implicated in, that of the American Enlightenment. It is the convergences between these logics which are really most conspicuous.

Stout’s second assumption seems to be that the Constitution belonged to a clearly defined camp of republican, enlightened “Framers,” while the Federalist clergy merely make sense of it from within some other rhetorical world. However, not only do the larger "camps" to which these social actors belong overlap one another. In addition, New England Congregationalists rightly claimed the Constitution and the new order as in some way their own. The success of the Constitution depended precisely on the genius of ambiguity embedded in the document, a genius which allowed it to be owned in different ways by many camps.

Likewise, when the Act of Toleration of 1689 opened New England to legalize other Christian groups, that the Puritans faced this challenge by reaffirming the voluntaryism at the core of their tradition was not a specious act of doublespeak. And when rationalist Christian statesmen steeped in Enlightenment thought aligned with non-conformist Baptists to oppose religious establishment—a convergence crucial to winning disestablishment at the national level (Witte 2000:28-34, 44-45)—both could legitimately own the outcome. The notion of an
inviolable sphere of individual rights grew out of religious insights protecting the individual conscience, and eventually also the domestic sphere, from state intrusions. Civic republicanism echoed the religious sense of common purpose of the Puritan commonwealth and traditional Catholic notions of the common good. Democratic affirmation of the equal dignity of all persons not only hearkens back to fundamental Jewish and Christian insights; it also reflects Reformation assertions about church order that emphasized the status of each believer. Many core precedents to the secular Constitution were strands already woven into America's religious history.

Moreover, the scope of the Constitution was a deliberate part of the religious settlement that emerged in the new order. The First Amendment is the only one that specifically restricts its application to Congress. In other words, the U.S. Constitution specifically left in place the authority of each state to regulate religious affairs in its jurisdiction. While many observers note how meticulous the Founding Fathers were regarding the absolutely secular nature of the Federal government, few have been as rigorously candid in acknowledging that the Constitution essentially passed along responsibility for dealing with the complex religious situation the United States inherited to the various states themselves. While most states did act to set a standard of religious neutrality approaching that of the Federal Constitution, not all did so immediately. And various states, including many entering the Union in the nineteenth century, maintained some form of religious test for office. (Kramnick and Moore 1996:43) As regards the free expression of religion and its corporate exercise, of the fifty current states twenty-five explicitly define free exercise in a way that serves to potentially limit its scope. As regards corporate religious groups, most state constitutions acknowledge that such institutions, corporations,

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31 For example, with regard to "establishing" one faith community over another, Maryland, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire continued to provide financial support for Christian churches, in some cases selectively so. (Witte 2000:54)
32 Delaware and Vermont only include provision for freedom of worship. Twelve others mention only worship, sentiment, profession, or opinion. Here the pietistic notion of religion as an inner disposition, sometimes shared with others, comes to the fore. (Witte 2000:88-90)
associations, or societies do exist, but only thirty-six then affirm that they all have equal status before the law.33

Thus at the federal level rigorous neutrality prevailed, but the states were deliberately left with a certain religious autonomy. The coexistence of disestablishment at the Federal level with this leeway for differing state constitutions is sometimes viewed as a temporary expedient, one allowing for the Federal logic to work its way through the system over time. In other words, these arrangements could be viewed as provisional, but eventually one logic would prevail. However, contemporaries viewed these arrangements more in practical terms, as a compromise honoring a range of values, where some part of that range would be sacrificed if consistency prevailed. Such leeway then lent legitimacy to states like Massachusetts that maintained a covenantal ethos within a larger national framework of disestablishment. Within Massachusetts Stout's Federalist clergy viewed that covenantal ethos precisely as their way of being American.

During the first decades of the new republic, American Catholics and Protestants of all stripes did labor together with genuine good will to create a new society, one in which all could find a home. Certain circumstantial developments also helped to heal over divisions between Protestants and Catholics. That Catholic France had aided the colonies in their struggle with Great Britain decoupled the habitual link Americans made between patriotism and anti-Catholicism. And asserting nationhood status meant taking up a more cosmopolitan, less parochial approach to religious affiliation. At the same time, domestically, the Maryland gentry presented a respectable face for American Catholicism. They were English, educated, circumspect, and loyal. Among their leaders Charles Carroll (of Carrollton), one of the wealthiest men in the colonies, was a strong voice for the cause for independence, a man who risked his fortune for his country. (Dolan 2002:20-22) When openings for Catholic participation in

33 However, at present New Hampshire and Connecticut specifically extend this guarantee only to "every denomination of Christians." (Witte 2000:90-91)
American civic life did finally appear, Catholics took eager advantage of them. Philadelphia publisher and philanthropist Matthew Carey worked together with the likes of Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush on civic projects for the betterment of Philadelphia. (Dolan 2002:15-20) And in the end, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution all had at least one Catholic involved in their deliberations.34

In that era, America provided a unique context for Catholic religious and civil leaders to engage Enlightenment trends. In Europe, it is true, a number of Catholic thinkers had labored since the late seventeenth century to bring Enlightenment thought and Christian tradition into dialogue. This included attempts to integrate ecclesiology and social philosophy with the religious diversity that was an increasingly evident phenomenon of the day. Enlightenment anthropology—emphasizing the claim to dignity and the capacity to reason which all individuals possessed in view of their humanity—was the pivot on which these efforts turned.

Historian Joseph Chinnici notes that on the Continent many of these Catholic efforts stumbled over the attempt to reconcile the notion of freedom of conscience as a natural right with both the natural obligation to recognize truth and the commitment of the state to a substantive notion of truth. In the British domains, however, some Catholics thinkers were able to reconcile civil religious liberty without admitting doctrinal indifference by strictly separating the religious and civil spheres. "Unfortunately, these people never received an opportunity to see their theories put into practice. That chance was given only to their friends across the Atlantic." (Chinnici 1979:733) Indeed, in America even before the Revolution, forward-looking Catholics had been thinking through such a project. While Mathew Carey was an ardent Catholic, he was just as ardent a champion of the Enlightenment.35

The career of John Carroll, who eventually became the first American Catholic bishop, reflects the unique historical possibilities of the moment. Carroll was educated on the Continent, where he entered was ordained a priest in 1761, at the age of twenty-six; in 1774 he returned to America. Imbued with the learning of French humanism and the English Catholic Enlightenment, he could appreciate the depth of the dialogue that must take place between faith and culture. Throughout his life he was especially concerned that American Catholicism be truly American. After the Revolution, in exchanges regarding how the Catholic Church in America should organize itself, Carroll fretted that it not come directly under the Vatican, that it preserve its native independence, and that any bishop be chosen in accord with the tenor of American culture, by election. While Benjamin Franklin was in France Vatican officials made contact with him about the possibility of appointing a bishop for America. Carroll got wind of these moves, and given the historic opposition to foreign control of American affairs, he was driven to distraction. In the end, through Franklin's influence it was Carroll himself who was named "superior" of the American mission in 1784. While mission superior he convinced Rome to allow the American clergy to elect their own bishop, and again, he himself was chosen.

Dolan (2002:22-23) notes how thoroughly Carroll's sermons and correspondence reveal him to have been a proponent of the Enlightenment. When it came to religion, whereas Continental thinkers had argued that the ruler might wisely grant toleration as a benevolent concession, he was convinced it was a natural right. After the Revolution the transformation of American society that allowed Catholics to serve in Congress, in civic organizations, and in the military made a deep impression on Carroll. He endeavored to cultivate a church that could participate in the unique culture of democracy that America sponsored. He developed plans to use the vernacular in liturgy. He was anxious to establish seminaries in the United States to train clergy who had been born there and understood its culture. When planning the nation's first Catholic cathedral, he and the lay cathedral trustees engaged Benjamin Latrobe, architect of the
U.S. Capitol, rather than adopt the baroque style then in vogue in Europe.36

Carroll was able to endorse contemporary thinking concerning the social order, including many notions connected with popular sovereignty and religious liberty. That entailed rethinking Catholic political theory. In addition, at least early in his career, Carroll also thought church order might profitably incorporate certain democratic innovations, innovations which would bring Catholic practice into constructive dialogue with values generally inscribed in American culture. Such proposals struck closer to home in that they touched on Catholic self-understanding and theology. Even there, while Carroll would introduce considerations amenable to American culture regarding how bishops were chosen and how parish life functioned, he did not propose doing away with the episcopacy or handing parish governance over to lay councils. Finally, when it came to theology and more central themes in ecclesiology, Carroll was also strongly committed to the truth of Catholic doctrine. Enthusiastic patriot and promoter of an American Catholicism that he was, he nonetheless was clear that the affirmation of democratic principles in civil society did not mean that those same principles automatically overrode established norms governing Church teaching, Church authority, or the self-understanding of the Church. Nor was he prepared to lead American Catholicism into the denominational entente that united many Protestant bodies. Instead, he held to traditional Catholic self-understanding that the Church was bound by its tradition, and that it was not simply one Christian body among many. Moreover, while Carroll's Enlightenment anthropology led him to recognize a human nature that was shared by all people—a commonality he viewed as the basis for genuine amity—given his understanding that the differences between faiths mattered, he worried lest democratic culture lead to "indifferentism" or religious mixing. (Agonito 1976:358) Thus, while in civic affairs Carroll nurtured a constructive coexistence between Protestants and Catholics, with regard to religion he kept the larger culture

at a critical distance.

In order to negotiate the relationship between Catholicism and American culture, Carroll drew on the tendency of British and Continental Catholic thinkers to sharply distinguish between the religious and the "merely" civil: In religious affairs, Church hierarchy and doctrine had real, binding authority, but in civic affairs Catholics could be citizens, like anyone else.37 Thus Carroll strongly argued that the allegiance Catholics owed to the Church and its pastor in Rome was "purely religious," and that as a result it did not interfere with their duties as citizens. (Dolan 1992:107) Of course, achieving harmony between the duties of citizenship and those of faith depends not only on abstract definitions of religion and civic life, but on religious and civil authorities conspiring to coordinate their demands so that the two not conflict.38 Nonetheless Carroll held, as did Tocqueville in a later day, that the problem of religion in society could be neatly resolved when civil and religious authorities respected the line between civil and religious duties, as if this were some obvious given, something that Reason alone could deduce.

The approach Carroll took regarding the distinction between his duties as a citizen and those he affirmed as a Catholic reflected the antecedent history of Catholicism in America. Sharp tensions between Catholics and Protestants during the colonial era led to efforts to remove faith from arenas where they interacted. That strategy both kept the peace and safeguarded an arena to which Catholics could retreat to practice their faith. More recently, as members of a disenfranchised faith, Catholics also habitually maintained that they could be good fellow citizens alongside Protestants, despite the difference of their faith, because faith was one matter, citizenship another. Even in the new order Catholics were a small minority in a country whose population and culture remained predominantly Protestant. In these circumstances, distinguishing

37 Given the effort Carroll made to internalize democratic culture into the life of the Church itself, clearly this bifurcation was not absolute.
38 To return to the example of pacifism: If it were a tenet of one's faith, it might conflict with the demands of citizenship unless civil authorities made some provision for it that religious authorities could accept.
the civil from the religious sphere continued to recommend itself as a way of protecting a distinct arena for Catholic faith. While they might not embrace the larger culture unreservedly, so long as the civil authorities made no inordinate demands on them, demands that violated their faith, Catholics could be good citizens. At the same time, when it came to religion in public life, that meant emphasizing the autonomy of the civic, as well. Given the historical antagonisms between their faiths, the more Protestants brought their faith into public life, the less Catholics felt welcome. As a result, Catholics were wont to strongly uphold a secular standard of public life.

Thus in post-Revolutionary America, following the lead of Carroll and other prominent, like-minded members of their community, most American Catholics quickly embraced the new nation and its religious settlement as their own. They readily understood that it promised them a legitimacy and respectability that stood in stark contrast to the disabilities they had suffered throughout much of colonial history. At the same time, Catholics approached that settlement in a way quite different from New England Congregationalists. The Congregational clergy of New England viewed the post-Revolutionary settlement in light of their own history and commitments. They made sense of the nation and its Constitution under the rubric of covenant and sacred purpose. Accordingly, they were wont to emphasize the continuity between faith and national affairs, and locally, too, they understood they had a moral and religious responsibility to promote a godly order in the life of the community. On the other hand, Catholics were not as quick to identify God's plan of salvation quite so closely or obviously with the history of the nation.

While separation of church and state was not a traditional Catholic theme, safeguarding the independence and integrity of the Church has been a hallmark especially of the Western or Latin Church. From the earliest centuries the popes resisted imperial control, and Latin bishops struggled with monarchs over the independence of national churches. Within their own jurisdiction, the Latin prelates repeatedly staked out the right to operate according to Church tradition. However, historically they were not so ready to relinquish their say in the affairs of the overall society. That is not to say that in the Latin tradition there was no understanding of the distinction between civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Not only did it distinguish between canon and civil law. In distinguishing reason from faith and natural law from revelation, Latin thinkers sponsored a deliberate effort to establish a sphere of thought and jurisdiction relatively autonomous from Church control. But nonetheless the strength of the Latin tradition lay in its efforts to safeguard the independence of the Church.
Instead, they identified the work of the Kingdom with the Church (which they were often quick to identify with the institutional Catholic Church itself). Accordingly, they strongly endorsed the U.S. Constitutional settlement because it supported a secular standard of citizenship, and because it promised to respect the integrity and independence of Catholic religious practice. They understood this settlement through the lens of civic republicanism: In political affairs they were democrats and could meet their fellow citizens as citizens. They would fulfill their responsibilities to community and neighbor with all the civic enthusiasm they could muster. And in return they expected the freedom to fulfill their religious duties without interference or prejudice.

In post-Revolutionary America Catholics made an determined effort to participate in and serve diverse roles in the new order. They served in Congress, in state legislatures, and in other public office. And they were met with good will on many fronts. Chinnici (1979: 727-28) describes an emblematic event: In 1810 in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, on the occasion of the dedication of a Catholic church, both Protestants and Catholics turned out, including seven Protestant clergy. The Catholic priest unabashedly addressed how Catholic teaching was often misrepresented by Protestants. Then all the clergy gathered for a meal at the house of one of the Lutheran ministers. Commenting on this event, Dolan writes,

This was not an unusual occurrence. Lebanon was America writ small during the republican era. Throughout the period Catholics and Protestants were learning how to live together; mutual respect had improved; they attended services at each other's churches, sometimes out of necessity, more often out of genuine interest and curiosity; Protestants gave land and money for the construction of Catholic churches and sent their children to Catholic schools; Catholics and Protestants were partners in politics, and mixed marriages were commonplace. (Dolan 1992:102-03)\textsuperscript{40}

In numerous places Tocqueville also cites this neighborly coexistence between Catholics and Protestants with deep admiration. He even encountered a Catholic priest, Father Gabriel Richard of Detroit, who was among the Catholics elected to Congress, in this case mostly by Protestant

\textsuperscript{40} Dolan refers the reader who might like to pursue these extraordinary developments to Agonito (1976).
constituents. (Tocqueville 1971:132)

During these decades Catholics expressed their participation in the larger culture by internalizing a style and way of proceeding that were uniquely American. Churches were often plain white and lacked stain glass or statuary. And most Catholic parishes reserved a prominent role for elected committees of lay people. At a time when there was little ecclesiastical infrastructure and few clergy, the development of the local church depended upon the initiative of lay people. Often when they settled in areas that lacked a church, they would form a parish society, purchase land, and plan for a future parish. Once established, such parishes continued to have elected boards of "trustees" who played a vital role in sustaining parish life and even held title to the church building and lands.\textsuperscript{41} Though clergy coming from Europe were able to adapt to this voluntaryism—especially those coming from France and Germany, where lay involvement in parish life offered some precedent—in America this principle reached far fuller expression.

The regime of religious accommodation that Catholics and Protestants established in post-Revolutionary America has been characterized as a "republican interlude." (Dolan 1992:101-126) The debating the character of the new republic was the explicit focus of so much of public life. This vast conversation drew in Americans of all faiths. In Tocqueville's presentation even some two generations later America's public culture was still largely republican in spirit; all religion was supposedly strictly confined to the churches, while the debates of the day were conducted in purely civic terms. At best this was an idealization Tocqueville crafted to bring home the distinctiveness of the American spirit to his European readers. Nonetheless, America did have a secular Constitution and a federal government that was supposed to operate according to religion-blind principles. And certainly just after the Revolution if the dominant churches had not been chastened, they were following events rather than leading them. All were discerning

\textsuperscript{41} Patrick Carey (1983, cited in Dolan 2002:33) shows how this tendency reflected a deliberate appropriation of republican philosophy. For a historical review of American Catholic "trusteeism" see Carey (1987).
where they fit into this new order. Hence most religious groups moderated their claims on
American public life, adopting a generous take on religious coexistence and freedom. They made
room for one another in public life to the extent that they conducted its business in the vocabulary
of citizenship. The common sense was to keep religion out of public life so as to maintain
neighborly peace. This order then made room for Catholics to participate as fellow citizens. Yet
various religious groups often approach public life from different vantages. And as events were to
show, especially in local affairs, in the end Protestants continued to maintain a proprietary claim
over public life that Catholics did not.

In any event, it is clear that the religious regime which took shape in post-Revolutionary
America under a "godless" Constitution was not the result of a deliberate plan in favor of a
godless society. It represented a compromise among religious groups, not their overthrow by
secularism.42 The formulas of the Constitution were carefully crafted to allow diverse.constituencies to coalesce about its propositions. As a result, a remarkable array of religious
groups were able to recognize the Constitutional order that emerged early in U.S. history as in
some sense their own achievement. While civic republicanism and Enlightenment individualism
provided a "neutral" language for the U.S. Constitution and America's religious regime, one
constructed to avoid alienating any given minority, that regime was deeply embedded in
America's religious history. Its terms resonated on many levels with the religious traditions of
existing faith communities. And so those communities continued to make sense of and talk about
public life from the vantage of their traditions. The Constitution at the center of this regime
explicitly pertained only to the federal government. Yet it represented a compromise that had
support throughout society, so that state constitutions and the larger civic culture took shape in
friendly dialogue with the framework it established.

42 See Eisenach (2000:30ff) on this point.
This regime of structural pluralism came into being in part because no one Protestant group was dominant in America, but also because various Protestants groups had developed a capacity to collaborate with one another. It was the fruit of their capacity to see a certain legitimacy in one another. At least to the extent that it embraced a number of Protestant groups, internally grounded pluralism underwrote this regime. The premises and culture of this regime had for the most part been developed in the context of Protestant religious history. However, once the regime was codified in terms of republican and Enlightenment vocabulary, it became the basis for formally extending legitimacy to religious groups beyond the limited Protestant consensus of the day. That implied collaborating with religious groups with whom Protestants had limited working relationships. In the end, the only other major religious group Protestants had to engage for the next century or so was Catholics, a group with whom they shared a very tragic history.

In retrospect, America's post-Revolutionary cultural regime was not pluralist in the contemporary sense of a celebration of diversity. "Religion" was a support to the moral and social order because of its "common principles." Individuals were accommodated because primacy of conscience was to be safeguarded despite their differences. That is, they were accommodated primarily as individuals. In the regime of structural pluralism that resulted, diversity was not so much a desirable state as the social cost of toleration. The ideal was unity. Most of the religious groups in America held more or less that position. Among themselves various Protestant groups had developed a denominational paradigm for making positive sense of diversity. However, despite a noticeable thaw in relations and good will extended to Catholics, Protestant disdain for

41 In his Notes on the State of Virginia ([1782] 2002: 157-61), Thomas Jefferson actually did offer a contemporary argument in favor of religious diversity. There he addressed the presupposition of his day in favor of uniformity of belief: "Is uniformity attainable? Millions of innocent men, women, and children, since the introduction of Christianity, have been burnt, tortured, fined, imprisoned; yet we have not advanced one inch towards uniformity." Then he moved beyond the practical observation that such uniformity is merely unattainable: "But is uniformity of opinion desirable?... Difference of opinion is advantageous in religion. The several sects perform the office of a Censor morum over each other." Given the imperfection of the human condition as we know it in the circumstances of history, Jefferson maintained that in fact diversity could serve both religion and truth.
Catholicism was often only thinly masked. Catholics they might abide as individuals, but their faith was another matter. Likewise, Catholic leaders were convinced of their own faith; they sought to maintain the integrity of that faith within their community while simultaneously participating in American society on civic terms. Their embrace of the American order did not represent an explicit endorsement of Protestantism so much as its promise to live and let live.

In post-Revolutionary America Enlightenment individualism and civic republicanism seemed to contain the promise that would resolve all contradictions. Their easy formulas maintained that public life could be conducted on the basis of what united people as citizens, while religious differences could be neatly relegated to some other realm, in which they essentially existed as qualities of individual consciences. In an era when no group made vocal claims on public life, all groups were strenuous in their affirmation of the new, tolerant order, and even Catholics looked and behaved a lot like their Protestant fellow citizens, the problem of religious difference did not seem unmanageable. However, the promise of free exercise meant that religious differences could take corporate and public form. By the time Tocqueville was making his way across America, the homogeneity that worked to submerge difference and promote the conduct of public life in neutral, civic terms had already begun to break down.

44 When Bishop Carroll himself visited Boston in 1791, he was accorded a warm welcome at several functions. But as one native clergyman was careful to distinguish, that was on account of his personal character, not his faith. Carroll himself came to accept that especially in New England the prejudice against his faith was quite deep-rooted. (Agonito 1976:359)
Chapter V. The Changing Structure of Religious Accommodation in U.S. History

A. Prefatory Remarks

This chapter explores some of the ways in which regimes for negotiating religious diversity and the overall place of religion in American public life have been more than merely religion-blind, even while articulated in ostensibly neutral terms. In the American context how the norms of public life have related to particular faith communities most often goes unacknowledged in official rhetoric, or it has even been obfuscated. Precisely because in the context of disestablishment partisan arrangements increasingly lacked legitimacy (even when disestablishment originally applied only at the Federal level), the rhetoric of public life was grounded in non-sectarian terms. Of course, what "non-sectarian" meant varied depending upon the period or the controversy; it could mean ecumenically Protestant, generically Christian, broadly Judeo-Christian, or ostensibly neutral secularity. Nonetheless, whereas in the context of establishment the relationship between public policy and a given, privileged tradition is publicly visible, even deliberately so, in the United States the rhetoric of public life has often mystified the link between its norms and interfaith relations. Given the complex relations among the wide range of religious groups in America and the polymorphous informality of civil society, the tendency to such mystification has been pervasive.

Here the point will be to make explicit some of the links between public regimes and interfaith relations. Such regimes have often reflected the doctrines and commitments of some religious groups but not others. They have involved impositions on some groups but not others. And they have reflected the contests and accords between groups. That is not to reduce such regimes to little more than the strategic outcome of power struggles between American religious groups. For example, while the nineteenth century is often described as a period of "evangelical Protestant hegemony," that is only true within a larger context of disestablishment, freedom, and
legal protection for people of all faiths (with the often painful exception of Native Americans).
The norms governing the place of religion in American public life do not reduce to such
hegemony: The "American experiment" also manifests an integrity and cultural logic of its own.
Since tension, conflicting perspectives, and contest make up much of the narrative which follows,
it must be acknowledged at the outset that throughout America's history the majority of its
religious communities have vocally appreciated and supported its Constitutional framework, and
in the main they have interpreted that framework in ways to accommodate one another, as well.
Yet it would not be possible to explain the norms governing religion in public life apart from the
tensions which scored it, as well.

The thrust of this chapter then is to shine a light on the links between religious regimes,
interfaith relations, and key religious groups in America, especially Catholics and Protestants. In
this brief space no attempt will be made to give an exhaustive account of such links. Rather, the
endeavor will be to provide sufficient treatment to illuminate on not only the importance of these
links, but also the significance of the rapprochement which has taken place more recently in
America's religious history.

A number of ways of periodizing the various religious regimes in U.S. history have been
proposed. One is to recognize a number of dis establishments, beginning with the watershed of
legal dis establishment inaugurated by the U.S. Constitution. To that first disestablishment, it is
common to add a second, the cultural disestablishment of Protestantism, a development much
harder to date with any precision. Following Robert Handy (1971:184-225) many authors cite the
events of the 1920s as crucial turning points in this process. Phillip Hammond (1992) has argued
that the 1960s then constitute a "third disestablishment," in the sense of the cultural
disestablishment of religious tradition as such. He argues that in that decade for the majority of
Americans religion went from being a primordial characteristic—a given fixture of identity—to
being an elective affiliation. As a result, while the vast majority of Americans continued to be
religious in some important sense, how they held their religion had changed.

William Hutchinson's periodization of the stages of pluralism roughly parallels this breakdown. The ethos of "toleration" he describes corresponds to the period of cultural hegemony that Protestantism exercised prior to the second disestablishment, while the ethos of "inclusion" arose in the context when such hegemony was no longer presumptive. The broader legitimation of religious diversity that leads to the ethos of "participation" Hutchinson envisions is not precisely the result of the rise of personal autonomy described by Hammond. It correlates with slightly later developments. But those developments do emerge in the wake of the 1960s.

How one isolates key moments in a story depends, of course, on the story to be told. This chapter is concerned with the shifting relations between religion groups in America, especially American Catholics and Protestants, but also groups within the larger Protestant fold. It reviews key moments and movements in the period between that settlement and the 1960s: Protestant hegemony during the nineteenth century, the contestation over modernity that divided all the faiths in America beginning in the late nineteenth century, and the rivalries behind the "Protestant-Catholic-Jew synthesis" discussed by Herberg (and described by Hutchinson as "inclusion"). The roots of the present regime for negotiating religion in public life arose during this last period. However, since the 1960s America's religious culture has undergone such a significant transformation that it calls into doubt the presuppositions of those arrangements.

B. An Immigrant Church in the Evangelical Century

Americans adopted a secular Constitution and the broadly tolerant religious settlement associated with it at a singular moment in their religious and cultural history. Though the colonies each had their particular histories and constituencies, by the latter part of the eighteenth century they had come to share a common culture, even to the point that the descendants of the Dutch in former colonial New Amsterdam had begun to think of themselves as Englishmen (Niebuhr
Across the Colonies the educated classes participated in the common intellectual ferment of the Enlightenment, and confessional boundaries had been tempered by the pan-Protestant religious trends of the day. During the colonial period Catholics had come to understand the religious mores of their Protestant neighbors and adapt to the culture they shaped. Unity among all Americans was further cemented by the experience of war, the euphoria of victory, and the endeavor to build a nation in their aftermath. And while conventional church participation was low, most Americans shared a common Christian heritage. This cultural homogeneity conspired to mask a fundamental ambiguity at the center of the American religious settlement. That settlement was essentially built on an entente between Protestants, but then it was articulated in philosophical language which extended it to "all religions."

The ongoing debates over religion entertained in the Virginia Generate Assembly, first convened after the colonies declared independence, open a window on some of these ambiguities. In 1776 the Assembly passed a declaration of rights which included "the free exercise of religion." Then on several occasions bills were introduced which proposed moderate forms of establishment. A bill of 1779 would have granted recognition and tax support to congregations of the "Christian Religion" so long as they observed four broad creedal tenets, and their lay members chose their pastors (a provision specifically crafted to exclude both Catholics and Quakers). The bill was defeated. Another, proposed by Patrick Henry in 1784, would have salaried teachers of the Christian faith. The bill was framed in terms of the public good, and by eschewing any doctrinal or other distinguishing criteria, it also seemed genuinely non-preferential. However, James Madison then pointed out that the term Christian was a stumbling block: Who was to define it? Did it entail adherence to the Bible? If so, which edition? Which doctrines defined Christianity? Who was to decide? Such questions underscored the impossibility of having a "little bit" of establishment. A tradition is precisely a conversation taking place in a community which has gained a certain structure, one with certain standards of argument and bases of
authority. That is not to say that every tradition has to be able to come to a single definitive resolution of every controversy. However, it does mean that if government does not operate out of a specific tradition, it no longer has access to such standards.

A more inclusive compromise bill was then proposed, one extending the benefits of establishment to all religious groups. But then proponents of Christian establishment got the word "Christian" slipped back in. It was in response to this maneuver that Madison wrote his famous "Memorial and Remonstrance against Religious Assessments." There he argued that when people "enter society" they retain their natural rights, among them "equal title to the free exercise of Religion according to the dictates of Conscience." (section 4)

In fashion typical for his day, Madison took up the traditional Christian notion of conscience, along with the non-conformist stress on uncompromising respect for its integrity, and he united these with a natural law approach that invested this freedom in the individual as one of his or her inherent natural rights.

The point of making something a "natural right" is to argue that it is something which Reason itself is compelled to recognize, something due the individual apart from any granting of it. But again, to illustrate the dependence of Enlightenment reasoning upon religious history, the "obviousness" of this "natural right" only revealed itself in the context of preceding religious history in the West. (Indeed, in some cultural contexts today its obviousness remains elusive.)

Madison also included the following argument: "Who does not see that the same authority which can establish Christianity, in exclusion of all other Religions, may establish with the same ease any particular sect of Christians, in exclusion of all other Sects?" Here Madison once again reminded the assembled statesmen that any attempt to empower the state to intervene in religious matters, no matter how seemingly innocuous or broadly supported, could set a

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1 Here Madison himself is quoting from article 16 of the Virginia Declaration of Rights.
2 Thiemann (1996:21) underscores how Madison aptly captured the core common sense of his day: "Madison's arguments in the 'Remonstrance' capture the essential principles that undergird the religion clauses of the first amendment. The Basic principle animating the Bill of Rights is the 'freedom of conscience.'"
precedent for discrimination against the very faith one held dear. In a context where all faiths were minorities, and hence delicately balancing their relationships with one another, the argument hit home. Madison's arguments proved decisive, and this bill, too, suffered defeat.

In the end, in 1786 the Virginia Assembly passed a revision of the Statute for Religious Freedom which Thomas Jefferson had drafted, and which it had originally rejected back in 1779. Section two of the Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom of 1786 states:

Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That no man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever, nor shall be enforced, restrained, molested, or burdened in his body or goods, nor shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief; but that all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinion in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

This was a remarkable outcome considering that Virginia had been one of the colonies where the establishment of the Church of England had been most rigorously enforced. In commenting on the debates over the Statute, Jefferson himself observed that the Assembly declined to include any reference to Jesus Christ, "in proof that they meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Mohammedan, the Hindoo and the Infidel of every denomination." (Jefferson 2005)

This history manifests a number of significant points. First, despite Jefferson's reference to a wide variety of faiths, in fact the real issues of the day to be resolved were the place of Christianity in society and the contests between Christian groups. As the 1779 proposal for tax support of Christian churches showed, despite all the contemporary rhetoric about religious liberty and equality, the default common sense of the day was not only that the state should offer

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3 By contrast, in New England, where the dominant church had not been overturned in the new order, Congregationalists felt more confident about unabashedly perpetuating some form of establishment.

benign support for "Christianity," but that Christianity really meant Protestantism, and even there there were some Protestant groups that recognized one another as legitimately Christian and others relegated to the pale. When the more inclusive compromise bill was proposed, but then revised in favor of Christian groups rather than all religious groups, that illustrated the tendency for biases to slip back into even originally non-preferential arrangements. In this case it was done overtly, but bias can also slip in in the way that arrangements are interpreted or applied. People's presuppositions about legitimate religion have a tendency to color in the term. Hence Beneke (2006:172) observes that in early American history "religion" repeatedly turned out to mean "Christian;" "Christian" meant "Protestant;" and "Protestant" often enough boiled down to some favored denomination or denominations. And that elision could take place even among well-intentioned civic leaders, apart from any overt animus.

Second, it should be noted that the bill that finally passed dealt with the rights of individuals and their beliefs. Leading statesmen of the day repeatedly assumed that religion was an individual affair, a matter of conviction and beliefs, a personal and existential encounter with God, and a voluntary association of adult individuals similarly convinced. Hence the prototype of religious intolerance was the effort to constrain the opinions of individuals, and that of religious freedom was the lone dissenter being able to stand up and publicly proclaim his or her own appropriation of the faith. Those prototypes had emerged in the context of a particular religious history. They represented what the new society was ready to make room for, the unimpeded right of an individuals to entertain their own beliefs, no matter how eccentric. While "belief" may highlight certain dimensions of what religion entails, it ignores others. That religion also shaped a way of life, was shared in community, involved binding commitments, was passed on to children, and might constitute a cultural system, all with very public implications—such a conception of religion and its relevance for social life were not at the forefront of public discussions of religious
liberty in the late eighteenth century.\(^5\)

Such naïveté concerning the real implications of religious diversity is understandable, since at the time such religious diversity was not a mark of colonial culture. Rather, despite their contentious religious differences, given the gamut of human faiths, the range of beliefs over which Americans differed was theologically slim: The idea of a Hindu or Muslim presence in colonial society was a pure abstraction; Catholics and Jews were small minorities with little social power; African and Native American traditions, as it turned out, did not even count as religion;\(^6\) and such controversial American faiths as Mormonism had not yet come into being. So while Jefferson boldly argued that no Hindu or Muslim should be discountenanced for his or her faith, given the circumstances of the time, that opinion was essentially gratuitous. It certainly did not reflect any real appreciation of the relevant beliefs of these complex traditions, much less their implications for the life of society. However, in a few decades, the real cost of difference would become apparent. Then Protestants would come to argue that there was something about Catholicism that was incompatible with American democratic society, yet Catholics were a good deal closer to Protestants than Hindus or Muslims.

When statesmen in other parts of the country learned of the broad liberality built into the Virginia Statue, not a few vented their exasperation. Yet Jefferson added an argument which

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\(^5\) Hutchinson (2003: 30-32, and following) makes a similar point. He notes that many people with radical, even controversial, beliefs were tolerated in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century America, but Catholics and Mormons were given a hard time. He proposes that the crux of the difference was that eccentric beliefs were tolerated, but non-conformist behavior was a problem. To be sure, that is part of it. American society had developed a language and even a religious framework for dealing with diversity of belief, so long as it remained an individual eccentricity of thought. However, what Catholicism and Mormonism represented was not simply the divergent beliefs of individuals, or even individuals' divergent behavior, but something far more threatening: a distinctive, corporate religious culture. Precisely by proclaiming that there was more to religion than individual belief, personal sincerity, and an essentially secularized civic morality, Catholicism and Mormonism seemed positively heretical. They did not conform to the "belief" paradigm of religion. And for their part, the heretics, returned the favor and denied the full legitimacy of the reigning Protestant faiths. At heart there were dueling intuitions of the very nature of religion, and the implication of those intuitions for social life ran deep.

\(^6\) In Hutchinson's (2003:17) assessment, "As for non-European religions, the very idea that blacks or Indians had religions of their own seemed absurd to most members of the dominant culture."
ultimately proved persuasive: In free debate the truth would always win out. Such a position reflected an Enlightenment notion of faith as a "reasonable" affair. It held out the promise that in a free society a certain consensus on matters of faith would emerge. More importantly, from the perspective of a person convinced of his or her faith, it implied: "All would come to see as I do." (Beneke 2006:167) When the Constitutional Convention took place the following year, freedom of belief was indeed taken for granted. Given the assumption that in a free society religion would take on a "reasonable" cast, and given the larger cultural and religious consensus of the time, freedom of belief did not seem to pose a serious threat. At the same time, at a later date, this normative notion of faith as something open to debate, and hence persuasion, informed the expectation that immigrants to America, especially Catholics, should be open to the Protestant faith of their new country, given its seeming self-evident reasonableness.

Even before major changes in American society and religious culture compromised the presuppositions of the American settlement, contradictions began to surface. During his first term as President under the new Constitution, George Washington visited Newport, Rhode Island, where he received a welcome message from the local Jewish congregation. Its members wrote in praise of the federal government because it made no provision for bigotry or persecution. In his response, Washington made a remarkable point: "It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it was by the indulgence of one class of people, that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights." The First Amendment had yet to be ratified, but Washington was convinced that already in America toleration was obsolete because all were equally members of society, irrespective of creed. (Beneke 2006:202-03) It was a noble sentiment. Yet before the decade was out, in neighboring Massachusetts Catholics challenged the collection of taxes for the support of Protestant ministers only, and the case went to the State Supreme Court. They lost the case. According to Father Francis Matignon, the judge explained,

The Constitution [of Massachusetts] obliges everyone to contribute for the support of
Protestant ministers and them alone. Papists are only tolerated and as long as their ministers behave well, we shall not disturb them. But let them expect no more than that. (cited in Agonito 1976:359-60)

Apparently, even bare toleration was not to be taken for granted. Meanwhile, the same George Washington who promised respect for all irrespective of creed also promised the aid of the federal government to a group endeavoring to "civilize and Christianize the savages of the wilderness" (Washington's words, cited in Beneke 2006:206). Such contradictions arose because Americans attempted to extend an entente among Protestants based on certain presuppositions about religion to "all faiths," and while they adopted broad Enlightenment and civic categories to talk about this religious settlement, on the ground the those presuppositions continued to inform what legitimate faith really meant.

These contradictions were exacerbated by two momentous historical developments in American religion. First, Catholicism changed. Not only did it become bigger, as Catholic immigrants increasingly made their way to the United States. It also became noticeably less American and noticeably more "Roman." Second, Protestantism changed. Statesmen such as Madison and Jefferson had apparently envisioned the result of disestablishment to be a religious order measured according to their own standards of reasonableness, something akin to "a self-canceling religious pluralism presided over by an enlightened and cosmopolitan gentry" (Eisenach 2000:17). Instead, matters turned out quite differently. Disestablishment essentially cleared the way the series of popular religious movements that constituted the Second Great Awakening. Beginning in 1800 and spanning three decades, this populist religious revival aimed at an immediate and deeply personal engagement of what Christian faith means, tailored to the culture and categories of the times. Biblically based, stripped of extensive theological trappings, the revivals of the Second Great Awakening once again transformed the religious landscape of America. The approach of the revivalists led to the phenomenal growth of new and previously minor churches. It threatened a full-scale religious contest with the more theologically committed
church establishment of the day, had not a number of factors intervened, one of which was a shared anti-Catholicism. Instead, in the religious ferment which followed, Protestants of various stripes conspired together to erect an establishment by non-governmental means to replace the formal one eventually dismantled by the Constitutional settlement. The collision between nineteenth century immigrant Catholicism and this establishment meant for a far more religiously boisterous century than any of the signers of the Constitution could have anticipated.

Here the purpose will not be to trace that history, but to cite a representative issue which illustrates the implications of the alliances and conflicts among religious groups for the place of religion in public life. In the nineteenth century a wide range of issues involved religion and public life, but the many controversies that erupted over schooling are among the most revealing. In the context of these controversies Protestant and Catholic Americans not only enacted particular understandings of the relationship between religion and in public life. They also made explicit arguments about that very issue. The depth of these controversies led to a proposed Constitutional amendment which nearly passed, and the revision of many state constitutions; their complexity provokes renewed analysis in every generation. The point here will not be to plumb that complexity, but to observe how the construction of the relationship between religion and public life was caught up in the relationship between religious groups.

Even before the turn of the nineteenth century the very progenitor of an American Catholicism, John Carroll, had begun to backtrack on Americanization. In the 1790s the country as a whole was waking up to the realization that national unity required some commitment to order and authority, and this lesson impressed Catholics as one relevant to the Church, as well. In addition, a number of factors chilled the spirited dialogue between Catholicism and republicanism in America. For one, Catholics were finding that in reality democracy was not always friendly to minority rights. Even more disturbing were the attacks on the Church in France which followed in the wake of the revolution there. Add to that the constraints of organizing a far-flung church in
thirteen states, and understandably Carroll gradually relinquished proposals for new forms of church organization in favor of the standardized order developed in Europe and codified in canon law. Plans for a liturgy in the vernacular fell into abeyance after 1810 (though sporadic use of English in rites, prayers, and the Mass continued for years to come). More significantly, Carroll stopped pushing for the election of bishops, while Rome was often ready to exercise its authority to create new dioceses and appoint bishops to fill them. (Dolan 1992:112-24)

The Europeanization which progressively overtook the American Catholic Church was not simply the result of one man's change in temperament. The American Church increasingly relied on clergy from Europe, and their influence proved decisive. When Carroll convened a synod of all the clergy in America in 1791, eighty percent were foreign-born. (Dolan 1992:118-19) Despite Carroll's success in establishing Saint Mary's Seminary in Baltimore that same year, in the end he had to resort to the Sulpicians to staff it, a French order famous for its learning and preaching, but European in outlook nonetheless. Through the 1820s on average sixty percent of the priests ordained at Saint Mary's continued to be foreign-born. Similarly, when four new dioceses were erected for America in 1808 (New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Bardstown), all had foreign-born bishops appointed for them. Many of these men were quite able, but they were not shy about asserting the traditional Catholic understanding of church governance: Within his diocese the bishop was a virtual monarch. As for the priests, those familiar with European Catholicism tended to adopt a paternalistic moralism vis-à-vis their congregants, emphasizing personal devotion and parish life rather than civic involvement. Gradually, the artwork and architecture that facilitated such a devotional culture infiltrated the American Church, as well. (Dolan 1992:112-24; Hennesey 1981:89-100)

Not all European-born clerics were anti-republican. In 1820 John England, an Irish priest involved in liberal reform movements, was appointed bishop of Charleston, South Carolina. He entered a diocese torn by disputes over issues of authority and governance, and he brought peace
by establishing republican forms throughout. He wrote up a constitution for his diocese and had it accepted at a convocation of clergy and laity. It included provision for parish trustees and regular annual convocations thereafter. But when he died in 1842, these convocations and the republican experiment he promoted, by that time quite singular, came to an end. (Dolan 2002:35-36)

The story of Saint Mary's parish in Philadelphia offers a more typical counterpoint to South Carolina. The center of Catholic high society in the city, by the 1820s Saint Mary's had succumbed to infighting over the appointment of pastors. Resisting the authority of the bishop, the trustees and their constituents broke out into pitched battles with one another in front of the church. They called in everyone from the courts to the state legislature to the pope to settle who governed the church and had authority to appoint the pastor. Eventually, the pope suspended the reigning bishop for incompetence and two priests involved in the infighting. The new bishop of Philadelphia then laid down the law, placing the parish under interdict until it submitted to his authority. With such examples in mind, when the bishops of the United States met in Baltimore in October of 1829, among their efforts to bring order to the American Church was the determination to reign in the trustee system. They were done with trustees appointing priests amenable to their own agendas, and priests manipulating parish politics like machine politicians. (Better to keep politics in chanceries, where it belongs!) Instead, they invested effective authority in the bishop and the clergy he appointed. (Dolan 2002:41-43, 47-49)

While the Europeanization of the American Catholic Church curtailed its adaptation to Protestant American cultural patterns, it proved an apt in the face of the ever increasing numbers of European Catholic immigrants that arrived throughout the nineteenth century. Most were not in a position to make decisions about how to organize parish life in a new society; rather, they looked to the parish as a support in organizing their own lives. And strong bishops and priests proved valuable advocates in the rough and tumble that America's industrializing cities soon became. Even before independence, Irish and German Catholics had been arriving throughout the
colonies, and they remained the largest Catholic immigrant group in antebellum America. Because of their numbers and the incorporation into America of lands that had been French and Spanish, by the time of the Civil War what had originally been a tiny Catholic population of perhaps 40,000 had swelled to some three million. That made it the single largest church in the United States. Its size, its European character, and its hierarchical organization confronted Protestant Americans with a daunting institutional presence, one that could scarcely have been imagined during the Revolutionary era.

On the Protestant side, disestablishment opened the door to innovation, and that led to creative efforts to reach people who had moved beyond the urban centers of the established churches, people living in rural areas and on the ever-expanding frontier. Bishop Francis Asbury, appointed by John Wesley in 1784 to take over the mission in America, typified the spirit of the new era. He laid the foundation for the American Methodist Church (now fully independent from the Episcopal Church), riding circuit tirelessly, preaching wherever a crowd would gather. In their early years Methodist and Baptist leaders positively eschewed excessive education for their ministers, fearing that too much of human erudition would overlay the wisdom of God and the simple truths of the heart. They were extremely successful in preaching to ordinary people. At the same time, the Methodists in particular had a genius for organization, involving lay people in the running of local affairs. Other ministers developed the camp revival. Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist preachers would often collaborate in orchestrating large camp meetings, such as the famous Cane Ridge revival which took place in Kentucky in 1801. There people were led to confront their sinfulness, appreciate the depths of God's mercy, and open their hearts. It was a simple and clear formula, and one that effectively captured a crucial dimension of Christian faith. Charles Finney, a lawyer turned evangelist, studied this movement of the spirit and brought its

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7 Some authorities differ slightly with these figures. For example Finke and Stark (1992:113-16) argue that by 1860 Catholics totaled only two and a half million, and that they were not the largest single church until as late as 1890.
techniques into the churches (often to the dismay of his more intellectual colleagues). The camp revivals also gave rise to the Restorationist Movement, in which men such as Alexander Campbell promoted a "non-denominational" Christianity, one which would cast off the accretions of tradition in order to reclaim the simple truths of New Testament faith.

The ethos of this movement of evangelization is especially important to take note of. These camp meetings and revivals were widely advertised, open to all, and reported on in the local newspapers. They took place in public, before the whole community, exposed to the full light of day. Hence they were public in a very democratic sense. They were not sectarian in the sense of some closed affair taking place in a church. And they were part of a broader religious conversation, one that included the active collaboration of a number of Protestant churches. Even those Protestant ministers who objected to the emotionalism of these revivals ultimately had few objections to their basic Christian message. At the same time, the revivalists did not only appeal to the Bible. They based their appeal on natural law, ethics, democratic theory, and also the science of the day. In fact, they drew on a Baconian paradigm of science and faith which saw the truths of science and faith as mutually reinforcing. (Bozeman 1977; Hovenkamp 1978:10-12)

Thus when Campbell argued that Christianity should get back to the New Testament, he was making an appeal to get back to the "facts," the plain truth of Christianity, stripped of all the fanciful and unempirical accretions that had taken root over the years.

Campbell's appeal to Baconian science fit not only with the spirit of the times, but also with the revolutionary approach to Christianity for which he became famous. The church would rely on the facts of New Testament Christianity alone and so follow only primitive Christian practices. (Marsden 2001:59)

While not every revivalist was as strictly literalist as Campbell—who forbade music in worship because it did not specifically appear in New Testament accounts—they approached their project stressing similar themes. They proclaimed a harmonious synthesis of progress, science, faith, democracy, and Scripture, with Protestant Christianity a the center of it all. Those strands were
woven into the religious common sense of the day.

The notion of religious truth operative here is crucial. This truth was clearly not a private affair. It was something confirmed out in the open. It accorded with science and democracy. It was broadly Protestant, thus occupying the center of the entente that was "really" at the core of the American settlement. And for some evangelizers even the notion of a "denomination"—one tradition sharing in some broader, essential Christianity—did not go far enough. Rather, what they proclaimed was a "non-denominational" Christianity. While others might operate within traditions, these evangelists had transcended the bounds of any tradition and simply proclaimed Christianity as such. To an outside observer, of course, the form of Christianity they articulated was not only very particular, but very American, as well. In this light, it is clear that the hermeneutic principle these populist revivalists deployed lacked a certain self-awareness. Truth was simply truth, uttered in plain words. The awareness that those words were uttered in conversations that necessarily took shape within a tradition was not only lacking; it was denied. Moreover, this hermeneutic tended to treat all truth as of a piece: The truth of the Bible was in straightforward continuity with the truth of democracy, and even with the truth of science. This linking of the "plain Christianity" of evangelical revivalism with Christianity as such, science, democracy, and objectivity had profound implications for its claim on American public life. What could claim more public legitimacy than such an objective proclamation of the Truth?

The Second Great Awakening further fueled the rise of the upstart sects, the Methodists

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8 The movement that traces itself back to Campbell did become a particular church, the Disciples of Christ, a denomination with its own beliefs and practices. And in keeping with their tradition, they do keep it simple, so that certain essentials shine forth.

In our own day some Christian groups make an analogous claim. They argue that their faith is not a "religion," that is, a religion in the sense of a man-made system. They stress what many Christians would in fact agree is a core religious insight: That authentic faith is not about a system of doctrine or ritual, but (from a Christian perspective) about a relationship with God. What the Christian groups who condemn other faiths as being mere "religions" fail to see is that most also proclaim the same thing, that the "externals" are not what they are witnessing to. As the Zen master tells his students, doctrine is merely a finger pointing to the moon. It is not the moon itself.
and the Baptists, and their eclipse of those churches which had dominated the colonial religious scene, the Episcopalians (formerly the Anglican Church), the Presbyterians, the Dutch Reformed, and the Congregationalists. But even the latter churches became caught up in the religious enthusiasm of the day and the great project of evangelizing society. This project involved not only personal reform of life, but also social reform. To cite a prominent example, the churches took up the cause of abolition, so fervently, in fact, that by the 1840s it led to schism between the Northern and Southern branches of the Methodists, the Baptists, and the Presbyterians.

The drive to evangelize society led church groups to sponsor a wide range of social services. And it made education a crucial locus of activity. Despite the "everyman" approach of the circuit riding ministers, through the late nineteenth century the churches were also the greatest sponsors of higher education in the United States. And beyond church-sponsored institutions, state universities often had ministers as presidents and required students to attend broadly Protestant services.\(^9\) This last development reflects one way in which prominent members of the main Protestant denominations came to constitute a cultural establishment in American society, an interconnected network of leaders in church affairs, education, politics, social service, government, and the business world which effectively operationalized the unofficial yet quasi-official hegemony of Protestantism in American public life.\(^10\)

The trajectories of America's Catholic and Protestant constituencies propelled them on a crash course. Historian James Hennesey (1981:89) puts it gently when he writes that the rise of the "Righteous Empire" (quoting Martin Marty's moniker) was "not an altogether comfortable time for Catholics." Nor were Protestants altogether comfortable with the form Catholicism was taking in their midst. Anxiety over the influx of clannish foreigners fueled rumors of papal plots

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\(^9\) Interest in the Christian heritage of American education has provoked a wave of recent scholarship. Two standard treatments of this topic are Marsden (1994), who focuses on Protestant institutions, and Burtchaell (1998), who also includes Catholic ones.

\(^10\) See also Howe's (1990) discussion of Protestant populism and the "benevolent empire."
to take over the land. By the 1820s, anti-Catholic tracts and Catholic-baiting in tabloids such as the New York Observer were being countered by a series of Catholic diocesan newspapers founded during the decade.

Boston, Philadelphia, and New York became centers of Catholic-Protestant tension. In Boston, while the first Catholic bishop, Jean Cheverus, was an urbane man well-respected in Protestant circles, after his return to France, relations began to deteriorate. In 1834 tensions came to a head, fanned by a famous Protestant preacher, Lyman Beecher, who was visiting from Cincinnati. Beecher's own concern was some imagined papal plot to take over the Mississippi Valley, but his sermons encouraged Bostonians to pursue their suspicions about a Catholic convent and school for girls. Despite selectmen finding nothing amiss, a mob attacked and burned the convent to the ground. Two years later the pornographic and completely fictitious Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery was published by one Maria Monk, with the sponsorship of two Protestant clergy. Its incendiary accounts of illicit liaisons between priests and nuns confirmed the worst fears about what Catholics really did behind closed doors. Monk and her sponsors went on the lecture circuit to deliberately fan bigotry and fear. In 1844 in Philadelphia, mistrust and fear led to violent riots. Mobs burned thirty Catholic homes, the seminary, and two churches; fourteen people were killed in the melee. In all these incidents, civic leaders expressed their regrets after the fact, but no redress was ever made. In New York, the bishop, John Hughes, an unabashedly feisty character, let the city leadership know they should be proactive in preventing mob violence. He made it clear that if any churches were torched in New York, the city would become a second Moscow—Moscow had burned to the ground in 1812.

Clearly, John Hughes, or "Dagger John," as he was affectionately known, had a different temper than John Carroll. But the times had a different temper, too. In Carroll's day Catholics were being invited to participate in newly opened arenas of a society. By Hughes' day they chafed repeatedly at being shut out of the institutions that governed their lives. Tensions waxed and
waned for the remainder of the century. One center of those tensions was a new institution, the public school, or as it was originally termed, the common school.

The common school early became a rallying point for building a democratic and industrious society. America led the Western world in developing this institution. Protestant leaders saw it not only as a tool for educating the next generation in both the technical skills and social mores required of them in this emerging new order. Many came to view the common school as the nation's church (Dolan 1992:271; Michaelsen 1969:212), where the national creed of Protestantism, democracy, and progress was inculcated. Finally, it was viewed as the essential tool of Americanization. As the nation recruited increasing numbers of immigrants to tame its lands and work in its factories, the common school was seen as the crucial medium for transforming, if not the first generation of arrivals, at least their children into Americans. And at the time, given the close and ever more intimate association between America and Christianity (meaning Protestantism), this meant that the common school was used as a sometimes subtle, though usually overt means of religious proselytizing.

Will Herberg (1955:23) famously wrote, "The newcomer is expected to change many things about him as he becomes American—nationality, language, culture. One thing, however, he is not expected to change—and that is his religion." That observation did not apply to the nineteenth century. Rather, what distinguished America from traditional societies in the Europe and Asia was the view that citizens, and potential citizens, were primarily individuals. When other societies accepted immigrants, they expected them to retain their corporate identity and to live in ethnic enclaves. Often such societies even made provision for groups to retain some measure of their own customary law and leadership structure. And they only allowed immigration to the extent that they were prepared to accept people as they were. Immigrants to America were offered full membership in society, but in exchange they were expected to become American. So while religious freedom was an explicit part of the American religious settlement, in fact the
normative hope and expectation was that as immigrants became American, they would assimilate on a religious level, as well. Especially as evangelization became a pervasive cultural force, buttressed by a growing informal establishment, the press upon individuals to take up Protestant Christianity was encountered in every aspect of life, from the workplace to the school house.

Religious freedom could be and in fact was interpreted to mean that once immigrants had left behind their former oppression, they were free to cast off its superstitious traditions, as well. Since a central part of Protestant mythology was that Protestantism was the faith of freedom and progress, while Catholicism was the yoke of papal oppression, Catholic immigrants in particular were expected to conform to the script and embrace the Protestant faith of their new homeland. When they did not, when they clung to their faith, this was repeatedly interpreted as the result of manipulations of their malevolent priests. The priests were exercising "control" over Catholics as a body, and this was a violation of the norms of democracy, where everyone was to "think for themselves." The proponents of the "benevolent empire" expected to have access to the immigrants as individuals, and when Catholic corporate behavior and institutions stood in their way, this was seen as a violation of the terms of their assimilation. But really this had nothing to do with Catholics not thinking for themselves; the root of the problem was that they in fact did.

The common schools were a none-too-subtle instrument of assimilation into both American and Protestant values. Christianity was a pervasive part of the curriculum. "Religious training was assumed to be part of a good education and both private and public schools routinely taught Protestant doctrine (often to the chagrin of Catholics and others)." (Marsden 2001) This was held to be "non-sectarian," however, because it was generally pan-Protestant, and not the doctrine of a particular denomination. Until 1830 or so a fairly standard part of grade school education was *The New England Primer*, a text dating to a much earlier era and ethos (1688, to be precise). In the course of teaching the alphabet and basic reading skills, it inculcated Christian doctrine on every page, often with a strong Calvinist flavor. From a Catholic perspective, not only
did it leave out certain crucial aspects of faith—an appreciation of the sacramental dimension of life, church history, and devotions that mark Catholic faith—it also contained outright attacks on Catholicism. For example, in depicting the martyrdom of John Rogers under Queen Mary, the Catholic daughter of Henry VIII, it reports his last testament to his children. He exhorts them,

Abhor that arrant whore of Rome,  
And all her blasphemies,  
And drink not of her cursed cup;  
Obey not her decrees. (Massachusetts Sabbath School Society [1688] 1843:26)

The whole setting of these admonitions and this abusive reference to the pope were calculated to make a deep impression on children. Certainly, the tragedy of Christian persecution of other Christians was a fact of history, and perhaps in education it is important to have children confront such tragic intolerance. However, this text made no mention of the Catholic martyrs Mary's sister Elizabeth created. It was not a lesson about intolerance. Rather, it was part of a larger, purely partisan appeal to take sides against Catholics. Yet it was deemed appropriate reading material, not only for Protestant children, but also for Catholics in publicly funded schools.

In New York in the 1830s schools for children were operated by the Public School Society, a Protestant organization explicitly committed to promoting Protestant piety, but which received tax money to fund its operation. Despite such public funding, in these schools "[i]t never seemed out of place that history, geography, and literature textbooks ridiculed 'Romish' beliefs and practices" (Hennesey 1981:108). Catholics refused to send their children to these schools because of their pervasive efforts at trying to undermine their children's faith, and instead their children crowded into the basements of parish churches for basic instruction. Catholics tried to make their objections to the common school curriculum heard, but to avail. When John Hughes became bishop in 1838 he applied to the city's Common Council for funding for a Catholic society that would operate on a par with the Protestant society. After a two year campaign of public meetings and debate, the petition was denied. While the Protestant society's schools were
"public" schools, Catholic schools would be "sectarian." Hughes was so exasperated by this logic that he went so far as to organize a Catholic slate for the state legislature. He made enough of a dent in state politics that he got his point across. The state took over the running of New York's public schools, and at least in heavily Catholic neighborhoods the bigotry was toned down. Meanwhile, Hughes became committed to establishing a network of Catholic schools in his diocese. (Dolan 1992:262-63; Hennesey 1981:107-09)

In Boston the drive to build parochial schools was never fully embraced by the Catholic leadership, and most Catholic children attended public schools. In Massachusetts Horace Mann, a Unitarian by faith, directed the state Board of Education from 1837 to 1849. And while he was no friend of Catholicism, he also watered down religious content in the public schools to a fairly inoffensive minimum: the Bible, a vague deism, natural theology (that is, non-dogmatic philosophical theology), and ethics. Yet even this did not forestall all conflict. In Boston tensions ran high because by mid-century nearly half the population of this citadel of Puritanism was Catholic. In 1859 these tensions erupted because a ten-year-old boy refused to read the Protestant version of the Ten Commandments at the start of the school day. At the urging of a school board member who was a former Know Nothing, the school principal refused to allow the boy recite the Catholic version. Meanwhile Father Wiget, the boy's parish priest, urged him not to compromise his faith. The next week for an hour the principal beat the boy's knuckles with a cane.

According to Protestant religious historian George Marsden (1994:87), "Transparent in the common school enterprise was its anti-Romanism. Mann as much as Lyman Beecher feared the Catholic threat, but in the East urgency was heightened by the prospect of social disruption created by the rapidly rising urban masses of the poor and uneducated, mostly Catholics."

The difference is a subtle, and seemingly insignificant one. The Catholic (and Lutheran) way of breaking up the passage containing the Decalogue follows Augustine, who himself was following the common practice of the synagogue in his day. In this approach, the prohibition against images is included as part of the first commandment, which enjoins worshiping the Lord alone. In this setting, the prohibition has the sense of forbidding images of God or of another god. The Protestant version takes the prohibition against images out of this context and numbers it as a commandment in its own right. This approach lends support to a more general prohibition against images, and to the recurrent Protestant polemic against Catholic devotional life. Of course, all of this was probably lost on the ten-year-olds of the day.
before the entire class, and while his knuckles bled, his classmates urged him not to give in. The courts sided with the principal, while the Catholic boys staged an insurrection in the schools. One Protestant minister condemned the priest for this Catholic aggression on the public schools, while another urged that the "general and common doctrines of Christianity" in the common schools were at stake. A few months later, however, the school board conceded that no Catholic school child would be compelled to recite anything which violated his or her faith. (Lord, Sexton, and Harrington 1944: vol. II, pp. 587-601; McGreevy 2003:7-10, and following)

At the same time, if the truth be told, Father Wiget was indeed deliberately confrontational, to the exasperation of the pastor under whom he worked. Wiget had come recently from Europe, where a resurgent church was caught up in a struggle with "modernity," while the pastor was an American, someone committed to working over the long-term with his Protestant neighbors. (McGreevy 2003:19-37) So while it was true that the school board's original refusal to accommodate a potentially legitimate Catholic concern reflected the refusal of certain actors to accord any real legitimacy to Catholicism itself, Father Wiget was just as intransigent. Moreover, the kind of mass loyalty he commanded was precisely what violated Protestant sensibilities. (However, it must also be admitted that he did not wield his authority over Catholic adults, but rather over grade school boys.)

Further West, politics were not quite as confrontational. The shorter history of the settlements there meant that anti-Catholicism was not always as deeply inscribed in their institutions and culture. In the early nineteenth century Cincinnati, the leading inland city in the United States, was famed as a truly American city because it was founded only after the colonial era. There the Catholic bishop, John Purcell, took a conciliatory attitude to the public schools, while also quietly building up a parochial school system. He arrived in 1832 and served as bishop until 1883. He tried to have common school textbooks amended to lower the volume of polemic
against Catholicism, to have the Catholic translation of the Bible available for Catholic students,\textsuperscript{13} and to secure public funding for Catholic schools. And in each of these efforts he was rebuffed.

Then in 1869 the school board realized that its failure to accommodate Catholics meant that they were abandoning the public school system. At the time one third of the city's entire school population, some twelve to fifteen thousand students, was attending Catholic schools. The board, ten of whose forty members were Catholic, convened a committee to pursue consolidation of the school district with the Catholic schools. In talks with the bishop they developed the proposal that all would use common textbooks and no religious instruction would take place during regular school hours, but on weekends the Catholic diocese could make use of its buildings for religious purposes. A resolute block of Catholic clergy formed against this proposal. At the same time, it represented a departure from the proposals of Horace Mann which had served as a working compromise among Protestants and more liberal religious thinkers for the past several decades. Preachers and citizens' groups railed against the Romish plot to strip the public schools of the Bible.\textsuperscript{14} The marriage was off.

In the face of this impasse, one school board member proposed that all religious instruction and the reading of all religious books, including the Bible, simply be barred from the

\textsuperscript{13} The "Protestant version of Bible," almost always the King James Version, excluded books included in Catholic versions (though both agree that some of these books are inspirational rather than authoritative). Obviously, different approaches to translation also had doctrinal implications, even subtle organizational principles as arose in connection with the Decalogue. But most significantly, the King James Bible also implied a position on who had the authority to issue a translation of the Bible in the first place. The Bible itself is in a very real sense the Church's constitution; that is, it literally constitutes the Christianity's self-understanding: It was assembled as that collection of texts in which Christians saw their faith and their collective purpose reflected. A translation of the Bible issued by the King of England affirmed a role for the British monarch in deciding the Church's constitution which the Catholic Church contested. So in a number of important respects the King James Bible was an explicit symbol of English Protestantism. However, as many Catholics were able to acknowledge when polemics subsided, it was also admittedly a translation of extraordinary literary, scholarly, and religious integrity.

\textsuperscript{14} "All opponents of the Miller resolutions extolled the virtues of America, the Bible, the common schools, and the common (Protestant or Christian) religion. They warned against the sinister conspiracy of the 'Romanists' and the non-believers to remove the Bible from the schools and they saw in this move an effort to undermine the public school system and even the country itself." (Michaelsen 1969:205) Again, the position taken assumes the equation of America with Christianity with Protestantism.
Cincinnati public schools, so that all children "of all sects and opinions...[can] enjoy alike the benefit of the common-school fund" (cited in Michaelsen 1969:205). The board passed this proposal. A group of citizens promptly filed suit, charging that its violated the Ohio Constitution, which stipulates that "religion, morality and knowledge" were essential to good government, and due provision should be made for imparting them. In their argument they noted that "religion" must mean "Christianity," since that was the prevailing religion of Ohio. Since the Bible was the revealed text of "religion," it had to be read in the public schools. (The question of there being different traditions of Christianity and different translations of the Bible was glossed over.) The Cincinnati Superior Court found in their favor. But three years later the Ohio Supreme Court found that the state constitution did not "enjoin or require religious instruction, or the reading of religious books, in the public schools." From that day forward the Bible was not read in Cincinnati public schools, but at that point the fire had gone out of the issue.15

Controversy over public schools continued to rage across the country. The president of Washington University in Saint Louis battled against Catholic influence in the public schools there (McGreevy 2003:92). Even allowing Catholic priests access to inmates in prisons or asylums was seen as a form of subservience to Catholic "demands" (McGreevy 2003:92); yet it did not seem inappropriate in the first place that Catholics had to demand concessions that were granted as a matter of course to Protestants. At the national level Ulysses Grant warned about the danger to democracy of supporting "sectarian schools," and he argued for taxing church properties. The Catholic Church would have been most hard hit because at the time it directly ran a wide range of institutions—schools, orphanages, and service agencies—since analogous private and tax-supported institutions were often overtly discriminatory. Yet Grant argued in civic terms and never explicitly mentioned Catholicism. He claimed he was fighting for freedom and

patriotism against the incursions of superstition and ignorance. But these were epithets with which mainstream Protestants regularly tarred Catholicism. People knew what he meant.

Under Grant's presidency Maine Senator James Blaine proposed a constitutional amendment that would have forbid public funds being divided among "particular" religious groups or being used in connection with a school run by any such group. There was a certain wisdom in trying to quell the heated contests dividing communities throughout the nation. But the provision was not meant to be even-handed or to get religion out of public schools. No particular "sect" was to have access to educational funds, but that left in place the ability of the lay Protestant establishment to control public education, insuring the continuity of a generic, "non-sectarian" (pan-Protestant), "enlightened" (anti-Catholic) religious regime. "[Blaine's] intent, in short, was to maintain the public schools as de facto Protestant institutions in post-Civil War America." (Eisenach 2000:3) While the Blaine amendment failed in the Senate, its proponents turned their efforts to the states, where they were more successful. All but eleven worked some such provision into their constitutional law.

The same underlying logic regarding religion in public life repeated itself throughout these developments. Public life was defined in civic terms, in keeping with the American religious settlement. Then given that religion was understood to be an essential support for civic-virtue-and-American-values, some provision for religion was made in public life. However, that then turned out to mean Christianity, because America was a Christian nation. At the same time, certain normative presuppositions informed what constituted legitimate Christianity, and many Protestants simply knew that Catholicism was beyond the pale. However, when arguing in civic terms one did not say as much; one simply argued that certain religious values were compatible with democracy, progress, and science, while others were not. And in fact, there was a real, historical and philosophical link between many Protestant traditions and the American religious settlement that was part of American democracy. Of course, examination of the historical record
reveals that Catholics were also a constructive part of the conversation on religious liberty, more so, in fact than the Puritans who executed Quakers and strove to maintain a religious monopoly until their hands were repeatedly forced. However, in the end, Protestants did point to two very real obstacles to Catholicism's claim to democratic credentials: the Church's internal governance and its unwillingness to affirm state disestablishment as normative.

The outcome of this cultural logic for religion in public life was two-fold. In the first place, insofar as certain mainstream Protestant groups were able to view each other as legitimate and collaborate with one another, they were able to erect an informal establishment, one which could not be explicitly codified, but whose logic emerged in the pan-Protestant arrangements that came to typify nineteenth century public life. The informality of these arrangements and their terms of their description were at once civic, then religious, then Christian, then Protestant. That meant that American Protestants were able to maintain a Protestant establishment in the name of religious freedom and disestablishment. All the while they actively excluded Catholics from those arrangements, while excoriating Catholicism as an ideology of oppression because it would not formally foreswear state establishment. Catholic exclusion was further justified because in the end Protestants implicitly denied Catholicism's claim to religious legitimacy. Catholicism was repeatedly describe as falsehood, superstition, and idolatry—on the spuriousness of Catholicism Protestants of all stripes, whatever their degree of piety or secularity, could agree. Some Catholics they could abide as individuals, but not their faith.

As a result, and in the second place, Catholics were repeatedly forced to form parallel institutions at their own expense while also supporting public institutions from which they were

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16 Robert Baird, a Presbyterian minister and a missionary to Catholics in southern Europe, spelled out the contemporary common sense of who belonged to this entente and on what basis. In Religion in the United States of America ([1842] 1969), the first comprehensive history of its kind, he listed those bodies that were "evangelical," and those such as Catholicism, that stood outside the fold. The work was no mere history. It was "a manifesto for a worldwide reform of Christianity that took American Protestant voluntaryism as its model" (Ahlstrom 1972:8). Baird's work reflects the underlying structure of and competition within American religion.
excluded. Ironically, these parallel institutions were then seen not only as illegitimate—a refusal to participate in the salutary public life of democratic society. They were cast as a threat—part of some vast papal conspiracy to take over America. For their part, Catholics settled into this stance because many were likewise not willing to concede the religious legitimacy of Protestantism. The Catholic Church held a unique claim to legitimacy, one they would not compromise by participating in arrangements that refused to acknowledge the absoluteness of their claims.

This configuration of American religious culture did not follow from the logic of the American settlement itself. It was a function of the relations between various religious groups in American society, some who could view one another as legitimate, and some who could not.

These relations, along with certain assumptions about religious unity and the meaning of tradition, also explain why in the nineteenth century a pluralist solution to America's religious controversies was impossible to come by, at least with regard to schooling. A pluralist solution would have allowed for the state to work collaboratively with particular religious groups according to civic criteria. With regard to education, it would have meant offering arrangements to Catholic groups on a par with those offered to Protestant groups. However, in New York, rather than provide funding for Catholic schools, the state ceased funding the Protestant Public School Society. In Boston, rather than allow Catholic children to use the Catholic version of the Decalogue, the school board backed off requiring the Protestant version. In Cincinnati, rather than accommodate Catholics in any way in the public schools, the school board voted the Bible out. There were some local exceptions to this general trend,17 but in general in nineteenth century America it was not possible for Protestant Americans to extend to Catholicism the kind of legitimacy that such accommodation would have represented.

17 One such instance was the cooperative educational plan instituted in Poughkeepsie, New York, along lines similar to that proposed for Cincinnati. Archbishop John Ireland of Minneapolis also made similar arrangements for two towns in his archdiocese in 1891. And locally, away from the glare of publicity, informal accommodation of Catholic difference did take place.
Pluralism assumes that truth must always be apprehended from within some historical perspective or tradition—that it always has a particularity about it—whereas in the nineteenth century both Protestants and Catholics held normative assumptions about truth that evaded or denied the historical location of their own truth. While Protestants were aware of the traditions which divided them, when it came to public life, they argued that the arrangements they instituted were not in any sense particular. Instead, they reflected the common religion of America, the common sense of reasonable people, the leading edge of progress, the plain sense of Scripture, and so forth. State-sponsored establishment of Protestantism in education was somehow not really establishment because Protestantism was not a particular sect. What was established was simply Christianity as such, which was simply the religion of the land as such. Such an approach also accorded with the uniform notion of truth that prevailed in populist revivalism, in particular. Hence, the approach to religion in public life that resulted was to devise consensus arrangements—a commonly agreed upon version of the Bible, a common natural theology and ethics, a common set of readings. Apart from that consensus there was no capacity to acknowledge any legitimate religious diversity in public life; apart from those arrangements all else was "sectarian." Catholics had the choice of going along with those arrangements or being shut out.

A failure to appreciate the importance of tradition and the degree to which human beings operate out of tradition may be a Protestant susceptibility more than a Catholic one; "tradition" is what Protestants stood up against, while for Catholics it is what they regularly call upon. However, while Catholics understood they operated out of a tradition, their self-assurance that theirs was the uniquely valid tradition, while others could be measured by their standards, meant they dogmatically refused to acknowledge the truth or validity of other traditions. They did not participate in joint religious services with others, and they did not acknowledge their sacraments, the validity of their ordination to ministry, their translations of the Bible, their theology, or their
preaching. When faced with the choice of going along with common arrangements or being shut out, Catholics often opted the latter course. Achieving a working religious consensus with such intransigence was not possible.

One consequence of the American emphasis on religious unity and its concomitant de-emphasis of particular tradition has been that, with the possible exception of the Lutherans, many of the mainstream Protestant denominations often worked harder on fostering a common set of values and shared theological positions than deepening the distinctive insights of their own traditions. One pro-Bible voice in the Cincinnati Bible wars put it this way: It was necessary to teach a common, biblically grounded political faith in the public schools because the United States did not have an established church. (Michaelsen 1969:212) There was a single, American, and patriotic faith that the Protestant churches were collaborating to maintain. That collaboration lies behind the paradox that has frequently struck foreign visitors: Despite its overtly secular Constitution, the United States has always seemed "a nation with the soul of a church," to cite G. K. Chesterton's famous phrase. The nation was a cause in which Protestants became invested, and a religious one at that. Meanwhile, American Catholics invested a tribal sentiment in their Catholicism the tenor of which was often akin to patriotism.

The point of these observations has not been to assign moral culpability to any particular religious group. Rather it has been to explain how in America, under a secular Constitution and a broader settlement advocating religious liberty, an exclusive religious establishment took shape, so that religion intersected with public life in ways that seemed to fly in the face of America's religious settlement. This explanation required reviewing in rough outline how Catholics and Protestants constructed that settlement and the cross purposes at which they found themselves. The result was a tale fraught with stress and tension. Certainly, by today's standards of political correctness, the nineteenth century does not measure up well. However, today's standards, as much as Jefferson's naïveté, may underestimate what really is involved in the American
proposition. America asks people of different religious backgrounds to work together as fellow citizens, which means building a life that is in some significant sense shared. How to do when faced with deep-seated theological differences and historical animosities can not be resolved by a few abstract formulas. It requires engagement and accommodation over time. In nineteenth century such engagement between Protestants and Catholics did not take place on a very deep level. Among themselves, at least during nineteenth century, Protestants were able to build a constructive synthesis. But Catholics were largely relegated to their own religious enclave. Nonetheless, apart from some truly ugly riots in the mid-eighteenth century, the larger structural arrangements for containing religious diversity did hold up. That meant the process of coexistence and engagement could continue.

The paradox of maintaining an exclusive religious establishment in the name of disestablishment itself derives in large measure from the central contradiction noted at the outset, the one entailed in taking an entente that everyone implicitly knew rested upon the mutual engagement of certain Protestant groups and extending it by means of Enlightenment abstractions to "all religions." The whole proposition was based on a rather naïve understanding of the nature of religion. Given the cultural and religious homogeneity of the late colonial era, it all seemed manageable. But then Catholics showed up, and they took advantage of the promise of religious freedom to be just that, Catholics. In retrospect, the whole experiment never should have worked.

Or perhaps there was a deeper wisdom at work. When all is said and done, despite the contradictions and the tensions which Catholics and Protestants endured in one another's presence throughout much on the nineteenth century, the naïve faith the founders of the United States had in the capacity of people to run their own lives and work out their mutual affairs may truly have been inspired. Protestants did make room for their Catholic neighbors from abroad, despite their reservations about their faith. In New York, Boston, and Ohio, while public authorities could not work out a public accommodation of Catholicism on a par with what they had Protestantism, they
did address some of the inequities. And while many immigrant Catholics did not always appreciate the ideals of America's civic-minded, democratic culture at first, over time Catholics became great champions of the United States. One reason was the American Catholic Church. Instead of being a papal hotbed of conspiratorial subversion, it was one of the most successful vehicles of assimilation in American history. Not only did American Catholics grow to appreciate American democracy on a very deep level. They ultimately drew on their experience of living in America to transform the worldwide Catholic Church itself. However, for that to take place, the process of assimilation and engagement had to extend beyond the limits of the nineteenth century.

C. Modernism, Fundamentalism, and Public Legitimacy

At the turn of the twentieth century, by many measures the Protestant establishment was at its height. In Church of the Holy Trinity v. United States (1892), Supreme Court Justice David J. Brewer famously explained at great length that America was a Christian nation whose institutions rightly presupposed that truth. Later that decade, in an appearance before clergy of his own Methodists denomination President William McKinley felt no compunction about justifying the Spanish-American War as a divinely mandated effort to "uplift and civilize and Christianize" the Filipinos. (Ahlstrom 1972:879-80) Christianity and civilization would triumph over bigotry, superstition, and ignorance—that is, Catholicism—in the Spanish West Indies and the Philippines. McKinley also appeared to speak before the Ecumenical Missionary Conference in April of 1900 to encourage its members to be heralds of the Gospel and go forth and teach all nations. He was followed on the dais by then Governor of New York Theodore Roosevelt and former President Benjamin Harrison. Handy (1991:7-8) cites this latter event as one that gave "a certain visibility to the informal but often effective Protestant establishment at the turn of the century[.]") Yet trends were already well underway which would undermine the legitimacy of this synthesis of religious and public culture, trends both in religion and in the larger society.
Four developments reshaped the way religion could be public during the decades leading up to World War I, developments that have remained cogent to the present day—although since midcentury they have been supplemented by other developments equally as salient. The first of these is that American Jews became a significant presence in the country's religious and public life. In acknowledging that, Christianity could no longer be equated with public life quite so facilely. Second, all the major faiths experienced tension and division over how to adapt to changes in social life, the sciences, the human sciences, and religious scholarship—changes that seemed to unfold at an ever-increasing pace. Responding to these changes was generally themed responding to "the challenge of modernity." The division that visited the larger Protestant community as it faced these challenges were particularly serious and particularly significant for the place of religion in public life. Third, in myriad ways the institutions and cultural patterns of American society experienced a differentiation that spelled the progressive disintegration of the nineteenth-century synthesis, the cultural synthesis that had placed evangelical religion at the center of American life. That process has been described as the cultural disestablishment of Protestantism. And fourth, Catholics and their institutions emerged as a recognized presence in American life. Catholic leaders took pains to play a collaborative role in American society, and Catholicism gained a public legitimacy previously denied it.

Though Jews had made their home in the colonies since the seventeenth century, at the time of the Revolution they remained a very small minority of perhaps 2500, most of whom were Sephardic Jews, who could trace their ancestry back to Spain or Portugal. The Jewish presence in America increased significantly in the 1820s with the influx of German-speaking Ashkenazy Jews, part of the larger German immigration of the time. Perhaps 200,000 to 400,000 Ashkenazim arrived during the next half century. Then in the 1880s Jews from Central and Eastern Europe began settling in the United States, perhaps 1.7 million in total by the time of World War I. While numerically American Jews constituted a comparatively small community,
even after this influx, they were the largest religious group in America after Protestants and Catholics. And a number of those in the German immigration in particular early took an active role in public affairs. The Cincinnati of the 1869 "Bible war" was home to Isaac Mayer Wise, a major public figure in the city and a national leader of the Reform Movement in Judaism; and during the controversy the school board included two members who were Jewish (Michaelsen 1969:203). During the first decades of the twentieth century Jews were included as conversation partners in major national organizations and in many local contexts, as well. Their inclusion helped to depolarize Catholic-Protestant relations by adding a further perspective. At the same time, the continuing tendency to define American culture in broadly Christian terms throughout this period often meant that their presence in America had yet to be fully appreciated.

There had been a number of efforts to adapt Jewish life to American circumstances even among descendants of the first wave of Sephardic Jews. German Jews were even more apt to take advantage of the opportunity to mingle in American society, setting up businesses that served the greater community and participating in its life and culture. Many had been to exposed various currents of German liberalism, so they were quite receptive when leading rabbis such as Wise developed a theoretical basis for this adaptation. Stepping back from the detailed injunctions of the Talmud, Wise and fellow reformers articulated Judaism in more abstract, ethical, and spiritual terms, terms that allowed for significant modernization and Americanization. Such trends were codified in the Pittsburgh Platform, issued by a meeting of Reform rabbis held in 1885 and then adopted by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. Significantly, based on their shared conception of the "God-idea," the Platform also called for the recognition of the inherent worth of Christianity and Islam. However, Reform Judaism did not find a receptive

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18 In 1825 a group in Charleston broke with the larger Jewish community to form the Reformed Society of Israelites. A central issue at the time was replacing Spanish in the services with English.
19 For example, accepting America as their home, proponents denied the necessity of a territorial homeland in a reconstituted Israel; they were able to rethink Messianism in terms of justice. And "ritual laws," such as kosher dietary restrictions, were rejected in favor of an emphasis on ethics.
audience among the Jews arriving from Central and Eastern Europe at that time, many of whom were less sophisticated folk for whom the merits of such an approach were lost. They held to the synthesis of orthodox teaching and Yiddish culture they had come to understand in their homeland. Herberg argues that while second generation Eastern European Jews ended up abandoning Orthodoxy in large numbers, following "Hansen's law" the children returned to active participation in Jewish life—though they often sought a form that was more suitable to active participation in modern, American life.

Analogous divisions appeared in American Catholicism over the question of adaptation to modern circumstances and American culture. During the colonial era such adaptation took place out of necessity. In the early Republic, the American Catholic Church not only adapted to laws and civic forms often based on Enlightenment and Protestant presuppositions about the nature of religion; Catholic leaders also attempted to shape the culture of the Church on a deeper level according to those norms. Those experiments were cut short by the Europeanization of the American church and the hostility of the surrounding Protestant population, which trends intensified the formation of an oppositional subculture.

While throughout the nineteenth century some leading Catholics, both clergy and laity, attempted to keep up a constructive dialogue with American culture, it was late in the century before an identifiable "liberal" party appeared in the American hierarchy. Most prominent among its proponents were Archbishop John Ireland of Minneapolis, Bishop John Spalding of Peoria, Bishop John Keane of Richmond (and later Archbishop of Dubuque), and Archbishop James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore. In his day, Gibbons was the elder statesman of American Catholicism, and an influential interpreter of things American to the Holy See. When in Rome to

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20 Namely, "What the son wishes to forget, the grandson wishes to remember." In other words, while the second generation is caught up in developing its American identity, and hence sees its ethnic and religious heritage as an obstacle to that project, the third generation is secure in its American identity, and positively seeks to retrieve its heritage. (Herberg 1955: ix, 186)
accept his election as cardinal in 1887, he was famous for making known his opinion in favor of the separation of church and state, arguing that the United States Constitution was the finest government document ever written. He also hand delivered a statement to the pope on behalf on the Knights of Labor, then in danger of condemnation as a "secret society." His intervention proved instrumental in cementing an amicable relationship between the Catholic Church and labor unions in the United States, a circumstance which differed markedly from that of Europe. Gibbons was also well respected by American civic leaders. In recognition of his place in American life, in 1911 President Taft and a large delegation of Washington dignitaries attended the fiftieth anniversary celebration of his priesthood (McGreevy 2003:123).21

Yet it was John Ireland who was the most vociferous spokesperson for an American Catholicism. He constantly lauded the values of the nation and argued for Catholic adaptation to the democratic spirit of the age. Ireland introduced American educational reforms into his seminary, and in his personal and administrative style, he eschewed clericalism. He spoke in strong favor of public schools to the National Educational Association. A voice of compromise, he argued that Protestant texts and prayers in school were preferable to schools denuded of all religious reference. Within the church he urged for Americanization in language and values rather than the perpetuation of myriad ethnic Catholicisms. In 1892 he toured France touting the success of the American experiment and urging conservative clerics to reconcile to the French Republic (reinforcing the counsel of Pope Leo XIII at the time). In retrospect, his enthusiastic advocacy of Catholicism and American nationalism was a bit one-sided, but in a context were Catholic voices in Rome and America were ever ready to criticize what were perceived as the secular excesses of American culture, he took up the much-neglected other side of the question.

Ireland's enthusiasm provoked no shortage of detractors. German Catholics in particular were strongly committed to preserving their language, and they often complained about the

21 John Tracy Ellis's (1952) biography of Gibbons remains an authoritative source on his life.
unresponsiveness of the predominantly Irish hierarchy to their concerns. They found an ally when in 1871 Peter Paul Cahensly, a wealthy German citizen and legislator, founded the St. Raphael Society to serve as an international support organization for German Catholic immigrants to America. In 1890 the various national leaders of this society met in Lucerne, on which occasion they petitioned the Holy See to promote American parochial school instruction in native European languages and to allow greater independence for ethnic jurisdictions in the American Church. In their petition they cited the corrosive effects of American culture and (imaginary) mass defections of immigrant Catholics. Their proposals would have fractured the American hierarchy along ethnic lines. This controversy painted a stark opposition between ethnicity and tradition, on the one side, and Americanization and secularization, on the other. While the majority of bishops usually found themselves on the other side of the question from Ireland and the other "Americanists," when faced with what might have led to the Balkanization of the American Church, they strongly opted for the path of Americanization.

In 1893, when it came to speaking out for the independence of the American Church from Rome, the conservatives and the Americanists again joined ranks. At the time, Archbishop Francesco Satolli, the representative of the Holy See who had been in the United States since the previous year, announced that he was to establish a permanent office in the United States. Gibbons himself had already written to Rome to forestall such a development, and after the announcement Spalding spoke against it as a "foreign intrusion." The liberals feared compromising their American credentials. At the same time, the conservative bishops demurred, as well, since the Vatican was then perceived as an ally of the liberals.

By the end of the decade, however, perception of the Holy See swung in the other direction. In 1899 Leo XIII issued the apostolic letter *Testem Benevolentiae* in which he condemned the heresy of "Americanism." This condemnation was provoked by a seemingly minor event, the publication in France of a translation of a biography of Isaac Hecker, the founder
of the Paulists (an American Catholic society for evangelization). Conservatives seized on Hecker's program as exemplifying a characteristic American Catholic propensity to minimize the content of the faith in order to pander to culture and win converts. Hecker was already deceased, but that was not the issue. For those who recalled John Ireland's 1892 tour touting American democracy, this was an opportunity to highlight excesses that conservative critics had been citing in the American church for years. When the apostolic letter was issued, American liberals were quick to point out that no one really advocated the opinions that it condemned. (Dolan 2002:108-10; for a thorough discussion of this affair also see McAvoy 1963) In that respect, it was a classic Vatican pronouncement. It satisfied conservative critics, defined certain doctrinal outer limits, and left substantial ambiguity in place.

Much more chilling was the dispute over "Modernism" which had already begun to unfold and which shook the church in the next decade. At issue were a series of questions raised by recent trends in the "higher criticism" of the Bible (exegesis, literary analysis, hermeneutics, and so forth). These included the degree to which sociological, historical, and cultural factors properly entered into any expression of truth; individual conscience and dissent; and the independence of scholarship. While "Americanism" had to do with the proper adaptation of the Church and its faith to culture, "Modernism" touched on the very substance of faith itself and the internal discipline of the Church. In response to the controversies raised, Rome eventually censured or even excommunicated several European scholars and priests for positions they took, placing their works on the Index. In 1903 the Holy See established the Pontifical Biblical Commission to monitor the work of Scripture scholars. And in 1907 Pope Pius X issued the encyclical Pascendi Dominici Gregis defining "Modernism." He also set up an office under an Italian scholar, Msgr. Umberto Benigni, which literally created a network of covert operatives to ferret out relativism in Catholic seminaries and institutes in Europe and America. Leading Catholics suspected of sympathizing with the Modernist "movement" were required to denounce
its tenets. And thenceforth upon ordination every priest had to take an oath against heresy. While Pius X announced that Modernism was a dead issue the very next year, the machinery he put in place was not formally suppressed until Benedict XV acted in 1921. By then it had suffocated Catholic scholarship for almost a generation, confirming the worst stereotypes of Catholic authoritarianism. At the same time, it did preserve the unity of the Church in the face of a complex set of challenges. 22 In 1943, on the fiftieth anniversary of an earlier encyclical on biblical scholarship, Pius XII issued *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, which sanctioned many of the same historical critical methods that had provoked the concern of conservatives in the first place.

American Protestantism also faced "the challenge of modernity," and how it did so was distinctive for a number of reasons. In the first place, there were many more Protestant groups, each with a distinctive heritage and relationship to the others. Moreover, since no single authority structure governed these groups, some of their disputes were not suppressed or contained, as in the Catholic case. Most significantly, for Jews and Catholics the question of modernity was caught up with questions of immigration and assimilation to American life. However, for most Protestant groups (with a few possible exceptions, mainly the Lutherans) the question of their relationship to American culture did not arise in quite the same way. Protestants were not troubled by the need to burnish their credentials as Americans, since America was then closely identified with its Protestant heritage. Instead, insofar as leading Protestants were also leading members of establishment culture, in navigating the relationship between faith and modernity they were simultaneously addressing the terms of legitimacy that defined American public life.

Already beginning in the 1870s a number of key reformers in American higher education were promoting a process of secularization, yet they did so in the name of their own Christian faith, in some cases even drawing on the rhetoric of "non-sectarianism" that evangelicals had

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used to describe the public school system. One agent of this process was Henry Tappan, the first chancellor of the University of Michigan. Tappan emphasized the independence of intellectual inquiry from immediate theological relevance or oversight. He was an enthusiast of German philosophy and ideals in education. In light of these, when it came to intellectual inquiry he understood the Baconian paradigm to mean that induction and inquiry should take their own course, free of theological preconceptions. Their results eventually would meet up with the Bible and good theology, but in the meantime it might be necessary to entertain some "difference."

Accordingly, he would not support theological oversight of other departments. Yet Tappan was no atheist—he was an ordained minister in the Reformed tradition. Unfortunately, he combined his opinions with a demeanor that smacked of elitism. For his sins the university board met and voted him out of office without warning. (Marsden 1994:103-11)

A protégé of Tappan, Andrew Dickson White, the first president of Cornell University, was able to pursue a similar program without such interference. White understood that Tappan had been undone by "sectarian" interests, and in that light, when tapped by Ezra Cornell to head up a new institution in upstate New York, he insisted that it not have any denominational ties. As a private institution, it would also be independent of the state, which as an informal base of the Protestant establishment often brought religious considerations to bear (as in the case of the University of Michigan). Indeed, when White and Cornell applied to the state legislature for public funds to set up an agricultural school within the university, the denominational colleges opposed his university as "godless." To this charge White replied that Cornell University would be Christian, but never sectarian. And throughout his career he never tired of making the case for its Christian character, just not in such a way that it could be identified with any particular Christian body. White did arrange for prominent ministers of various Protestant denominations to preach on campus, and the chapel held services daily. But beyond the general promotion of human welfare, as defined by society in his day, there was no sense in which the university was
specifically committed to Christianity. While White himself attended Episcopal services, he was never confirmed in any church, and he would have left religion altogether were it not for the solicitude of a Unitarian minister. (Marsden 1994:113-21) More to the point, no Christian body specifically authorized him to establish a Christian institution. Yet somehow this individual with apparently minimal Christian commitment and beliefs was able to maintain the public claim that he had founded a Christian university, but without any accountability for what that meant or the ends the institution served. He did so by exploiting the ambiguities of informal establishment:

   By insisting that Cornell was Christian, nonsectarian, dedicated to high moral values, yet free, especially for scientific inquiry, White was effectively taking over [or co-opting] the rhetoric of the evangelical establishment. (Marsden 1994:117)

   During his tenure at Cornell, White gave a lecture at the Cooper Union entitled "The Battlefields of Science." He kept expanding ideas he developed there, and eventually he publish this project as a two-volume *History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (1896). In it he advanced one of the most well-known statements of the conflict theory of the relationship between science and religion. In a day, when America had begun to worry about industrialization and competition on the world stage, White's message adumbrated the larger chorus of academics and scientists who sought professional autonomy. (Garroutte 2003) Of course, not all made the case for professional autonomy on the basis of militant or anti-religious secularism. Some such as Tappan maintained a dual track approach to truth. And historians of science now concur that White overstated his case. They have since abandoned the notion of a widespread conflict between science and religion (Shapin 1996; Wilson 2002). Nonetheless, the scenario White sketched retains its hold on the popular imagination.

   White's scenario, moreover, had portentous implications for the public legitimacy of religion as it had been conceived under the earlier evangelical synthesis. If the truths of faith do not coexist as simple "facts" in easy continuity with the truths of science—facts that can be read off and interpreted according to contemporary common sense—then the public and democratic
credentials of evangelical faith had to be rethought. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the public legitimacy of evangelical faith rested in part on its claim to accord with populism, democracy, progress, science, and common sense reason. Now under men like Tappan and White, science and the academy were breaking away from the synthesis of the earlier part of the century. That effectively implied the relegation of evangelical faith to a separate domain. It had its truth, but not such as existed in the easy continuity with science and progress that had been presumed. While the consensus among educated Americans that the growing "differences" between the truth of religion and the truths of various other bodies of knowledge did not mean religion itself was in ultimate jeopardy—as in Tappan's case there were ways of straddling the difference, so long as one had a more sophisticated appreciation of the multiplex nature of truth—it did mean the that "common sense" evangelical synthesis of the nineteenth century was itself in jeopardy.

This is not the first time in Western history that the growth of natural science threatened the unity of knowledge which religious faith had come to presuppose. When laws of physics were worked out with mathematical precision and applied to astronomy, that prompted the more general proposition of a mechanistic cosmos, which in turn raised a host of questions regarding freedom, determinism, and the place of God in a law-driven, mechanical order. A divide between science and faith opened up, and various proposals were advanced to negotiate that divide. One was to abandon faith: no faith, no divide. In America atheism was not a popular option, though it did gain adherents in Europe. Another option was Deism, that is, the endeavor to rebuild the connection between "reason" and religion based on a unified set of principles derived from the science and philosophy of the day. From the side of faith, people like Jonathan Edwards in America read Newton and thought about God as the law-giver. On a popular level, the revivalists made the case that their religion of the heart was also consonant with science and the new culture of democracy. Their evangelicalism provided a unified vision that allowed ordinary people to make sense of science and culture from the perspective of their faith. It took the Bible and the
experience of Christian conversion and made them relevant to the democratic culture of the day. At the same time, on occasion it drew on the accepted grounds for public legitimacy to serve as grounds for religious legitimacy: The facts of the Bible are facts that you can read off like any other (the criterion of common sense); the work of the Spirit takes place in public and leads to concrete moral reform (the criterion of public utility); miracles were redefined in terms of natural laws (that is, as their interruption); and virtue leads to success and prosperity (success as empirical confirmation of God's moral law).

At the end of the nineteenth century, as the earlier populist culture gave way to one based on science, technology, and higher learning, a gap once again emerged in American culture between faith and other areas of knowledge. People began to speak of the need to heed the "spirit of the times" or the "spirit of the age." (Marty 1986:25-31) The age was understood to be the modern age: it was universal and cosmopolitan, like science and reason supposedly were, not local and particular. The World Parliament of Religions was an attempt to meet that spirit head on. (Marty 1986:17-24)

The challenge was an immense one, though, because the learning of the day was not simply seeking autonomy; it was pressing in on religion's own turf. The most serious challenges of the day were posed by evolutionary theory and biblical criticism. (Marty 1986:32) Evolutionary theory only had direct implications for three chapters out of the entire Bible (since most of the text has to do with human life and human history). But two of those chapters start the Bible, and evolution, if true, made a literal, common sense interpretation of those chapters impossible. As for biblical criticism, it had been progressing in Germany throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, so that when it reached America it was already quite developed, and Americans were confronted with its implications in fairly advanced form. Its implications for a literal approach to Scripture were much more far-reaching than evolution: The texts themselves were not written with a nineteenth century empiricist notion of truth in mind, and so they simply
did not lend themselves to such a reading. Moreover, hermeneutics made it clear that the frameworks with which traditional notions were articulated were not the same as the frameworks of the modern world. In light of all this, how then does one make sense of Scripture and the traditional formulas in which the faith was expressed?

Just as Deism attempted to resolved the challenge to religion in its day by beginning with the principles of contemporary science, a series of approaches to negotiating an analogous gap developed in nineteenth century American Protestantism, taking their lead from contemporary science, social science, psychology, and biblical criticism. Proponents wrestled with the "symbol of Jesus" and tried to develop a credible Christology for a contemporary age: What could it mean to moderns to claim that Jesus was the Son of God? Some held to the traditional creeds and formulas but made use of contemporary science and philosophy to replace their content. (Marty 1986:26-27) As in the Catholic instance, approaches for reappropriating and rearticulating Christian faith that followed such an intellectual trend were classed as "modernism." In the Catholic Church authorities explicitly rejected giving principles from contemporary learning the priority in the dialogue with faith, and they supervised a centralized effort to monitor the seminaries and establish boundaries for admissible theologizing. In American Protestantism battles with "modernism" were waged denomination by denomination, seminary by seminary, leading to heresy trials, expulsions, and divisions over a wide range of issues. How various issues were resolved varied from institution to institution, though in general the North and the East seemed more amenable to modern intellectual developments than the rest of the country. Some even hailing them as salvation from superstition, promising a new era of religion based on authentic faith rather than the wobbly crutches of simplistic tradition. (Marty 1986:39-41)

It was in response to these modernist trends that two evangelists, Amzi Dixon and Reuben Torrey, published a series of twelve volumes entitled *The Fundamentals* beginning in 1910. Soliciting conservative Protestant contributors, they provided a statement of what they
considered the essentials of faith. A wealthy oil magnate funded the project and disseminated three million copies to pastors and religious workers throughout the United States. While at this juncture, opposing evolution was not their major theme,\footnote{They still held on to the friendly synthesis of Christianity and science. In several places the positions taken specifically lauded science rightly done, science open to an appreciation of the role of the Creator: "Most of their authors supported science, though their science was of the Baconian inductivist sort. With their consequent love of what they thought of as facts they did not see how evolution could ever complicate their faith, even if they could not refute the theory. As for science in general, one author, A. W. Pitzer, wrote that the Christian 'hails with joy each new discovery as affording additional evidence of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.'" (Marty 1986:36)} affirming the literal truth of the Bible and opposing the errors of biblical criticism occupied almost a third of the ninety-four topics addressed. After World War I the term "fundamentalist" was lift from the title of this series by Curtis Laws to describe someone who took a stand for the "fundamentals" of evangelical faith. In the 1920s evolution increasingly emerged as an issue central to this project. The famous Scopes Trial of 1925 then became one of those moments in a controversy which helped to define its constituencies and their commitments.

At times the contest between liberals and fundamentalists became quite strident, one side ridiculing the other, the other vilifying the first. In the process, the working consensus that had unified the Protestant establishment broke up. The original evangelical synthesis had won the credentials of democratic and public legitimacy. In a sense, in the divorce which took place, the conservatives gained custody of the substance of the synthesis, restated in a deliberately trenchant form, while the liberals took the credentials of public legitimacy, restated in light of modern developments.

This divorce built on divisions that had always existed in American Protestantism. The division between those traditions which emphasized theological training and those who were able to appeal to the masses was long-standing. When faced with the dilemmas of urban life, there were those who took up the Social Gospel and those who emphasized individual responsibility and conversion. Those denominations that thought collaboration in social ministry would further
the realization of a Protestant vision for America came together in Philadelphia in 1908 to form the Federal Council of Churches (predecessor to the National Council of Churches, which grew out of it in 1950). These mainline denominations constituted the new Protestant establishment, while the evangelicals kept their distance. From the ranks of the mainline, many of those who held to a more conservative theology bled away. Some formed new denominations outside the mainline; others established congregations that remained independent but linked by networks centered around favored preachers or Bible institutes. The mainline leaders continued to speak for American Protestantism. They occupied the seats of power in business and government. And in the media, when the major networks allotted time to non-profit and religious broadcasting, as required by law, they consistently gave voice to the mainline members of the FCC. (Lippy 2000:22-23) The "fundamentalists" seemed to have melted away.

The third development noted was the cultural disestablishment of Protestantism. That development has often been cited as a species of secularization. Such a characterization is accurate enough, insofar as it involved the differentiation of various institutions in society, the autonomy of various sectors of social life from the direct oversight of religious bodies, and the relinquishing of an explicit claims of ownership of public life. However, some caveats must be added. If by secularization further assumptions concerning a mono-directional, monolithic, all encompassing, and inevitable process are intended, then they do not apply. As for monodirectionality, when it comes to science and learning, there are periods when a particular way of conceiving the relationship between religion and other fields of learning breaks down, and periods when new syntheses emerge, as has already been noted. As for "monolithicity," it has also been noted that certain secularizing developments can exist side by side with rises in other religious indicators, as in the case of the coincidence of legal disestablishment in the United States with the rise of the religious voluntaryism which it positively enabled. In the early twentieth century, while the evangelical synthesis, and with it the reigning form of Protestant
cultural establishment, broke down, many indicators of religious participation continued to rise.

Christian Smith has gathered a collection of papers under the title *The Secular Revolution* (2003). In its introduction he argues that in the United States in the late nineteenth century, secularization was not the result of some anonymous sociological process, but rather the strategic outcome of deliberate actors, actors with an explicit ideology intent on breaking the hold of religion on society. Of course, on one level this is a non-proposition: There is no contradiction between holding that anonymous social processes led to a certain historical outcome and that deliberate actors did, because sociological processes can work through actors' own reflexive choices, as well as despite them. The real question Smith raises concerns the extent to which an organized party staged a cultural coup, something akin to a "revolution." There were people aplenty with agendas, power, and money, but they were not necessarily militant secularists bent on overturning religion. The stories of White and Tappan may be more indicative. One was a minister, the other professed a non-dogmatic Christianity. Neither was an express opponent of religion; rather, each held a religious vision which made room for an autonomous sphere of human activity. When one places developments in the larger of society alongside what was happening in the religious institutions themselves—seminaries, congregations, denominational conferences, and so forth—the parallel lines of argument emerge very clearly. In that light this the secularization of the day was clearly supported by a *religious vision* of the new social order.

In a sense there was a sort of "regime change," that is, in the sense of a change in the regime governing the place of religion in public life. However, in terms of the people who held the levers of power, there was no abrupt turnover. Within the mainline denominations those more able to accommodate a pragmatic engagement with "the challenge of modernity," one that relinquished dogmatic allegiance to an overarching synthesis, took over positions of leadership. Their predecessors and opponents had begun to sound old-school, repeating rhetoric that did not
take adequate account of the significance of changes in the offing. Meanwhile, those
denominations that had been part of the evangelical alliance but failed to rally to the mainline
were gradually sidelined. But insofar as Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and
Methodists continued to hold positions of leadership in society (along with some new-found
Jewish allies), there was more continuity than change.

A fourth change in the structure of American religious culture involved the rise in the
place of Catholics in local and national life. In many cities Catholic political networks had long
been a formidable force. By the late nineteenth century no serious candidate in national elections
could any longer afford to snub Catholic votes. And in international affairs the Catholic
hierarchy was in increasingly relevant conversation partner, sometimes at odds with the
administration, but not to be dismissed out of hand. Thus when the United States took possession
of the Philippines, the American bishops were involved in the constant negotiations over how to
proceed, how to staff the Church there and rebuild society, and how to deal with the question of
Filipino independence. (Hennesey 1981:218-20) The Catholic Church also proved an important
partner in labor issues. Initially the hierarchy did not stake out a position on labor, despite
Gibbons's pro-labor intervention in 1887 and subsequent pro-labor precedents set in papal
teaching. However, on a practical level, American Catholics were certainly caught up in labor
issues, and their priests were increasingly caught up in these issues alongside them. The bishops
were dragged along as well, hesitant as they were over entanglements with anything that smacked

24 In Missouri conditions were different than on the coasts, and the Lutherans there felt secure in their
isolation. In the era of The Fundamentals, one Professor Theodore Graebner dismissed the proponents of
biblical criticism out of hand; they were like "boys in kneepants tak[ing] to swearing and cigarettes,
because it makes them feel big, while they are only bad boys." (cited in Marty 1986) In Lutheran Missouri
a professor could give such an ad-hominem, folksy rationale for dismissing biblical criticism and keep his
job. In the major centers of theology and intellectual life in the United States, such a response would have
been completely inadequate.

25 In a famous gaffe, a spokesman at a Republican rally in the last weeks of 1884 painted the Democrats
with the epithet of "rum, Romanism, and rebellion." It was then used as a battle cry to rally Catholic voters
against James Blaine, probably costing him New York State and the election.
of socialism. Eventually, a Catholic equivalent to the Protestant Social Gospel did coalesce around labor issues, and Rev. John Ryan became the lead spokesperson in its development. However, prior to World War I the main contribution of the Church regarding the labor question was to serve as a force for mediation. (Dolan 1992:334-46)

At the same time, as late as the turn of the twentieth century, the American Catholic Church was hardly a unified entity speaking with a single voice, nativist preoccupations to the contrary. In fact, concern over nativism was a key factor keeping Catholics from establishing an effective national coordinating structure. Opponents of any such proposal cited the potential to provoke a nativist backlash over "Catholic mobilization." A contemporary effort to create a federation of the hundreds of Catholic societies and organizations of the day foundered over this very issue. (McShane 1986:57-61) As a result, bishops ran their own dioceses independent of one another, and while they sometimes met to discuss common challenges, the last time they had gathered as a body was in Baltimore in 1884. Not only was the church trying to hold itself together in the face of divisive ethnic differences; the conflict over how to adapt to all the challenges of the day had fractured the hierarchy. One project that ought to have united them at the time was the establishment of a national Catholic university in Washington, but since the idea was proposed by the Americanists, support among the other prelates was sparse. Similarly, on most other issues there was no unified Catholic voice or approach.

The event that provoked a key turning point in shaping a Catholic public presence was

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26 Such fears were not unwarranted. As recently as the 1890s a secret society, the American Protective Association, appeared on the scene, aping some of the tactics of the Know Nothings. Its members took vows not to hire (if possible) or vote for Catholics, and they organized against them in elections. They also circulated false documents purporting to reveal a papal plot to "kill heretics" and take over the country. The mayor of Toledo took them seriously enough to call out the national guard. Across the country several people were killed in riots they provoked. (Marty 1986:130-32) In characteristic fashion Marty downplays this episode as arising from "a quirk if local politics," the "richest joke of the year," a mere "footnote, not a turning point." In retrospect, the APA attracted slight support, and a number of leaders in the Protestant community publicly condemned the organization. However, given the vicious and conspiratorial nature of the group and its unprincipled tactics, and given the preceding history of anti-Catholic rumor-monger, slander, lies, and violence, American Catholics remained wary of such trends.
World War I. Woodrow Wilson had won the presidency in 1916 on the promise of neutrality and peace, but by the next year he had come to the conclusion that American involvement in the conflict was inevitable. In April he made his case to the American public, presenting it in terms of a purely idealistic fight for democracy and civilization. And he called upon the churches to make the case with him. While equating the cause of American democracy with a divine mandate had long been a Protestant theme and prerogative, inviting the American Catholic Church into the national alliance was new. In taking this course, Wilson extended the Catholic Church a public legitimacy it had not previously enjoyed.

Catholics responded on a number of levels. In the name of the American archbishops, Cardinal Gibbons promised, "Our people, now as ever, will rise as one man to serve the nation." (cited in McShane 1986:57-61) But at first it was the Knights of Columbus, a national Catholic men's lay organization, that drafted a proposal for supporting the war effort. For the American Church as a whole to fulfill the bishops' promise would require some effective coordinating mechanism. At the prodding of a Paulist priest named John Burke, the bishops approved the creation of a standing organization, the National Catholic War Council, for that purpose. The effort surrounding the NCWC proved a crucial catalyst. It focused the collaboration of the bishops under the glare of the national spotlight, and its activities required Catholics and Protestants to work side by side for the good of the nation. After the war, the bishops opted to maintain a standing national organization. They kept the initials of the NCWC but changed its name to the National Catholic Welfare Council.27 With its creation a corner had been turned.

By the 1920s the structure of American religious culture was undergoing a major transformation. In public life the evangelical synthesis of the nineteenth century gave way to a

27 In 1922 the name of the organization was again revised to the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Due to concerns about episcopal autonomy that some bishops then brought to the Holy See, Rome at first favored abolishing the organization, then upon petition recommended the further name change to underscore that bishops were voluntary participants and not bound by its decrees.
modernist synthesis, one in which the affairs and categories of public life were increasingly articulated apart from explicit religious reference. The liberal religious vision of mainline Protestantism supported this development. It coincided with the sense of competition, unleashed potential, and urgency that the developments and problems of the day communicated. Meeting the challenges of industrial development, urban reform, academic scholarship, international competition, and rapid social change required freedom from pious but outdated controlling paradigms. While Christianity might provide the motivation behind the Social Gospel, social science should guide its deployment. And as the polemic with conservatives deepened, liberals became more insistent on meeting the age, just as conservatives grew more definitive about their theology and their claims regarding biblical inerrancy. Defining public legitimacy in professional, secular terms not only was the very manifestation of their victory over conservative evangelicals. It also served as an implicit critique of and disadvantage to rival Catholics. Yet Catholics and especially Jews readily embraced this development because a secular standard for public life seemed to promise fewer disadvantages than an explicitly Protestant evangelical one.

For its part, the Catholic hierarchy understood Catholicism's claim to public legitimacy in terms of their commitment to promoting and facilitating the Americanization of their flock, publicly upholding the formal disestablishment of religion at least in America, and serving their country when asked to do so. Catholics were also finding, as on the labor question, that they could draw on their natural law tradition to affirm social reform, the common good, human rights, and much of the progressivism of the day.

However, there were limits to the extent to which they could endorse the American arrangements. Natural law reasoning enabled thinking about society in its own terms; at the same time, it left in place the claim that the Church would operate according to its own principles based on its own "constitution." In addition, in the Americanist controversy and some of its run-ups Leo XIII had already indicated that American arrangements were not necessarily normative for all
societies, and that equivocation irked detractors of the American Catholic Church.\footnote{Here it is instructive to note that Americans often take the absolute validity of their values as dogmatically seriously as the Catholic Church takes the normative status of its doctrine.} The Americanist controversy highlighted that there was only so far that the Church would go to "meet the age." More serious were the implications of the Modernist controversy and the unwillingness of the Catholic hierarchy to uncompromisingly support an independent, secular standard for higher education at the Catholic University it had founded in Washington. In terms of the emerging standard of respect for secular autonomy, here the practice of the Church foundered. At midcentury the lag in performance between Catholic universities and their secular counterparts in America would be cited to discredit Catholicism as a cultural system.

In an earlier era the Protestant establishment had upheld the notion that America was a Christian nation whose institutions should reflect that standard, a position not very different from that of Leo XIII. And in higher education it had continued to protect the nineteenth century synthesis, even in the face of mounting evidence that it was faltering. Positions that supported that synthesis were protected for theological reasons, not in terms of independent standards. But that was then. The regime was being rewritten. And once it was, Catholics were out of step once again. At the same time, while there were objective reasons for rewriting that regime, some of which can be described in terms of "the anonymous process of secularization," the polemic between Protestant religious groups was certainly responsible for the way it was deployed.

D. Behind the Mid-Twentieth-Century Synthesis: Protestant, Catholic, Jew

When Will Herberg wrote \textit{Protestant, Catholic, Jew} in 1955 he made what now seems an utterly prosaic observation, that in his day there were Protestant Americans, Catholic Americans, and Jewish Americans. All were Americans. So to rephrase the observation as Herberg himself put it: There were three ways of being American, and (he claimed) in the "eyes of Americans,"
these three ways of being American were all *equally valid*. Certainly, that was hardly a view to be taken for granted in the nineteenth century, or for much of the twentieth century, for that matter. The tendency had been to view Catholics and Jews as foreigners or immigrants, while Protestants were the *real* Americans. However, by the mid-fifties Catholic and Jewish communities had taken on a considerably more American, English-speaking cast. For one, earlier generations in each community had Americanized and been interacting with other Americans for quite some time; beyond that, the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act, which took effect in 1929, had severely reduced the influx of new arrivals to their ranks. So in polite company no one would have denied Herberg's observation. But they might not have gone out of their way to state it in the affirmative, either. Herberg simply assumed it to be so, and in his text he incorporated a chapter devoted to each religious group, showing how each wrestled with and appropriated what it meant to be American. In telling the story of Catholicism and Judaism from that perspective, Herberg was helping Americans see it that way.

In the present day, the tendency is to refer back to United States of the 1950s as the "Herbergian" Protestant-Catholic-Jew days of easy consensus religiosity, an era when everyone was reveling in monochrome monotheism. In fact, while the period is known for the increasing popularity of the term "Judeo-Christian," as well as for certain expressions of generic public religiosity, and while Protestantism, Judaism, and Catholicism were all *publicly* held to be equally valid expressions of "the American Way of Life," religion in public life remained a controverted issue. The major religious communities in American society each had a distinctive relationship to and appreciation of public life. And the relations between these groups continued to suffer various tensions. While public officials increasingly gave lip-service to the presence of Judaism in American society, arrangements in public life still regularly reflected the presupposition that America was a Christian nation. At the same time, Catholicism's claim to public legitimacy remained publicly contested through the 1950s, though the terms of
contestation were decidedly different than they had been in an earlier era. These contests in turn shaped the meaning of a key phrase which emerged for making sense of the place of religion in public life, the "separation of church and state." This section will review the history behind these contests and the way they colored the that phrase.

Handy (1991:175) states that the work of the National Catholic War Council was an impressive achievement that increased Americans' respect for a church that had been seen as a foreign presence. Marty (1986:189-90) may be nearer the mark when he states that the actual contribution of the Council was modest, mustered as it was as the war entered its final stages. But both concur that the Council and more, the overall collaboration of Catholics with other Americans in a patriotic cause, improved Catholicism's American credentials. The bishops thus were persuaded to continue to maintain a national level organization. In fact, persuaded they had to be. The merits of such a visible structure seemed obvious to many Catholics; some pointed to the effective work the Federal Council of Churches was able accomplish. However, for the bishops, used as they were to running the affairs of their own dioceses in hallowed independence from one another, the prospect of such a body did not have immediate appeal. And while Cardinal Gibbons ultimately favored the proposal, he also specifically discouraged that even remotely resembled to the Catholic Centre party in Germany. (McShane 1986:85-88) He knew any organization that was overtly political or partisan would only sour relations with other Americans.

The Catholic bishops did not have any grand agenda for American society. However, the visibility of the Church during wartime actually made receding into its previous fragmented, self-concerned state almost unthinkable. Therefore, a number of months before the armistice was signed the NCWC formed a committee to contribute to the discussion on how the country should respond to the challenge of rebuilding after the war. That committee quite literally seized onto some working ideas of Rev. John Ryan. Ryan was one of the preeminent Catholic social thinkers of the day, a man known for his progressivism. In his own research and writing he attempted to
synthesize Catholic natural law thinking, especially as found in the writings of Leo XIII, with contemporary proposals being put forward for reforming democratic capitalism. (McShane 1986:7-56) On basis of Ryan's work the NCWC published the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction in February of 1919. Through adept appeal to the media, the proposal gained considerable press coverage, and very favorable coverage, at that. In the process the bishops elevated their role as participants in American public life from a practical, and often partisan, one to one highlighting the common good and making a thoughtful, principled contribution to the debate. After the war, not only did the NCWC continue on in existence in its new guise as the National Catholic Welfare Council. It created a Social Action Department, and under the direction of John Ryan it continued to promote the progressive vision of social justice contained in its proposal for reconstruction. This new role in public life was a very different one than the Catholic Church had been accustomed to in America.

The ensuing decade was one of noticeable institutional growth for the American Catholic Church. New parishes, schools, and seminaries were built at a remarkable rate. For example, during his first ten years as archbishop of Philadelphia (1918-28), Denis Dougherty oversaw the opening of 92 parishes, 89 parish schools, and a minor seminary. Similar expansion marked many dioceses, notably including those of Louisiana in the South and California in the West. During this period a number of public displays of Catholic devotion—and Catholic strength—took place, including a five-day International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago in 1926, the events of which involved hundreds of thousands of participants. Such events continued to take place even through the Depression and the decade which followed. In 1934 a hundred thousand Catholics marched into Baltimore stadium to celebrate the third centenary of the founding of Maryland. Catholics

29 The seminal document of Leo XIII's writings on contemporary social issues was *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which affirmed the rights of labor, the right to form associations, and the duties of society to those disadvantaged by industrialization. The encyclical hewed a course between socialist emphasis on class warfare and the individualism inherent in the social Darwinism of the day.
publicly asserted their pride in being Catholic in American. (Dolan 1992:349-54)

The public role of the National Catholic Welfare Council and the newly assertive public presence of American Catholicism were not always welcomed by other Americans. While proponents of the Social Gospel were able to appreciate the arrival of new potential allies in public affairs, many other Americans were alarmed at what they viewed as Catholic aggressiveness. In addition, after the war, Warren G. Harding rode to presidential victory sounding the theme of "a return to normalcy." This theme suited the agenda of all those groups whose interests had been unsettled by the disruption of the war, especially big business, which had been forced to pay higher wages, but also social conservatives, isolationists, and nativists. Thus despite achieving military victory under Wilson's progressivist banner, the United States turned its back on the League of Nations, whose creation Wilson had made a centerpiece of his foreign policy. And it dramatically curtailed immigration with the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924. Because of its foreign affiliation, its immigrant membership, and its increasing sympathy for labor, the Catholic Church found itself on the wrong side of this conservative trend.

In this context, a reincarnation of the Ku Klux Klan asserted itself, combining racism, nativism, and anti-Catholicism in its ideology. Though modeled on the Klan that had sprung up in the South after the Civil War, in the post-World War I period it spread well beyond the South, feeding on a different constellation of social anxieties. Its spokespersons seized on the continued growth of the Catholic Church in the United States, its institutional bulk, its immigrant workers taking jobs away from "Americans," and its foreign connections. That mix they leavened with rumors of Catholic conspiracy and papal plots, re-circulating nativist and anti-Catholic propaganda that had been mouthed by Know Nothings and the American Protective Association in the nineteenth century. (Handy 1991:44) In 1922 the Klan deployed anti-Catholic propaganda to defeat Walter Sims, then running for the Atlanta city council, and to support Earl Mayfield, then running from Texas for the U.S. Senate. Despite a statement by the Federal Council of
Churches that same year condemning Klan intimidation and bigotry, as well as similar disapproval in much of the Protestant press, the Klan kept up its activities, mobilizing even more forcefully in the face of Al Smith's 1924 bid for the democratic nomination for the presidency. In the mid-1920s Klan demonstrations and Catholic counter-demonstrations threatened civil peace. During this period anti-Catholicism was more central to the Klan's agenda than race.30

Hiram Wesley Evans, the second Imperial Wizard of the revived Klan, explained that "the real objection to Romanism in America is not that it is a religion… but that it is a church in politics." (Evans 1925:811, cited in Curry 1972:7) Yet Evans leveled no such complaint against the Federal Council of Churches for organizing to shape social policy, or the Protestant churches for vigorously pushing for Prohibition. Rather, his contention that religious groups cannot engage in politics—as if religion were simply a set of subjective beliefs and practices—was selectively applied to Catholicism, as it had been throughout the nineteenth century, to delegitimate Catholic claims on public life. In advancing this line, Klansmen were able to draw on a stock of rhetorical tropes linking Catholicism and state power. Meanwhile, for their part the American bishops were primarily concerned with church affairs in their own dioceses, and had specifically sought to avoid any course that would involve entanglement with the state.

Curry makes the argument that at base the nativist concerns of the Klan had more to do with economic competition than any real appreciation of Catholic doctrine. Clearly on the face of it, their charges against American Catholicism made little objective sense. Nonetheless, those charges quickly took on a life of its own, one which reinforced the recurrent tendency for Catholic-Protestant polarization. Not only were Klansmen Protestants; they forged ties and joined cause with Fundamentalists, who often shared their nativism and anti-Catholicism. Klansmen were even known to parade into Protestant Sunday services in full paraphernalia to make a

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30 For a discussion of these post-war developments see Curry (1972:1-13). For this last point in particular, see Higham (1955:293, cited in Curry).
The Klan-Catholic conflict quickly escalated to the level of full-blown tribalism, a conflict between groups opposed to one another in a totalistic sense: Anything associated with one camp then became a threat to the other. (Curry 1972:6,11) For their part, it then became difficult for Catholics to appreciate that the Klan did not represent all of Protestantism.

Though the Klan was a weakened public force by the time of Smith's 1928 bid, the polarization it had helped foment continued to divide the public. Supposedly responsible citizens and politicians grew apoplectic over the prospect that Smith might become president. One U.S. Senator from Alabama made the nonsensical claim that his campaign "represented the crowning effort of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to gain control over the White House." (Curry 1972:15) Slanderous anti-Catholic rhetoric marred the election, and this time around the Federal Council of Churches maintained an embarrassed silence, its members unable or unwilling to publically condemn anti-Catholic excesses.

With all the religious ill-will that had been generated by the end of the decade, there were perhaps only two issues raised that really had any direct religious connection, Prohibition and the old church-state question. Prohibition was not a religious issue in the primary sense that it touched on the meaning or status of Scripture, the sacraments, the exercise of ministry, catechesis, and so forth—matters that are religious in a clear and immediate sense of the term (in that their significance unambiguously depends on a connection drawn with some transcendent referent). Prohibition was a religious issue in that it was tied up with the religious vision that fueled the temperance movement; it became a religious issue as the result of a pastoral stance certain churches had taken up. As such, it represented the last great pan-Protestant crusade in American history. On the evils of drinking Fundamentalists and Social Gospelers could agree. Billy Sunday, one of the most popular evangelical preachers of the day, was typical in his enthusiasm. He

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31 Curry (1972:7) refers the reader to Mecklin (1924) and Chalmers (1965) for more detailed analysis of the culture of the Klan.
predicted that with Prohibition, men and women would be free of the tyranny of alcohol; the jails would be emptied; and Hell itself would be cheated of many prospective captives. (Morone 2003:325) So while Prohibition masqueraded as social policy, it was essentially an evangelical crusade thinly disguised. And ironically, it represented the very intrusion of a religious vision on society that some accused Catholics of plotting.

Unfortunately, the pan-Protestant nature of the alliance supporting Prohibition tended to reinforce its anti-Catholic cast. The Klan, as it turns out, was as staunch a supporter of Prohibition as Sunday, and its hooded knights knew how to enforce anti-vice campaigns. "Drinkers flouted authority, morality, and the law. And who lay behind the crimes? Catholics, aliens, and blacks." (Morone 2003:338) The Klan understood how it all fit together. These links had already been forged before the 1920s. The temperance movement had been battling drinking and its attendant evils for decades, and it had long pinned the stereotype of the immigrant, city-dwelling drunkard on Catholics. In point of fact, there were Catholic leaders who had supported the temperance movement. However, for his part, Al Smith was a "wet." He played into the stereotype of being a "rum-soaked Romanist" by openly calling for the repeal of Prohibition. (Curry 1972:18) Thus the debacle that unfolded in the attempt to impose Prohibition's moral vision on America only served to intensify the conflict between Catholics and Protestants.

As for the church-state question, Smith's detractors repeatedly contended that there was a conflict between his faith as a Catholic and his potential obligations as President, often articulating their concerns under the rubric of the "separation of church and state." Catholic teaching did in fact maintain the normative expectation that the state recognize and support the true faith, assuming of course that that meant the Catholic version of faith. And none other an authority than the progressive John Ryan had written a book on Catholic political theory, *The State and the Church* (1922), in which he repeated the Catholic argument that error does not have the same rights as truth; accordingly, while the true faith could claim rights before state, other
faiths could only claim toleration. In the context of the Americanist controversy, Leo XIII had also denied that American arrangements were necessarily normative for all societies. These abstract formulations were often carefully crafted and hedged in by other considerations addressing particular issues. In line with the ever-present Catholic repudiation of relativism, they reflected an appreciation of the binding character of truth and right, and that over against the contention that popular sovereignty was the final arbiter of social relations. And they upheld the *ideal* that the state recognize the true faith, over against that it did not. At the same time, Catholic teaching also upheld the rights of established religious groups in society and the responsibility in conscience to uphold the laws of one's country. Catholic teaching did not support subverting American democracy in the name of a Catholic takeover, quite the opposite. However, neither the papal statements nor Ryan's text adequately addressed all the intermediary circumstances that weigh in between an affirmation of the objective obligations of truth and the circumstances of a pluralist, democratic order in which the mechanisms for determining that truth are dispersed. As Marty (1991:369) notes, Ryan's text was not helpful for building bridges between American Catholics and Protestants.

In the year leading up to the 1928 election, when these issues were swirling about Smith as the presumptive nominee, the *Atlantic Monthly* printed an open letter to him from a New York lawyer and canon law expert named Charles Marshall (1927). The idea was to air some of the religious questions so that they did not dog the election itself. While Smith at first was adverse to crediting the issues raised as worthy of a response, his staff convinced him to do so. He worked with a priest and scholar more versed in Church teaching—whom he acknowledged in his letter—to draft a response. Smith's (1927) response pointed out that according to Ryan himself the circumstances of the ideal Catholic state he had in mind were ones in which the population was all Catholic, which circumstance did not even apply in Latin America, much less the United States. Essentially, the issue seized upon was plucked from "the limbo of defunct controversies."
It was a non-issue. Smith noted that in the case of the United States, American Catholic bishops had repeatedly expressed their affirmation of and esteem for the American Constitutional system. Even Pius IX, whose theoretical statements about church and state had been cited, approved of the actual arrangements in the United States. For his part, Smith stated unequivocally and at great length that his being Catholic would entail no conflict with his duties to uphold the Constitution or serve all the people of the United States; it had entailed no such conflict with his duties as governor of New York. Smith unambiguously upheld "the equality of all churches, all sects, and all beliefs before the law as a matter of right and not as a matter of favor" (italics added). And he affirmed "the absolute separation of Church and State[.]" He thought he had settled the issue. Come election day it was clear he had not.

The other issues which divided Catholics and Protestants—jobs, social policy, immigration, foreign origins—were not specifically theological at all. That consideration and the utter speciousness of the repeated threat of papal subversion underscore the way in which Catholic-Protestant conflicts in the late 1920s were and were not religious. They were not religious in the sense of a conflict over central dogma and belief. They were not religious in that Catholics had designs on society such that they would disenfranchise Protestants once they got the upper hand. Rather, they were religious in that they took the form of a tribal conflict in which identity was drawn on the basis of religious affiliation. While Catholic Americans and Protestant Americans were in no way homogenous "communities," they had come to see each other in relatively monolithic terms.32 What then reinforced these identities was a refusal of each group to accord legitimacy to the other. Catholic doctrinal statements, for all their nuance, were self-grounding pronouncements that presumed the fullness of authority and legitimacy. And in American society, when Catholic behavior proceeded as if on the assumption that "The" Church

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32 That circumstance betrays how little engagement there in fact had been between American Catholics and Protestants up until that point.
and its agenda were self-important, it provoked enormous ire. The continued numerical and institutional expansion of the Catholic Church, and then Smith's bid for the highest office in the land, provoked "the still remaining uneasiness in the minds of Protestant leaders over growing Catholic strength in America." (Curry 1972:18) It especially offended not only Protestants' sense of self-importance. It especially offended the sensibilities of those Protestant groups that themselves refused to accord legitimacy to Catholicism. Moreover, Protestant leaders who would otherwise have confronted anti-Catholicism were averse to doing so for fear of "having a weakened, divided Protestantism in America in face of a unified and growing Catholicism." (Curry 1972:19)

In this context, the phrase "the separation of church and state" served as a focus for pointed questions concerning whether Catholic leaders took the rest of society, the autonomy of its institutions, and other religious groups seriously. However, it was not really about what it purported to be. Catholics were not maneuvering to take over society, and they were operating according to the rules of democracy at least as well as anyone else. Indeed, they had even begun to speak and think in terms of the common good, more fully honoring and participating in its underlying civic spirit. However, in an era when an explicit Protestant imprint on American culture, institutions, and public life was receding, an increased Catholic presence in public life seemed especially threatening.

After World War I there had been a number of interfaith initiatives undertaken to increase mutual goodwill and understanding. These grew out of the revealing experience that ministers and lay members of different faiths had had of working side by side in a common cause. In 1920 a group formed which called itself the American Committee of the Rights of Religious Minorities. It condemned deliberate attempts to arouse divisive passions and called for fostering a common recognition of "the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." (cited in Curry 1972:20) Thus the committee stressed the virtue of civic peace, and clearly it understood that speaking out
of a consensus religious position would be conducive to that end.

Several years later, in the context of Klan mobilization, high-ranking ministers of the federal Council of Churches initiated a series of conferences over dinner in which clergy of various faiths could get to know one another. Then in 1928, that religion again became such a divisive issue prompted members of the Federal Council of Churches to take a further step, the formation of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. This was the group that in 1934 instituted national Brotherhood Week (later parodied in a song by Tom Lehrer). The NCCJ provided forums for discussion and exchange. However, these were not religious conferences; its themes were always civic life, or at most natural religion (the religious sensibilities accessible to ordinary reason and experience), rather than revealed faith. That was because in that period Catholics thought of their participation in public life in purely civic terms, while conservative Protestants were not receptive to interreligious dialogue. These were still "pre-ecumenical days, especially in America." (Curry 1972:24)

After Herbert Hoover's election, the temperature of religious rhetoric in American public life rapidly cooled. Then when the stock market crashed and the Depression hit, America's religious communities joined together in supporting the nation as it faced yet another crisis. One Catholic radio commentator, Rev. Charles Coughlin, a man who injected Christian concern into a populist message that emphasized the plight of ordinary people, gained a wide audience among both Protestants and Catholics. Coughlin's success demonstrated that a religious message directed at the larger American public could gain welcome, whatever its nominal affiliation, so long as it was inclusive and addressed the concerns of its audience. The plight of the nation also meant that society was more receptive to the social justice position that the Catholic Church had outlined after World War I. Those themes were reinforced when in 1931 Pope Pius XI issued his

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33 Unfortunately, in his later years Coughlin's populism moved him into sympathy for Fascism, as well as a deplorable anti-Semitism. As a result, Church authorities had to pressure him off the air.
encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* ("in the fortieth year," that is, after the publication of *Rerum Novarum*), a document which reaffirmed the mandate to form the social order in accord with the dictates of justice. Franklin D. Roosevelt had a basic familiarity with Catholic social teaching, and his own social vision was essentially sympathetic. During the 1932 presidential election, he even took the opportunity to quote from *Quadragesimo Anno*. After Roosevelt won the election, he made a point of welcoming into his administration members of a wide range of American ethnic and religious groups, and more Catholics were included in high national offices than at any time up to that point in U.S. history. During the New Deal Catholics emerged as major partners in national life.

The ensuing decades inaugurated a period of tremendous vitality in American Catholicism. It also was a time when Catholics felt they had something positive to say to society. Reforms in Catholic devotional life, adapting it to contemporary circumstances, had been taking place since the beginning of the century. Prayer groups known as sodalities formed. Liturgical reforms included the more frequent reception of communion and opportunities for expanded participation in the Mass by all the faithful. These efforts were grounded in papal directives and the *nouvelle théologie* coming out of France. Catholic publishing houses produced devotional materials and popular magazines that reached a wide audience, while Bishop Fulton Sheen took to the airwaves—and later television—as one of the most charismatic media figures of his day. Catholic education expanded beyond the elementary school. While the U.S. Church was officially a mission until 1908, in the present period it began to organize to send its own missionaries overseas. Several lay movements also invigorated American Catholic life, including the Catholic

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The significance, as well as the irony, of Roosevelt's action should not be missed. When Al Smith was confronted with Charles Marshall's open letter, it contained excerpts from papal encyclicals that purportedly showed that as a Catholic Smith held doctrines that precluded his serving as President. Smith is supposed to have growled, "Will somebody please tell me what in hell an encyclical is?" (Hennesey 1981:252). A scant five years later, here was Roosevelt, a Protestant, citing the very type of papal statement that had been used to attack Smith.
Worker movement for the working classes, the Friendship House movement for interracial justice, the Grail movement for encouraging the participation of women in the work of the Church, and Catholic Action for making the link between faith and social life. These were days when young Catholics began to feel that their faith empowered them to play an active role in the life of society. (Dolan 1992:384-417) And while American Catholic intellectual life was not the most vigorous locus of its contribution to American society, Continental figures such as Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain provided intellectual stimulus in American Catholicism. Catholic social teaching, liturgical reform, and the neo-Thomist intellectual revival of the day together provided the basis for a rich, multidimensional engagement of modern society.

In the midst of the contemporary rhetoric of interfaith good will and their own evident success at responding to the challenge of modernity, Catholics were taken aback by the strenuous objections raised to two actions of President Roosevelt in 1939. In February Roosevelt sent Joseph P. Kennedy, then serving as ambassador to Britain, to act as his personal representative to the Vatican for the coronation of Pius XII. Later that same year he appointed Myron Taylor as his personal ambassador to the Vatican. Roosevelt justified these actions in civic terms, in recognition of the importance of the Papacy in world affairs and in view of the need to preserve peace among nations. Critics would hear none of it. For the next decade Taylor's appointment inflamed Protestant passions, just as it ignited Catholic pride. When Taylor remained in his post beyond the end of the war, agitation for its elimination mounted. Delegations to the White House, petitions, and frequent editorials in the Christian Century denounced the post, viewing it as an infringement on the separation of church and state. In 1950 Taylor resigned, and Truman determined to raise the post to the level of full ambassador. The outcry from Protestant leaders was so vehement that his nominee asked that his name be withdrawn. And this time the anti-Catholic opposition came not from hooded Klansmen, but from prominent members of the mainline. (Curry 1972:45-49) Given the valuable role that Taylor had served as a shuttle diplomat...
and conduit of confidential assessments supplied by the Vatican, this outcome was extremely unfortunate. (Marty 1996:109-10)

Protestant opposition to Taylor's appointment tapped into the larger sense of alarm with which Protestants viewed the growth in size and influence of the American Catholic Church. A series of eight articles which appeared in the *Christian Century* in 1944-45 gave voice to that sentiment. Written by Harold Fey, the series was launched with a battle cry of a title, "Can Catholicism Win America?" Fey noted that the Catholic Church in his day weighed in at more than twenty-two million, almost three times the size of the largest Protestant denomination (the Methodists). Its strength lay in the cities, in particular, which, Fey added, were the leading edge of culture. Moreover, referring to the National Catholic Welfare Council, he warned that for the first time in history, the bishops were functioning "as a unit": "In this period they have developed an organizational structure that enables them to do this systematically, thoroughly, and without intermission."35 (Fey 1944:1378) The title of Fey's series hearkened back to Harry Emerson Fosdick's 1922 sermon, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" That sermon, which galvanized liberal Protestantism in the face of what Fosdick saw as fundamentalist self-righteousness and exclusivism, also appeared in the *Christian Century*. (It got Fosdick fired from First Presbyterian Church in New York, as well.) Fey apparently hoped to galvanize the Protestant mainline to face down the Catholic menace. Marty notes with evident irony,

The very Protestants who talked of "One World" and "One Church" were the most ardent fighters on the front where Catholics threatened the Protestants' hold on American politics and culture. (Marty 1996:110)

In the post-World War II period the controversy over parochial schools served to further

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35 While supposedly based on two years of research, here Fey showed little appreciation of how the NCWC actually functioned. At best it was a coordinating center for joint statements and projects of otherwise canonically independent bishops. It was not an administrative center for the American Church as such. It did help forestall the numerous contradictory public stances that Catholic bishops had been known for, but not entirely. In any case, the machine-like integration Fey depicted was pure fantasy. An article in *Commonweal*, a contemporary Catholic journal, noted that Fey had little appreciation of the difference between those agencies "which are active and those which are largely paper organizations."
divide Protestants and Catholics. Like the row over the Vatican ambassador, but even more
torturous, this controversy was framed by Protestants in terms of the separation of church and
state. This persistent question had not gone away since the previous century, but it had changed in
complexion. For Catholics much of the objectionable content of the public schools had been
addressed. However, the Catholic bishops still considered formation in the faith to be an integral
part of education, so for this reason they continued to maintain a Catholic school system.
Meanwhile, most Protestants saw the maintenance of the Catholic school system as a refusal to
integrate into society, despite its evident success in promoting Americanization.

By this time an earlier precedent was still ringing in anti-Catholic ears. In Oregon in 1922
a referendum, strenuously backed by the efforts of the Klan, had passed which outlawed all
private education as "unnecessarily divisive." When this case went before the Supreme Court in
Pierce v. Society of Sisters of the Holy Names (1925), the Oregon counsel cited the state's the fear
that children might be taught that the claims of religion took priority over the claims of the state.
(Hennesey 1981:247-48) Cleary, the Oregon counsel was no George Washington speaking of
religion as the surest support for government. He was concerned that the loyalty claimed by
certain minority religions, especially Catholicism, stood in competition with loyalty to America.
In other words, his remarks betrayed that he understood America in Protestant terms, and that he
understood Catholicism and Protestantism to be in competition with one another, and fairly naked
competition, at that. In the end, the Supreme Court struck down the law unanimously.

*Pierce* did not settle matters. Instead, Catholics eventually began to seek government
funding to support parochial education, while for their part Protestants steadfastly opposed such
funding. Meanwhile, the larger issues of assimilation and suspicion over the growth of
Catholicism were never far in the background. Another landmark case followed, *Everson v.
Board of Education* (1947). It was *Everson* that fixed the place of the "separation of church and
state" in contemporary jurisprudence. In that case a taxpayer contested a New Jersey state law
which reimbursed parents for transportation costs for sending their children to non-public schools, including parochial schools. The Court ruled 5 to 4 that such aid was permissible because it was given to *individuals*. In the process of handing down that decision the court articulated a precedent which moved Constitutional theory in the direction of a rigorous separation between government and religious institutions. Citing Jefferson, Associate Justice Hugo Black, who wrote the majority opinion, argued that "the clause against establishment of religion by law was intended to erect 'a wall of separation between Church and State.'" This position stood in stark contrast to prevailing legal theory, which had emphasized that while the relationship between government and religion be "non-sectarian," there could be a relationship. However, in the previous century the meaning of "non-sectarian" was rarely able to accommodate Catholics. Whenever Catholics asked for inclusion, instead the terms of any relationship were scaled back. And this ruling reflected a similar logic. When threatened with revived efforts on the part of Catholics to secure funding for their schools, the Supreme Court moved to set up ever more rigorous barriers to collaboration between religious institutions and the state.

Black himself was a Ku Klux Klan member during the 1920s, the later revelation of which fact almost cost him his seat at the bench. He shared the Klan's virulent anti-Catholicism, vociferously opposing Al Smith for his faith. According to an associate, "Hugo could make the best anti-Catholic speech you ever heard." (Newman 1994:104, cited in McGreevy 2003:185) Jeffrey Rosen, professor of law at George Washington University, conducted an interview with one of Black's clerks which was published in the New York Times:

> It was Justice Hugo Black, the former Alabama Senator, Ku Klux Klan member and enthusiastic anti-Papist, who announced in 1947 that "the First Amendment has erected a wall between church and state. That wall must be kept high and impregnable. We could not approve the slightest breach." Walter Dellinger, who clerked for Justice Black before becoming the Clinton administration's acting solicitor general, confirms the connection between Black's separationism and his anti-Catholicism. "In part he was a Bill of Rights absolutist and in part he was a Southern Baptist who was concerned about the power of the papacy," Dellinger says. (Rosen 2000:42)
Other researches concur that Black's decision was specifically crafted to limit aid to parochial schools, and that the doctrine of "the separation of church and state" imports not only the history of religious contention in America into its sense, but a large measure of anti-Catholicism, as well. (Hamburger 2002:422-40)

Despite the lengths that Black went to to stave off any direct support for religious, especially Catholic, institutions, *Everson* galvanized a wide range of opponents infuriated over allowing even such indirect aid to parochial schooling as transportation. A group of clergy and intelligentsia promptly formed Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State (McGreevy 2003:183), an organization that became famous for its trenchant opposition to any accommodation of Catholic institutions by government. As the name "Protestants and Other Americans" makes clear, the real object of their concern was not really all religions, but "a growing Catholic monolith in the country" (Curry 1972:55). This was reflected in its manifesto, which raised a host of concerns—including the ambassador to the Vatican—that all involved the Catholic Church. The partisan character of Protestants and Other Americans United was only thinly veiled. For example, its periodical *Church and State* bemoaned that Catholics were numerically over-represented in the U.S. House of Representatives, and while Protestants more than held their share of seats in the Senate, they did not adequately represent Protestant convictions. (Curry 1972:57) That is a peculiar concern for an organization supposedly fighting for the separation of church and state.

Enter Paul Blanshard. Beginning in November of 1947 Blanshard authored a series of articles for *The Nation* that critiqued what he saw as a concerted effort on the part of the Catholic Church to subvert American democracy. Blanshard himself was a clergyman (a fact which he hid when he first wrote), so he had some background in theology and philosophy. However, his understanding of Catholicism was at best piecemeal and superficial. Rather than consult actual Catholics, he conducted research on his own in the Library of Congress and that of the Catholic
University of America. He then assembled everything he unearthed in this process—materials from different genres, levels of authority, and schools of thought—as "Catholic dogma." The result was a mishmash of an argument that Catholics of the day found confusing to follow because it presented mutually exclusive schools of Catholic thought as all of a piece. (Massa 2003:65-66) Nonetheless, Blanshard's work received wide acclaim from such luminaries as Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Horace Kallen, and even Albert Einstein. (McGreevy 2003:167) The Catholic Church had already gone on record and at length as an opponent of various schools of "liberalism," and to these critics Blanshard's book seemed an apt counterattack.

Blanshard portrayed Catholicism as a total system, one based on authoritarianism, and one which he would later parallel to communism (Blanshard 1951). But in the end, while the portrait he drew met all the expectations of Catholicism's detractors and then some, it really was not an effort to understand Catholicism in its own terms. In the first place, Blanshard assumed that Catholicism was a monolithic culture, a total system or mentality which operated in all spheres of life according to the same underlying paradigm. Such a notion of culture as a total ethos was current in contemporary anthropology, and it allowed Blanshard to cast his contest in terms of a battle between the culture of Catholicism and the culture of democracy. (McGreevy 2003:169) However, not only were Catholics far from monolithic; they were also quite clear about the difference between civil society and the church community. In fact they were quite good at making all kinds of distinctions. Moreover, any basic acquaintance with American history reveals that it was American Protestant who had consistently made strenuous efforts to impress an evangelical stamp on American culture. Though that was often to good effect, if the issue is Catholicism as a cultural system, Protestantism also had its cultural dimension. In that respect, the separation of church and state was at best a newfound avocation among Protestant Americans. American Protestantism also had its undemocratic underside—slavery, religion riots, the Know

36 Massa draws on Blanshard's (1973) own autobiography in drawing this assessment.
Nothings, the American Protective Association, the Klan, and so forth—some of which Blanshard briefly acknowledged. What he failed to acknowledge was that when one attends to the empirical record, American Catholicism has no comparable public history.

Beyond that, his own argument that democracy was a single culture which required a unified, state-run system of education was hardly democratic. While accusing Catholics of being totalitarian, with his insistence upon state education and the idea that society had room for a single culture orchestrated from the liberal center, Blanshard deployed assumptions about culture and education that were apparently just as totalistic. While Blanshard did raise some penetrating questions for Catholics, questions they were often too quick to brush aside with the plaint of being misunderstood, he was not at all even-handed. He did not really show how Catholics represented any more of a threat to American democracy than Massachusetts Puritans, Southern Baptists, upper class Episcopalians, Orthodox Jews, or secular liberals, for that matter.

John Courtney Murray pointed out what he called the "monism" in Blanshard's thought. In Murray's view Blanshard held too unthinkingly to the single standard of American individualism, which he then used to measure all other systems. By that standard, Catholicism is un-American, which also turns out to mean that it is unreasonable. (Murray 1949) Massa points out that Blanshard's argument revolved around a standard set of normative assumptions concerning Church polity: that authority derives from an assembled congregation of believers who each rationally came to their faith as independent individuals, and who were careful to confine that faith within the perimeter of their individual lives. His careful research unearthed bountiful evidence that Catholics did not appreciate those norms. Indeed, Catholics were quite clear about that. Catholics typically understood their faith in terms of a structured body of doctrine and dogma, along with certain people whose office it is to speak authoritatively out of that tradition; they made not secret of the matter. To Blanshard and his cohort such a church polity seemed obviously fraudulent, while to Catholic thinkers it did not matter how many
individuals put a certain doctrine to a vote, since Catholic doctrine was not a matter of anyone's subjective opinion. (Massa 2003:59-76) However, in their perpetual retreat to objective truth and philosophical rationalization, Catholics themselves continually missed engaging the larger point, the point raised by all the "Americanists," "modernists," and "liberals": How were such objective truths to be known? What room for flexibility is made in how truth is expressed in particular historical circumstances and particular individual lives? And was not authority to be held accountable? What ensued was an ongoing dialogue of the deaf. In these debates, "separation of church and state" was the slogan that Protestants constantly returned to discredit Catholic claims and keep them at bay.

At this time, Protestants found ready allies for a strict separationist reading of the First Amendment in the American Jewish community. From the Jewish perspective, the public presence of religion almost always meant Christian Scripture, holidays, and ideals, or worse, the Christian appropriation or even denial of Judaism's own religious heritage. One of Judaism's most strenuous advocates of strict separationism was Leo Pfeffer, an observant Orthodox Jew, who for over four decades beginning in the late 1940s worked as either a staff member or a legal consultant on church-state affairs for the American Jewish Congress. Pfeffer and the ACJ became prominent in the legal efforts to construct a powerful and impenetrable wall of separation between church and state. [new paragraph] These organizations took and absolutist position on church-state issues, opposing virtually all proposals to provide state support to nonpublic schools through direct subsidies, supplementary educational programs, educational vouchers, and the funding of transportation. Jewish organizations also objected to the displaying of religious symbols, including menorahs, on public property, and to the saying of nondenominational prayers in public schools. (Shapiro and Feingold 1995:55)

This position heightened Jewish-Catholic tensions, in particular, but Jewish Americans were unified on this point37 and not of a mind to back down.

Catholics then saw themselves as the victims of partisan attacks. However, to their critics

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37 Shapiro and Feingold cite the collaboration between Pfeffer and the more secular, Reform-oriented AJC as evidence of the widespread support that strict separationism had in the Jewish community.
it was Catholic partisanship that often provoked such vehement responses. A series of Congressional bills promoting federal aid to education exemplified the midcentury impasse. Two, which would have apportioned funds to the states and been open to their funding private and parochial schools, was defeated by Protestant opposition. Then when a bill was proposed which would have provided federal funding only to public schools, Catholics returned the favor. To Protestants Catholics seemed self-interested, while to Catholics Protestants seemed to dismiss their concerns out of hand. Protestants understood themselves to be working on behalf of society, but they were only willing to include Catholics up to a point. Catholics felt they were being asked to support public institutions which did not respond to their concerns while also having to support their own institutions. To Protestants it seemed like Catholics were taking advantage of the rules to play a different game: Given the freedom to integrate into American society, they chose to make use of that freedom to set up their own school system, then to ask for state support. To Catholics, religious liberty meant precisely that, being able to educate their children in their faith. Since they were members of the community contributing to its taxes, and since education was a state requirement, some share in those tax resources to meet that requirement as they saw fit seemed a matter of simple justice.

At base there were real asymmetries between the religious culture, the circumstances, and the institutional life of the different religious groups in America. Hence arrangements which favored one group seemed to penalize the others, and arguing the merits of these arrangements in the abstract simply meant one side talking past the others. However, asymmetries do not necessarily entail an unworkable social order. In fact, asymmetries always enter into relationships between groups, as they do between individuals. People then negotiate such asymmetries by making pragmatic compromises. Here "pragmatic" does not necessarily imply selling out one's

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38 The two bills which would might have opened the door for parochial school funding were proposed by Senators Taft of Ohio in 1947 and Aiken of Vermont in 1948; the restrictive bill was proposed by Representative Graham Barden of North Carolina in 1949.
principles. Instead, it may mean recognizing that there are a range of goods to be realized, and no one group's set of principles may realize them all. Compromise requires seeing a certain legitimacy in the claims of one's interlocutors. Throughout the nineteenth century Protestants had denied that legitimacy to Catholics and their claims. Then come the twentieth century they were exasperated to read in those infamous papal encyclicals that Catholic faith measured itself by its own standards, standards by which it also presumed to measure other faiths and the secular order, as well. Here was this "monolith" in their midst, and after 150 years it was just as intransigent as ever. While it is true that most America bishops vocally supported American values, and on an official, dogmatic level Catholicism repeatedly declined to affirm the religious legitimacy of Protestantism, and that despite all that gains that had been extended them in a Protestant society. So liberal Protestants then constructed a position from which to once again deny the legitimacy of Catholicism. In this context Catholics and Protestants found it impossible to engage one another on the level that working through asymmetrical interests requires. As a result, an ambassador to the Vatican and parochial school aid became lines in the sand, and "the separation of church and state" became a weapon in a polemic rather than a formula of compromise.

These asymmetries were aggravated by one further difference, the long-running assumption concerning the moral equivalence of Protestantism and America. In that light, a threat to one might readily be perceived as a threat to the other. For that reason, for most of American history whenever Catholics formed organizations, attracted converts, educated their children, built up their institutions, or organized politically, these actions were repeatedly cast in the most sinister light, as threats to the well-being of the nation, whereas when Protestants pursued the same activities the only problem was that they were never effective enough. In the post-World War II period Catholics were hardly anti-American. Instead, they were extremely patriotic, perhaps excessively so, even to the point of seeing themselves as the saviors of a nation whose resolve was being sapped by confused intellectuals who were soft on communism. Communism
was one further issue where many Catholics made an argument about the national policy, one subtext of which was their own qualifications to provide effective leadership.

The entire clash of the 1940s and 1950s was the result of a religious body with a new self-image and an established religious body with an accustomed role in leadership meeting in the same place at the same time. (Curry 1972:60)

Though Protestant critics repeatedly claimed that "Catholic power" and "Catholic aggression" posed a threat to American democracy, what they most directly threatened was the last remnant of Protestant hegemony.

By the mid-1950s leaders in both communities seemed to appreciate that their rhetoric was not only counterproductive. It was also obscuring rather than illuminating some of the real issues at stake. In 1953 the Catholic periodical *Commonweal* invited Reinhold Niebuhr, one of the most reputed Protestant theologians of his day, to contribute an article, and he took the opportunity to introduce an irenic note into Catholic-Protestant relations. In 1955 the *Christian Century* called for an end to "Catholic claustrophobia" and "Protestant paranoia." (Christian Century 1955: cited in Herberg 1962:41-42) Curry (1972:62-70) documents how tensions continued to ease. Supporters of Protestants and Other Americans United began to weary of its increasingly strident tactics and defect from its ranks.39 In this context, the reception of Herberg's *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* represented acquiescence on the part of American Protestants that the kind of hegemony they had sought to maintain was no longer possible.

The Nixon-Kennedy election of 1960 showed that America had indeed turned a corner when it came to religion in public life. There is an enormous literature on that campaign and the significance of Kennedy's election for Roman Catholicism in America.40 Here it will suffice to

39 For example, in 1952 POAU tried to prevent American cardinals from voting for the new Pope because they would be participating in an election in a foreign state. In 1957 it requested that the FCC refuse licenses to stations at Jesuit universities because the Jesuit order was based outside the United States (though the universities themselves were clearly domestic). It also insisted on distributing a voter guide entitled "Questions for Catholic Candidates," which prompted one board member, Stanley Lichtenstein, to resign because it amounted to a religious test for office.

40 For a recent review of this literature see Carty (2004).
highlight two points. First, in the popular literature the election of Kennedy is often portrayed as the long-awaited "arrival" of Catholicism in America. Certainly, it meant that a significant number of Protestant Americans were willing to entertain a Chief Executive who was Catholic, and hence was not Protestant, and given the earlier heated rhetoric concerning Protestant prerogative and Catholic usurpation, Kennedy's election was a turning point. At the same time, it was hardly an endorsement of Catholicism. Kennedy was able to win the White House to the extent that Americans were able to disaggregate religion from the presidential campaign, not because of any newfound appreciation of Catholicism's contribution to American society.

And that brings the discussion to the second point: The terms on which Kennedy the Catholic won the White House. When Kennedy ran, the question of Catholicism and the public life of the nation had not completely disappeared. Pollsters could not restrain from weighing the religious factor into the outcome of various primaries, making it even more of a factor as the campaign progressed. After Kennedy emerged as the Democratic nominee, a group of Protestant ministers gathered in Washington on September 7 to release a statement to the press on Kennedy's Catholicism. The Peale group, as the *New York Times* dubbed them (after Norman Vincent Peale, its most prominent spokesperson), rehearsed the usual complaints, including that Catholicism still held "theoretically" that "error has no rights," that in other countries the Catholic Church often held a privileged legal status not shared with other faiths, and that Canon Law mandated that Catholic children be educated in a Catholic context rather than common schools (which mandate, they did admit, the local bishop could waive). These ministers were morally certain of their case. However, when asked at the press conference they called whether there had been any Catholics or experts on Catholicism in their midst, they fell silent. Later Kennedy himself made the observation that attacks on his Catholicism were based on "carefully selected

41 It should be noted that Canon law operates differently than American law. American law begins with the minimum duties and rights applicable to everyone, whereas Canon law begins with norms and ideals. Then based on the values at stake it considers the circumstances and persons authorized for granting exceptions.
quotations, usually out of context from the statements of Catholic Church leaders, usually in other countries, frequently in other centuries." (Kennedy 1967:66)

At the heart of the Peale group's moral argument was the following proposition:

Brotherhood in a pluralistic society like ours depends on a firm wall of separation between church and state. We feel that the American hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church can only increase religious tensions and political religious problems by attempting to break down this wall. Much depends upon strong support for this well tested wall of separation by Americans of all faiths. (Braestrup 1960)

No Protestant candidate had ever been called upon to affirm such a wall of separation. Indeed, it would have been antithetical to the informal establishment which existed for most of U.S. history. However, when Al Smith ran for the presidency, he was forced to affirm "the absolute separation of Church and State" and "the strict enforcement of the provisions of" [the First Amendment]. With Everson and the Blanshard manifesto "the separation of church and state" became a central article of the American creed; and its cogency derived in large measure from its role as a rhetorical barrier against Catholic claims on public life, especially at a time when other religious groups in American society favored greater institutional autonomy in American culture. Calls for a Vatican envoy or state support for Catholic schools then became an attack on this "timeless" American principle, even when such proposals were advanced in terms of civic criteria. In Kennedy's case, he had already taken positions against state aid to Catholic schools and appointing an envoy to the Vatican. The ministers who assembled on September 7 went further and—in the name of separation of church and state, no less—demanded that in order to run for state office he take a stand public against norms and policies internal to the Catholic Church.

The ministers thought they had staged a rather clever coup. Either Kennedy play their game, or he refuse; in the first case he would alienate Catholic voters, in the second, Protestant voters. These ministers were not prepared for the interfaith firestorm of criticism they ignited. While the U.S. Constitution says nothing about state aid to parochial schools, it does expressly forbid religious tests for office, which was precisely what they were proposing. It was the
ministers who were offending the spirit behind the Constitution. Clergy and theologians of all
faiths repudiated their tactics, as did President Eisenhower. All deplored making religion an issue.
Nonetheless, at the level of innuendo and prejudice, the Kennedy team feared enough damage had
been done. On September 12 they arranged for Kennedy to appear before the Greater Houston
Ministerial Association to explain once again that his Catholicism in no way compromised his
ability to fulfill his Constitutional responsibilities as President. There he took a hard-line
separationist position that no Protestant would have ever have needed to or even dared. He argued
that he believed in "an America where the separation between church and state is absolute." His
religious faith would not entail even the remote possibility of a conflict. He declared, "I want a
chief executive whose public acts are responsible to all and obligated to none…and whose
fulfillment of his Presidential office is not limited or conditioned by any religious oath, ritual or
obligation." (Kennedy 1967:363-66) Here Kennedy apparently went to an absurd extreme; much
turns on what he meant by a "any religious obligation." Certainly a person can bring a conscience
formed by religious faith into the White House, and many voters make that an explicit
expectation, so long as it is a faith they trust and have confidence in. But Kennedy seemed to
relegate religion not only to another institutional sphere, but to another dimension of existence
entirely. Massa (2003:83) makes the following observation: "Whatever one's take on Kennedy's
personal spirituality or depth of commitment to Catholicism, it is precisely because Kennedy was
a Roman Catholic that he had to secularize the presidency in order to win it."42

The Peale group had argued, "Brotherhood in a pluralistic society like ours depends on a
firm wall of separation between church and state." However, in fact they were operating not on
the basis of brotherhood, but of suspicion and mistrust. In the sociology of religion secularization
theorists have argued that religious diversity leads to the secularization of public life because

42 For a treatment of the Kennedy election, the Peale group, and the role of religion, see his own analysis in
religious groups are total entities which inevitably project onto it mutually exclusive claims. The tensions over religion in the 1960 election certainly served to propel public life in the direction of greater secularization. And as a broad generalization, such a characterization of the long-term historical dynamic at work in the relationship between Catholics and Protestants in America seems in order. In fact, for their part, while Catholics were being accused of wanting to break down the separation of church and state, for most of U.S. history they were not interested in promoting some collaborative religious culture in society at large. Even with such issues as school funding they were seeking access to public resources to fulfill a public mandate but within their own institutions; they were not seeking to impose their religious vision on the public at large. In his campaign, Kennedy took up the rhetoric emphasizing participation in civic life on purely civic terms, and he rallied it in response to the gauntlet of separationism that groups such as Peale's had thrown down before Catholicism.

At the same time, competition and mutual delegitimation are not the only processes that can drive religion out of public life. Religious groups themselves might make room for a certain forms of secularization, especially when a former religio-cultural synthesis begins to limp. In their effort "to meet the age" at the turn of the twentieth century, liberal Protestants began allowing for a degree of autonomy in various spheres of social life, thus promoting the structural differentiation often associated with secularization. At the same time, they often did so in view of the long-term health and integrity of religion. The promoters of this vision were charged by their detractors within the theological community with everything from naïveté to duplicitously eviscerating religion in the name of secularism. Sociologists of religion have sometimes been too quick to concur that such structural differentiation represent the death of religion. If the relationship of religion to the overall culture of a society goes through stages of synthesis, disintegration, and reintegration, then it may not be completely apt to take the actions of one group operating at a certain point on such a cycle as evidence of the overthrow of religion or of a
simple linear trajectory in the direction of overall secularization.

Finally, when religious groups are able to work together, they may also conspire to integrate religion and public life. In nineteenth century America various established and dissenting Protestant groups were able to collaborate in bringing about a unique evangelical culture. In this case religious groups actually worked together to sustain a robust and multifaceted religious public culture. While at the time it was not able to accommodate all religious groups in society with perfect justice, it was remarkably more religiously inclusive than people in Europe imagined public culture could be.

The tactics of the Peale group and the response of the Kennedy team seem the classic instance of social actors conspiring despite themselves to bring about an end demanded by sociological theory. Sociologists of religion had held that the conflict entailed by religious diversity inevitably leads to ever stricter separation between religion and public life.\(^43\) However, the Kennedy election represented a turning point that such a one-dimensional analysis does not adequately capture. The Peale group was not the only voice, or even the dominant voice, of the day. The leading voices in the various religious communities of American society united to condemn the partisanship that their stratagem represented. At the same time, Catholic leaders in particular were either silent in the face of their incendiary rhetoric or merely calmly advised their flocks to take into account the issues before them and vote for the stronger candidate. Kennedy had argued that he was not the Catholic Church's candidate for president, but that of the Democratic party; and Catholic leaders did everything they could to studiously avoid belying the contention. And in the end, Kennedy won the election. He won by a razor's edge, but his victory nonetheless sealed the discredit of approaches to American political life like that of the Peale group, at least in the mainstream of society. While the Peale group denied particular animus or

\(^{43}\) In his analysis of the Kennedy election, Massa (1999:142-47) specifically refers to the work of Peter Berger (1967:147-52) on this point.
partisanship, it had set forth an indictment of Catholicism as such as the enemy. Such a total indictment was no longer legitimate. Not only was that to deny the implicit equation that many Americans still maintained morally equating America with Protestantism. It also meant that public arguments could no longer rely on unexamined assumptions about "what we all know to be true about Catholicism." That did not mean legitimate questions about the relevance of Catholicism to public life could no longer be asked. However, in the future a more even-handed approach had to be taken; that meant making a good-faith effort to understand Catholicism, making clear one's assumptions about Catholicism, and demonstrating their relevance for a particular issue.

That the mainstream voices in America's religious communities, validated by the American electorate, took such a position meant a new chapter had been opened in the book on religion in American public life. It signaled a willingness on part of Protestant, Jews, and Catholics to disaggregate political issues from questions of religious affiliation. In other words, it signaled a willingness to move beyond the religious tribalism that had dominated American political life for three centuries and more. Such a development had been supported by the interfaith contacts that began to take place during the late 1950s, when Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish theologians began to look at the religious issues dividing them as particular issues, while also stressing important commonalities. Such interfaith engagement reflected a willingness to look at divisive issues on something less than a totalistic level. Within Catholicism these moves were further validated by the Second Vatican Council, which endorsed a reassessment of other faith communities and a process of dialogue with them. American Catholics then took Vatican II and these developments within American society as a mandate to begin to dismantle the subculture to which they had retreated.

At the same time, these developments bore an irony of majestic proportions. In the midst of the historical moment that saw the reasons for separating religion out from public life begin to
evaporate, Kennedy rode to victory on the proposition of strict separationism. What had forced religion out of public life was not simply religious differences but the way they were held. Secularization theory proposed that religion must be kept out of public life not simply because different religions stake out different positions on public issues—if difference were a disqualification for participation in public life then we would all have to stay at home—but because religions purportedly are total systems that are irresolubly divisive: Different faiths are simply antithetical to one another. In America reasons for keeping religion out of public life were most often directed at Catholicism, on the ground that Catholicism itself is antithetical to American life. Sociological theory itself was colored by the historical experience of Catholic-Protestant struggles, one of the arch-paradigms of interfaith conflict. If the relations between Catholics and Protestants in America have evolved so that differences which arise are less than totalistic, what does this have to say about reasons for keeping religion out of public life? What has changed? And what is keeping the keep-religion-out-of-public-life rhetoric in place?
A. Prefatory Remarks

Over the course of American history the meaning of the norms governing the place of religion in public life was caught up in the relations between religious groups, and religious contest was a principle force driving the ongoing evolution of these norms. During the nineteenth century, religion was understood to serve a secular purpose insofar as it was the ground of morality and civic virtue. Then the distinction between "sectarian" and "non-sectarian" religion was asserted and contested as one standard for determining when religion might legitimately serve this public purpose. So, for example, when it came to forms of scripture legitimate in shared, public contexts, the term "non-sectarian" was employed to authorize the use of the Bible; accordingly, it applied to a translation of the Bible acceptable to some Christian groups but not others. Beyond that, it never applied to non-Christian writings. The term essentially functioned as a marker of consensus religiosity, at least such consensus as could be established among the majority of Christians in a diverse society. As such, the approach to public legitimacy it represented did not affirm diversity; rather, cultural forms derived from those traditions outside the majority consensus were precisely what was condemned under the rubric of "sectarianism."

In the twentieth century, the notion of "the separation of church and state" emerged as a new locus of the debate, and its meaning was similarly caught up in interfaith relations. It was conspicuously waved at some groups—but not others—to discredit their claims on community resources or the recognition of their specific culture and values. On the one hand, the President was expected to attend or send a representative to important religious gatherings and events, and that was not taken to violate "the separation of church and state." On the other, the appointment of an ambassador to the Vatican, though justified on purely secular grounds, was strenuously opposed as such a violation. At the same time, as the twentieth century progressed and the courts
became increasingly active in applying the First Amendment to the States, sometimes it was minority faith communities who were able to make use of "the separation of church and state" to scale back such "consensus religiosity" in public life as did not accord with their own religious sensibilities. In this respect, Jewish efforts in the twentieth century to counter Christian hegemony in public life were analogous to Catholic efforts of the nineteenth to resist that of evangelical Protestantism.

In each case, the meaning of "non-sectarian" or "the separation of church and state" did not derive merely from the immediate sense of the words themselves. It also reflected the current state of interfaith consensus and competition. Secular standards were deployed to allow religion into public life insofar as it accorded with secular ends, but clearly other considerations were also in play. These additional considerations served to discriminate between the religious culture of the dominant and minority religious groups in society, affirming the former and delegitimating the latter. Or they were used to set an excessively high standard, one that went beyond reasonable secular purposes, in order to delegitimate the claims of minority groups. Or in some cases, minority groups were also able to use those standards to scale back consensus religiosity in public life, insofar as they themselves were excluded from the consensus in question. Thus the ability of religious groups to accommodate one another in society was wrapped up in the meaning of various ostensibly neutral standards legitimating religion in public life and the reasons for their being advanced.

During the period from the 1940s through the 1970s, the public legitimacy of any given tradition became increasingly controverted. Nonetheless, even then it remained possible to affirm certain public expressions of consensus religiosity. For example, in 1956 "In God we trust," a phrase that had consistently appeared on U.S. coinage since the 1860s, was officially made the national motto by an act of Congress, and that act were not taken to violate the meaning of "the separation of church and state." Nonetheless, over the very long-term, especially from the vantage
of the 1970s, the prevailing tendency was for religious difference and contest to drive religion from public life, as secularization theory would predict.

The role of Catholics in these controversies was pivotal. Throughout much of U.S. history they were a key source of religious difference, often serving as the most significant religious "other" from the perspective of the majority of Protestants. Even after Herberg wrote *Protestant, Catholic, Jew* (1955), and while the Civil Rights movement was getting under way, Leo Pfeffer (1956) argued that the major divide in U.S. social relations still lay along Catholic-Protestant lines. Yet beginning in the mid-1950s Catholics and Protestants did begin to engage each other on a deeper level in a number of forums. And then in the 1960s in response to Vatican II the American Catholic Church undertook a series of reforms which reoriented its relationship to other faiths, and in the process it transformed the place of Catholics in society. American Catholic rhetoric and practice began to reflect a pluralism that was internally, theologically grounded. As a result, Catholics were then able to take advantage of the possibilities for greater collaboration and mutual respect which other faiths also worked to realize. These reforms were then integral to the emergence of a new paradigm in the overall pattern of religious culture in the United States, one more able to legitimate not only consensus religiosity but also religious diversity.

This chapter examines American Catholic involvement in public life during the period prior to Vatican II. It then reviews changes in the American Catholic Church's relationship with other faiths, especially those brought about by Vatican II. The final section it examines public Catholicism in the post-Vatican II period. The chapter which follows then demonstrates the significance of religious environmentalism and the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project in light of this trajectory.

In drawing this line of comparison between public Catholicism in the pre- and post-Vatican II periods, it is not possible to trace all the diverse ways in which Catholics were
involved as Catholics in the life of the larger polity. Instead the focus here is restricted to one privileged form that such involvement has taken during the twentieth century, namely the development of a specifically America tradition of Catholic social teaching. As noted earlier, broadly speaking Catholic social teaching is that body of Catholic thought concerned with a just social order. Its roots extend back to medieval treatment of such issues in society as usury, just war, and the proper bounds of authority. While Catholic theological engagement with the social issues that have arisen in the modern West dates to the early nineteenth century (and even earlier, see Schuck 2005), the social philosophy of Leo XIII (pope 1878–1903) is usually considered a pivotal reference point for modern Catholic social thought. Building on the precedent set by Leo XIII, the American Catholic Church essentially launched its own tradition of social teaching, at least on an authoritative level, with the publication of the Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction of 1919.

Certainly, that initiative was not the first American Catholic foray into social questions. Since Catholics gained a voice in American public life, men like the Carrolls of Maryland had spoken out on faith and citizenship, while Catholic advocates such as New York's Bishop Hughes had stood up in the public square for the rights of their constituents. However, especially during the nineteenth century the resources of the Catholic Church geared to its own needs, and its stance in American society was often more that of supplicant than partner. When it came to the broader social questions that the nation confronted, nineteenth century American Catholics rarely lived up to the example of the Carrolls, standing on the sidelines in on social questions that did not directly affect the wellbeing of the institutional church or the Catholic community per se.

The Catholic involvement in the debate over slavery, or the lack thereof, serves as a telling instance of Catholic leaders' reticence to involve themselves in public affairs. In a famous exchange which took place in 1840 Bishop John England, the reformer appointed to the see of Charleston, assured then Secretary of State John Forsyth that a
bull issued by Gregory XVI the previous year only condemned the slave trade, and not
the institution of slavery as such. (Saunders and Rogers 1993:319-320). In his public
writing and speaking he also assured all parties that the Catholic clergy and leadership
were not agitating on this issue, and he strongly condemned the abolitionist movement
for the threat it posed to the peace of the Republic. While abolitionists were taking the
Gregory's letter to advance their cause in Catholic circles, England and most other
Catholic leaders tried to read it in the narrowest sense so as to avoid nativist criticism of
Catholic interference in the life of the nation. (Quinn 2004) Catholic-Protestant tensions,
compounded as they were by the relatively recent immigrant status of many Catholics
and their forebears, discouraged equal Catholic participation in American social debates
of the nineteenth century.

As a result, American Catholic social teaching, in the sense of a systematic and relatively
non-partisan reflection on social issues in light of the tradition, did not fully emerge in the United
States until the turn of the twentieth century. As such, it represented a deliberate effort to bring
the Catholic tradition to bear on the life of society as a whole. In the present day, the recognition
of religious diversity in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project manifests a new approach to
the way the tradition is able to bring faith to bear on public life. Moreover, the unfolding of this
example of religious environmentalism shows the difference that internally grounded pluralism
makes for the role that religion can play in public life.

In tracing the development of Catholic social teaching from the Bishops' Program of
1919 to the Columbia River Pastoral Letter of 2001, the concern here is not so much the content
of that teaching as the way it brought religion into public life, as well as how that effort was then
received. Making use of O'Brien's notion of "public" as referring to a given community's
interaction with the larger society, the public nature of a given initiative will be measured by
taking into account the following: First, on whose behalf did its sponsors speak, a limited
constituency or some larger community? Second, what was the audience addressed? And third,
how was the effort received, at least insofar as it was taken as a legitimate and relevant exercise
of citizenship? In gauging the way religion was brought to bear on public life, three senses of
"religious" are operative. First, and most centrally, how was some link made between secular
matters and some ultimate, transcendent term or frame? Making such a link is the primary way in
which an issue is or becomes religious. Second, how was a given initiative identified with
religious actors? Such identification marks something as religious not so much on the basis of its
explicit reference, but by its association with a religious community or its leaders. Third, how are
other links made to a specific religious tradition, for example through reference to events, persons,
or doctrines that have a religious resonance that the intended audience will readily grasp?
Examples would include reference to a revered holy person such as Saint Francis, a scriptural text
such as a passage in the Tanakh, a doctrine such as karma, or a place such as Calvary. Like the
second measure of religious significance, this third is derivative. It derives its cogency not from
some direct, explicit link to a religious frame, but via association with some intermediary term
itself taken to have obvious religious significance.

The changing shape of Catholic involvement in public life certainly followed its own
cultural logic, and it even imported developments of the larger Catholic world into the American
context. Yet that logic was not fully autonomous; it presumed the background of interfaith
relations sketched in the preceding chapter. At the same time, it also is the story of how Catholics
contributed to those relations. In that sense it provides a window from the Catholic vantage onto
the evolving state of interfaith relations in America. Catholicism's own adoption of an internally
grounded pluralism is part of a larger confluence of historical processes, one that involved
changes both in the culture and orientation of other faiths and in the circumstances of religion in
society overall. These coordinate developments in other faiths and relevant trends that affected
the place of religion in American culture must be acknowledged. However, the main focus here is
the changed orientation of Catholicism to other faiths and the contribution this makes to the larger
public culture all faiths share. This change constituted an important adaptation of religion to
modern circumstances, one that altered the overall possibilities for religion in public life.

B. The Bishops’ Program and the Pastoral Letter of 1919

At first blush Catholic social teaching in the early twentieth century presents something
of an enigma. The church sponsoring this social thought generally held a totalistic view of
religion-and-culture. Catholic leaders of the day regularly promoted Catholicism as a total way of
life, one with implications for all dimensions of human existence. This tendency was only
reinforced by the controversy over "Modernism." Catholics were admonished to view
contemporary society with suspicion and even to keep it at a distance. Yet Catholic social
teaching was articulated in the form of abstracted, secularized principles. If Catholicism was a
culture, one with answers that supplied the deficiencies of modernity, why not bring more of the
whole package into the public debate? Why not introduce those foundational religious intuitions
which grounded the contribution Catholic spokespersons would make?

Part of the answer lay in the obvious lack of receptivity among non-Catholics that such
an approach would provoke. In the first place, on the level of culture, the patterns ingrained in
American social life were organized around assumptions deriving from a different religious ethos,
at least when it came to such issues as the primacy of individual autonomy and initiative, the
nature of political community, the nature of the state, and so forth. The more deeply an argument
was grounded in fundamental Catholic assumptions, the broader the debate it would provoke.
Such an approach would be desirable to the extent that provoking broader philosophical and
religious debate was the objective; but if a more limited policy outcome was at issue, then the
question of how to ground arguments about the social order deriving from specifically Catholic
intuitions raised obvious dilemmas.

Secondly, and more significantly, not only were non-Catholics accustomed to thinking about social life in different ways than Catholics, they also held a number of religious claims that historically were posed in opposition to those held by Catholics. Because contemporary religious communities constructed and held their religious claims in opposition to one another, non-Catholics—evangelical Protestants in particular—were not particularly receptive to religious appeals rooted in Catholicism, especially if they derived from its distinctive religious insights.

Finally, apart from specifically religious appeals and arguments, a quasi-tribal opposition to Catholics and their Church, viewed as a collective "other," steeled resistance to anything specifically Catholic. Anti-Catholicism existed on all these levels in American society, the cultural, the religious, and the tribal, and this anti-Catholicism made bringing Catholic religious insights into public life problematic. Insofar as bringing religious insights and rhetoric into public life was not similarly problematic for evangelicals for much of the nineteenth century, or even when the campaign for Prohibition was waged in the early twentieth, it is clear that the "secular" nature of American society was not the issue. The decisive issue was interfaith tensions.

At the same time, the culture of American Catholicism posed its own challenges to participation in public life. It was prone to a separatism that constantly reasserted itself. Shortly after the Revolution, Crèvecoeur (2006 [1782]:44-47) boasted that in his day his Catholic, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Quaker neighbors might just as well pray in one another's places of worship if such proved convenient. However, for most of American history Catholic clergy actively discouraged such religious mixing, concerned that such "indifferentism" could lead to confusion or defection. While John Carroll maintained that Catholics could participate fully in American civic life, it is telling that that was only because he also maintained that religious and

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1 "Indifferentism," the contention that all religions are equally valid, was formally defined and condemned by Pius IX in the *Syllabus of Errors* #15-17 (1864). The document drew on and codified prior statements and teaching. See the discussion in section C below.
civic life themselves could be strictly segregated. In religious matters he was far clearer about the
authority of the Catholic Church, and far less willing to acknowledge the religious claims of
others outside the Church. The bishops who came after Carroll then erected ever more structures
to safeguard the integrity of the faith and the authority of the Church, and these effectively served
to increasingly isolate Catholics from the surrounding society.

Canon law encoded and reinforced this distinction between the religious authority of the
Catholic Church and other groups. It prohibited participation in religious services of other
churches or faiths. It frowned upon Catholics marrying non-Catholics—even when all parties
agreed to the requirement to raise the children Catholic—because the parents could not provide a
united witness to the faith. And if a Catholic married a non-Catholic, canon law forbade allowing
a pastor of the non-Catholic faith to perform the ceremony because that would be to acknowledge
the religious authority of a non-Catholic minister.²

² One presentation of these positions can be found in the Baltimore Catechism, published by the American
hierarchy as the standard for American Catholic doctrine. The 1891 edition makes clear that: "There can be
only one true religion, because a thing cannot be false and true at the same time, and, therefore, all religions
that contradict the teaching of the true Church must teach falsehood." (Question 516) The Catechism then
adds the leading question: "If all religions in which men seek to serve God are equally good and true, why
did Christ disturb the Jewish religion and the Apostles condemn heretics?" The text goes on to note that
Protestant churches lack the marks of the true Church (that it is one, holy, universal, and of apostolic
origin), observing in particular that "[t]hey are not holy, because their doctrines are founded on error and
lead to evil consequences." (Question 517) When it comes to marriages with non-Catholics, not only were
"mixed marriages" discouraged (Questions 1041 and 1042), but marriage before a Protestant minister
incurred excommunication "because by such a marriage [Catholics] make profession of a false religion in
acknowledging as a priest one who has neither sacred power nor authority." (Question 1040)

Here the style of reasoning is particularly noteworthy. It operates at a level of logical formalism that often
devolves into tautology. For example, the proposition that "all religions that contradict the teaching of the
true Church must teach falsehood" simply states that all religions teach falsehood insofar as they teach
things which are not true. It is assumed that "the true Church" is somehow to be encountered in the Catholic
Church, but in Church teaching itself the true Church is never simply identified with the actual Catholic
Church of a given historical moment. It is a sort of Platonic ideal, though one that finds its instantiation in
the historical Catholic Church, to be sure. In any event, by referring to this ideal Church one can make
apodictic claims that would be rather difficult to maintain with regard to the complex, empirical reality that
is the actual Church of history. Likewise, the condemnation of other religions made here is not so sweeping
as at first blush. The proposition condemned is that all religions are equally true. And when it comes to
Protestant doctrine leading to evil consequences, again the reasoning is "merely" logical: Error leads to
consequences that are not good, hence evil, by definition. Which doctrines are in error and what are the evil
consequences is left unspecified. Finally, when a Catholic appeared before a non-Catholic minister, that
was a violation of sacred authority precisely because the Church claimed pastoral authority over its own (a
mandate which it was later to relax).
In general, in its popular teaching the Catholic Church held there was one true religion, the faith it professed; outside of that, the alternative was false religion, insofar as other religions differed from the truth of Catholicism. Such a presentation made no provision for appreciating an authentic unity among Christians, the special relationship that Christians and Jews shared, or the truth that even Catholic tradition could acknowledge in non-Christian traditions. It operated out of a black-and-white hermeneutic that seemed to claim a monopoly on all the religious truth that mattered. As a result, all actions which compromised this impression were discouraged.

The tensions this occasioned in the American Church were on display in 1893 when Cardinal Gibbons, accompanied by Bishop Keane, accepted the invitation to participate in the World Parliament of Religions of 1893. The American bishops had to be persuaded to endorse such participation in an interfaith gathering. Gibbons argued that participation in this event did not constitute, and should not be interpreted as, an indiscriminate endorsement of any and all religions. Representatives of each faith came to present their truths before the assembly, and Gibbons blessed the project in exactly that spirit. When he addressed the assembly himself, he spoke of sharing the treasures of his own faith. And he was no relativist. While he affirmed the shared basis of charity, humanity, and benevolence that made the Parliament possible—all of which could be understood in secular terms, and hence did not require acknowledging the religious truth of other faiths—he also spoke of the value and relevance of Catholicism for all humanity. (Will 1922:569-573) Yet despite his own clear affirmation of Catholicism, and also the prominence accorded his participation by the planners of the Parliament, in the end the papal

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The crucial point is that this style of reasoning relied on a univocal, propositional notion of truth. Such a rigid, dichotomous approach to truth placed the distinction between truth and falsehood into sharp relief. Adoption of this style of reasoning correlated with a historical moment in which Church leaders sought to maintain boundaries with other groups and the surrounding society. The gesture to the Protestant churches is hardly a friendly one. The reference to "the Jewish religion" leaves the impression that it is some "other" religion, when in fact Jesus and his followers all manifestly understood themselves to be Jewish, not to have founded another faith. The reference to "heretics" also heightens the barrier with others. Thus while the propositions about other faiths presented in the Catechism are technically quite narrow, they were marshaled in support of a quite deliberate strategy of separating Catholics out from members of other faiths.
delegate, Bishop Satolli, remained concerned that such participation and certain goodwill gestures
the Cardinal made lent weight to the view that all religions were on a par. (Ahlstrom 1972:833-
834) Avoiding of religious mixing remained the norm of Catholic Church policy until the Second
Vatican Council.

Gibbons' biographer notes that he was a prominent personage in American civic life,
respected by Catholics and non-Catholics alike. (Will 1922:560-562) He was a remarkable man,
part of a contingent American Catholic churchmen who found themselves equally at home in
America and in an international church that looked to Rome for leadership. They had tried to
break out of the separate Catholic subculture that had developed in nineteenth century America,
but in the end the moment escaped them. By the 1890s new waves of Catholic immigrants from
Southern and Eastern Europe helped to reinforce standing trend in favor of Catholic separatism,
as did Rome's rejection of "Americanism" and "Modernism." Immigrant Catholics in particular
looked to the clergy for leadership, and clergy emphasized the priority of Church law and Church
policy. If the larger culture was too Protestant or too secular, dedicated clergy and laity would
create an alternative subculture in which Catholicism was hegemonic. The prohibitions against
religious mixing and the rigid logic in which they were articulated then correlated with a the
creation of this subculture which set Catholics apart from the surrounding society. In context after
context this cultural logic reasserted itself.

At the beginning of the twentieth century American Catholicism lacked any adequate
paradigm for thinking through how to play a constructive religious role in a cultural milieu that it
did not govern. That is not to say that thinking Catholics, especially in Europe and Britain, had
not been proposing models for such engagement the preceding century and a half. However, in
America, the Church proceeded by devoting its best resources to the building its own subculture,
often achieving a great measure of growth and institutional success. Yet in the process, it had
little to say to the larger society, often sitting on the sidelines in such great social debates as the
slavery controversy and the Civil War. On the one hand, Catholic leaders built a separate cultural
universe in which Catholicism supplied all manner of religious meaning, and on the other, outside
that universe it had little of religious relevance to contribute. Catholic religious separatism, a
subculture with which it was correlated, and the tribalism that reinforced these limited the scope
of Catholic involvement in American public life.

When at the end of the Great War the American Church found itself still in the public
spotlight, almost against the will of its bishops, the bishops struggled to find some contribution
they could make to the social debates taking place amidst the challenges of the day. There were a
number of options open to them. Ann Swidler (1986) offers a starting point for thinking about
this historical juncture. Swidler popularized the notion of the "cultural tool kit," the set of
resources and strategies available to a group in a given set of circumstances. The point of this
notion is to underscore that social actors necessarily draw on existing repertoires of vocabulary,
institutions, and cultural forms when confronting the challenges they face. These options and
constraints structure the real possibilities before them.3 Given the tendency of American Catholic
churchmen of the day for building a robust cultural life around Catholic religious themes,
referents, and institutions, one conceivable option for bringing religion to bear on the social
problems of the post-war period might have been to pose a thoroughly Catholic option, one laced
with obvious reference to the Gospel, examples of favorite saints, sacrament and ritual, Catholic
theology, papal encyclicals, and the life of Church. Such was the notion of Catholicism as a total
culture that Catholic separatism had nourished. The works of such figures as James Walsh, author
of *Thirteenth, Greatest of Centuries* (1907), did propose Catholic culture as a generalized

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3 As an aside, I would also note that while Swidler highlighted an important notion, I would not concur
with her in counterpoising the importance of the cultural strategies and schemas to that of values and ends.
She was offering a valuable corrective to the idealism reflected in certain Parsonian approaches to social
action that would canonize value orientations as the final arbiter of social outcomes. While excessive
idealism is no virtue, especially in the empirical sciences, placing means and ends in competitive
opposition to one another may be unnecessarily polemical. Both are important to consider when making
sense of human social action.
alternative held out to the larger society. And in the 1930s and 40s, when Catholic institutions, Catholic authors, Catholic philosophers, and Catholic popular culture all conspired to reinforce one another in a world that otherwise seemed to have lost its bearings, the idea of a Catholic alternative experienced something of a heyday.

As compelling as Catholicism could be for those who were nurtured in the faith, and for a small stream of converts that it persuaded to enter its fortress sanctuary, dressing any public initiative in full-blown Catholic attire would not have brought it success in 1919. Even when Al Smith tried to downplay his Catholicism later the next decade, it ultimately proved toxic for his career in public life. Given the way Catholics constructed Protestants and others in religious terms that were exclusionary—and the way others returned the favor—and given the religious tribalism that set groups over against one another even before specific issues gained a hearing on their own merits, such an approach was simply not viable. The religious and tribal tensions of the day, and also the polemical battle being waged between the Church and various proponents of "liberalism" and "secularism," meant that non-Catholics would dismiss any such approach out of hand. The very strategies and "cultural tools" that Catholic leaders employed to noteworthy effect within the relatively isolated sub-community of American Catholicism were not tenable beyond its boundaries. Even apart from proposing a comprehensive Catholic vision for society, any proposal Catholics brought into public debate that made overt linkages to Catholicism would have provoked heated resistance.

At the same time, Catholic leaders themselves tended not to emphasize common religious values or views for fear of promoting "indifferentism." Rather the practice and rhetoric of the preceding century and a half had been to meet non-Catholics not on common religious ground, but on secular ground, collaborating on the basis of reason, morality, and citizenship, understood in terms abstracted from any overt religious context. The resources of the national law tradition were well-suited for such an approach.
Originally, it was the Greeks who had developed the notion of "natural law" as a philosophical and sociological vehicle for engaging other cultures. For example, the Stoics had argued that while each society might have its own conventional law (νόμος), all human societies were ultimately grounded in nature (φύσις) and ruled by its law, which law Reason could discern.

Early Christians in turn made use of this notion in negotiating their relationship to the Hellenistic world. They assumed that corresponding to the order "in things" was a capacity to discern that order—the very basis for morality itself—inscribed in human consciousness: As Saint Paul wrote, "The demands of the law are written in their hearts." (Rom 2:14-15) The natural law paradigm then enabled Christians to engage the Hellenistic world at what they held to be its foundation in nature and reason, while avoiding a more direct encounter with its popular culture, suffused as it was with Greek and Roman religion, which they rejected root and branch. Thus Augustine went so far as to argue that Christians could even make use of pagan philosophy to preach the Gospel. (Pope 2005:41-42) More generally, natural law reasoning could be used to restrict the focus to principles and purposes grounded in this order, leaving any transcendent referent at a further remove. It provided a general strategy for abstracting something that seemed to be of value from its larger religio-cultural matrix. In Christian antiquity this often meant taking some cultural form, stripping it of its original pagan linkages, and reworking it to reappropriate it within Christian civilization. It also enabled the reverse process. Hence it was to an approach based on natural law, one that dovetailed with tendency of American Catholics entering public life to meet fellow citizens on the basis of "citizenship" (understood in secular terms), that the bishops turned in articulating their Program of Social Reconstruction.⁴

For the remarkable impact that the Bishops' Program had, its preparation was a rushed affair. At the first meeting of the administrative committee of the newly formed National Catholic

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War Council, held in April of 1918, the challenges that the country would face in the wake of the war were already being contemplated, and accordingly a Committee on Reconstruction was established, at the time consisting of a single priest from the Boston Archdiocese. He eventually chose a secretary, and by October they had drawn up plans for a panel of fifteen experts to begin consultations and the drafting of a position paper. Then the signing of the armistice in November forced the decision to shift from committee mode to a single author, at least to get a coherent, working proposal off the ground. The "Committee" on Reconstruction turned to John A. Ryan.

Ryan was a priest of the Archdiocese of Minneapolis and a protégé of its "Americanist" bishop, John Ireland. He was also a graduate of the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., where he eventually returned to teach. CUA was first established as a center for graduate study and research in 1887. (It expanded to provide undergraduate education in 1904, as well.) Throughout the nineteenth century until well into the twentieth, the Church was caught up in its "brick and mortar" phase, building basic institutions and struggling to staff them. At the time, it was putting far more resources into primary education than its colleges. At its founding CUA represented the modest commitment the American Catholic hierarchy was willing to make to higher education and graduate study, and hence to providing a national institutional basis for sponsoring a distinctive Catholic intellectual contribution to American policy debates. Ryan earned his doctorate in theology from CUA in 1906, while also teaching at the seminary of his home diocese from 1902 on. He returned to teach at CUA in 1915, first serving as a professor of moral theology, and later political science, as well. It was at CUA that Ryan began working with a small group of scholars and writing on social issues. His aim was to bring some of the implications of Catholic social thought into dialogue with American and modern circumstances.

John Ryan was extremely sympathetic to the American Progressivism of his day. Historian Joseph McShane (1986:17) notes that "both the church and the Progressives were faced with the same pressing problems and should have been able to form an alliance to address them."
The Progressive movement took issue with the extremely individualist cast that a Lockean interpretation of American democratic principles gave to social policy; they argued for a more corporate understanding of human social life, and especially for a more positive appreciation of the role of the state in creating a favorable environment for economic and social wellbeing. With these positions Ryan wholeheartedly concurred, and he found ample support for his approach in the social teaching of Leo XIII. Ryan sought to build what seemed a quite natural bridge between Catholic social thought and the Progressives.

And bridge building would indeed have to take place, because what would otherwise have been a natural alliance was hobbled from the outset by interreligious suspicion and intolerance. The Progressives drew on a middleclass base, which in the day meant a largely Protestant and otherwise non-Catholic one. Many supporters and allies were secular reformers or Protestant Social Gospellers. Reformers reviled the Catholic Church for its traditionalism, while Social Gospellers often combined their efforts at social amelioration with thinly-veiled nativism, proselytizing, and Catholic-baiting. They won few friends among Catholic leaders, while they alienated the Catholic working classes with their patronizing tone, their attacks on labor unions, and their criticism of "interest politics." For their part, Catholic "offish-ness" and the clergy's reluctance to defer leadership to non-Catholics meant they passed up many opportunities to work with natural allies for the good of their constituents.5 (McShane 1986:11-17) "Prejudice and fear on both sides rendered vain the hope of forging such a bond." (17)

Ryan had been writing on some of the ideas published in the Bishops' Program since the early days of his career.6 In his dalliance with Progressivism, he was not unique in Catholic

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5 Even after the National Catholic Welfare Council had begun its work, McShane (1986:76) notes how difficult it was for Catholics and Protestants to overcome their prior estrangement. In the war effort, "Catholics had to cooperate with non-Catholic agencies. For a church that had been a favorite target for attack by these same groups and agencies during the peacetime, the prospect of ecumenical cooperation was a stumbling block. As a result, Catholics, both clerical and lay, grumbled about these new and unaccustomed ties with their former antagonists."

6 Ryan anticipated many of the ideas in the 1919 Program in a statement he published already in 1909.
circles, but he was something of a lonely voice. Yet to him the marriage between Catholic social
teaching and Progressive thought was foreordained. They operated out of similar premises
regarding the dignity of the human person, the social nature of human existence, the moral status
of community and intermediary organizations, and the responsibility of society to provide that
justice that would sustain human flourishing. All of this was consonant with basic principles laid
out by Leo XIII. At least when it came to taming the excesses of unbridled capitalism,
Progressives had arrived at a similar place as Catholic thinkers who had watched the rise of
capitalism with trepidation.

Ryan had developed a certain facility in translating Progressive proposals into the idiom
of Catholic social thought and vice versa. The administrative committee of the NCWC was
familiar with Ryan's thought—many were part of the conversation on social issues that circulated
around CUA—and they approved the draft of the program he prepared in consultation with the
secretary of the Committee on Reconstruction. After review by several bishops it went out in the
National Catholic War Council's name as "Social Reconstruction: A General Review of the

The statement consists of a two-paragraph foreword signed by the four bishops
representing the National Catholic War Council, thirty-nine sections treating twenty-four topics,
and a closing statement entitled "A Christian View," altogether totaling approximately sixteen
pages of text. The foreword announces that the statement to follow is an application "the
principles of charity and justice that have always been held and taught by the Catholic Church."

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(1) McShane (1986:155)
7 McShane (1986) treats Ryan's work in connection with the Bishop's Program. Abell (1960) discusses
Ryan in the context of the development of American Catholic social thought. For a critical review of Ryan's
8 The documents issued corporately by the U.S. Catholic bishops through 1988, along with commentary
and historical background, have been publish in five volumes by the United States Catholic Conference
will be cited as the standard source throughout, and where a document is also available on the web, that
reference will be provided, as well.
here applied to the social and economic circumstances of the day. However, were the foreword lacking, one could read the document through to the penultimate section without realizing that it was a statement of the Catholic Church. That is not to say there is no reference to religion in the document. However, in the main, its link to Catholicism is only explicit in the way it is "positioned," not in the way it incorporates any primary religious reference.

The document begins by skillfully setting the scene, noting that in the wake of the war the most fundamental questions regarding the proper order of society had been raised, underscoring moreover that peace rests on justice in society. The document makes this point by incorporating a quote from a pastoral letter of the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Bourne, placing him in a larger context, and thereby placing Catholicism itself in the larger conversation. The document proceeds to a seemingly objective, even complimentary, description of a proposal for social reform advanced by the British Labor Party, before noting that since the plan would lead to complete socialism, it cannot be approved by Catholics. Given the historic antagonism between socialism and the Catholic Church, it was perhaps not necessary to expand on that observation; in any event further elaboration was omitted. Nonetheless, mention of the Labor Party's proposal then serves to set an outer limit to any reform, reaffirm the conservative credentials of the Church (perhaps deemed necessary in light of the radical proposals it would make), and demonstrate the even-handed approach of the statement. Several other proposals are then cited, one advanced by American labor, one by British Quaker employers, one by American employers, and one by a British interdenominational group which, the statement notes, included Catholics. Thus the statement draws the panorama of a transatlantic conversation about social reform, one centered on the question of labor and business regulation and including a range of religious and secular participants. Catholics clearly come to the table as one among many groups, including other religious groups, participating in a conversation about ostensibly secular affairs.

Yet there is something distinctive that religion contributes to the conversation. The
document notes that the Quaker employers bring a "spirit and conception of responsibility that permeate every item of the program" they promote. It also notes that the interdenominational proposal presumes "that Christianity provides indispensable guiding principles and powerful motives of social reform." In particular, that proposal makes clear that there are other dimensions to human life beyond wage labor, and that society must not allow the necessity of gainful employment to subvert family life, education, culture, morality, and religion. And it stresses the moral responsibility of all, both those who own wealth and those who labor. Then the statement turns to the Bishops' Program itself. What religion brings to the matter at hand, and by implication what Catholicism brings, have been averted to, so that what follows are a series of proposals concerning the reintegration of enlisted men into the workforce, wage rates, a minimum wage, unemployment and medical insurance, vocational training, labor unions, participation in operations management, and the like, without a single explicit primary or secondary religious reference. The penultimate topic addressed ("New Spirit Needed") then elevates the gaze to some larger principles before the final section, "A Christian View," reintroduces a religious dimension. That section recontextualizes the statement by referring to Leo XIII and his call to return to "Christian life and Christian institutions." It closes by contrasting "human and Christian" ethics to an ethics of industry which is "purely commercial and pagan."

To anyone familiar with Catholic social teaching, natural law reasoning, and the social thought of Leo XIII, its congruence with the Bishops' Program of 1919 would have been plausible, if not necessarily self-evident. For Catholics the document does take on its full significance when placed in the context of Catholic social teaching. Not only did Ryan incorporate many of Leo's specific insights into his treatment; more to the point, he followed Leo's method, on the one hand assuming broad principles concerning human dignity and the ends of human life, on the other cleaving to reasons that could be located in the nature and operation of things. At the level of guiding principle, Ryan understood human and social existence to be an
ordered affair, such that when that order is respected all participants and the particular social
groups they form reach their proper ends. As a result, that ideal order and harmony is not
something arbitrary; it is something reason can explore and assent to based on the nature of things.
Such an approach lends natural law thinking a dual valence. On the one hand, its reasoning about
society can proceed in terms of the social order itself. At the same time, the purposes and ideals it
entertains, though consonant with "the nature of things," in fact draw on more than what is
empirically given; they are shaped by intuitions imported from some governing perspective, in
this case a Catholic theological-philosophical framework. Thus when the Bishops' Program
equated the Christian with the human, it was not simply being tendentious; it understood
Christianity to ground those insights which accord with the truth inscribed in human nature, such
that they conduct it to its proper end, whereas unbridled capitalism perverts human existence
because it elevates production and profit to a priority all out of proportion with an ordered
understanding of individual and social life.

Because natural law reasoning endeavors to treat the integrity of human existence in its
own terms—in terms of empirical referents in some relatively bounded domain—it can be cast in
secular form, absent any overt transcendent referent. The Bishops' Program took advantage of this
possibility, and as a result, the theological framework it presumed remained in the background.
Its understanding of the humanum was "inspired", to be sure: It necessarily retained an affinity for
the theological system on whose intuitions it drew. However, that affinity remained largely
implicit. In that respect, it differed from the Social Gospel, whose proponents were often quite
explicit in painting their public appeals in religious hues. At the same time, it also differed from
Leo's Rerum Novarum, from which Ryan and his colleagues at Catholic University drew so much
of their inspiration. Throughout Rerum Novarum Leo interspersed his observations about the
Elsewhere Ryan himself developed his arguments with far fuller reference to the tradition, but in the Bishops' program they were presented in a form that could be owned by Catholics and Progressives alike. Progressives recognized not only their reforming spirit but also many of their specific proposals enshrined in its provisions. Yet if a key consideration of the drafters was to simply demonstrate the congruence between the social thought inspired by Catholicism and the proposals of Progressivism, that purpose alone did not require bracketing religion; in fact, it might have been better served by making the religious inspiration of the Bishops' Program more prominent. However, if the intention was to get a hearing for the document in the first place, that would be better served by muting reference to Catholicism.

The secular cast of the Bishops' Program corresponded to how it was received outside that Catholic community. In a discussion of what it took to be the essentials of the program, the New York Times ("Catholics' Program for Labor Unrest" 1919) did not include a single religious reference apart from the affiliation of its sponsors, and that coverage was based on the press kit sent to it by the bishops' publicity agent. The tendency to focus on the specific proposals of the document, the pragmatic bottom line, was widespread. As a result, the document was readily reduced to one more endorsement of the Progressive agenda, albeit one coming from religious quarters. Members of other faith communities were generally positive in their response, applauding the Catholic Church, customarily seen as a conservative force, for taking this

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9 For example, the document mentions either God or Christ 75 times in 24 of its 64 sections. Other references to the Church, Christians, or Christianity run throughout.
11 That was no accident. Not only was Ryan himself anxious to engineer a rapprochement between Catholic social theory and Progressivism. McShane (1986:32) observes that he had in fact entertained many Progressive ideas before he had begun to seriously grapple with Leo XIII's social thought.
12 Even socialists were citing it to claim Catholic backing for their program, or so complained one bishop, Vincent Wehrle, of Bismarck, North Dakota. (Ellis 1952:1:541-42)
initiative in favor social reform. Writing in *Metropolitan Magazine*, one Protestant leader, William Hard (1920: 27, cited in McShane 1986:208), went so far as to argue that the Catholic Church had acted "for reasons which flow from the foot of the cross." The American Academy of Political and Social Science devoted volume 103 of its *Annals* to "Industrial Relations and the Churches" (1922), where representatives of various faith communities discussed their respective proposals side by side, and there a member of the leadership of the Federal Council of Churches also offered a collegial endorsement of the Bishops' Program and the tradition of Catholic social teaching out of which it came (Johnson 1922). However, as McShane (1986:32) notes, much of the dialogue between the NCWC and people of other faiths took place via private correspondence. Apart from the news media, uptake in religious media outside the Catholic community was sparse, and reference to its religious merits, such as Hard's comments, was rarer still.

In contrast, Catholic press coverage offered fuller treatment of the Bishops' Program in its religious context. *America*, the national magazine of commentary run by the Jesuits, devoted a series of articles—including the entire issue of March 29, 1919—to the program; there various columnists offering a range of perspectives. Those articles specifically addressed the religious roots and implications of the program.\(^{13}\) Coverage in other Catholic magazines also specifically cited the importance of bringing religion, Christianity, or the Church into the conversation about affairs in society.\(^{14}\) This line of discussion was then carried forward in the full range of diocesan newspapers. Grounding the Bishops' Program in Catholic tradition was in fact a necessary task, not only because it seemed to signal a departure from the well-founded reputation the American Catholic leadership had developed for social conservatism, but also because the Program itself leaves this task undone. Thus some prominent Catholic spokespersons questioned not only the wisdom of the proposals themselves (that is, apart from any religious valence), but also their

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\(^{13}\) McShane (1986:217) observes that they were united in arguing that it was "fully in accord with Catholic tradition."

\(^{14}\) See Schuster (1920), Hudson (1919), and Williams (1919: cited in McShane 1986:218).
relationship to the tradition and their authoritative status (or lack there of). Concerning these issues John Ryan carried on a lengthy and heated interchange with Conde Pallen, a prominent member of the National Civic Federation, an influential national civic organization that emphasized law, order, and dialogue between employers and workers. Pallen was editor of the Catholic Encyclopedia, and so his standing within the Catholic community and his erudition made his opposition to the Bishops' Program an embarrassment. He stated that he affirmed the teaching of Leo XIII in toto, but he attacked the Bishops' Program because it both lacked canonical authority and because was not clearly grounded in the principles Leo had articulated. Thus given Pallen's attack, it is evident that the very success the NCWC had achieved in presenting its proposals in secular form for the wider public meant that its specifically Catholic and religious credentials were ambiguous.

In September of 1919 the Catholic bishops gathered as a body, and it was at this meeting that they authorized a pastoral specifically for the Catholic community. Addressed to "to their clergy and faithful people" the Pastoral Letter of 1919 (U.S. Catholic Bishops 1919; U.S. Catholic Bishops [1919] 1983) covered a wide range of topics. It had been some thirty-five years since the Plenary of 1884, when the last joint pastoral had been addressed to the U.S. Church, and the bishops took the opportunity of this meeting to negotiate some consensus on priorities and set guidelines for the future. Sixty-one pages in length, the document was programmatic in scope, serving for the next two decades as a touchstone for issues relating to Scripture, the place of Mary in Catholic life, support for Catholic institutions, family life, industrial relations, and the like.

Many of the topics covered in the document—such as those relating to specifically Catholic devotional life and support of the institutional church—and also a number of polemical comments, clearly indicate that its intended audience was an in-house one. Such is also reflected

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15 The debate apparently waxed acrimonious, and with Ryan eventually undertaking a series of public lectures that were rushed to publication to turn back Pallen's attacks. (McShane 1986:229-234)

16 For example, under the heading "The Scriptures," it observes that "those movements which began by
in its rhetorical style and use of religious reference. One of the pastoral's major purposes, especially in view of the ambiguous response that the Bishops' Program had evoked in certain Catholic circles, was to provide a fuller exposition of Catholic social teaching so as to authoritatively root the Program in Church tradition.\textsuperscript{17} So even when one restricts the focus to the pastoral's treatment of industrial relations, it is clear that the bishops have stepped out of the public square and are operating in a different forum, one where overtly religious reasoning and reference flows throughout. Moral theologian Charles Curran (2005:469-470) comments on one aspect of this difference: "The first pastoral of the U.S. bishops in the twentieth century…differs markedly from the 'Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction' with regard to the use of papal teaching." Curran attributes this contrast to the difference in audience. And indeed, despite its significance, beyond its primary audience, the Catholic community, the pastoral received scant notice.

Thus when it came to publishing and publicizing Catholic social teaching after World War I, the U.S. bishops participated in public life in a way they had not before. They spoke on behalf of the entire society as partners in the national life, and their participation was received in that vein. At the same time, the document they issued in February of 1919 under the authority of the NCWC made its point primarily in secular terms. Its logic eschewed any tight link to a transcendent framework; instead religious terms and referents discretely framed the main text. The main text was also stripped of secondary religious referents such as scriptural quotations, examples of saints, or other referents from the Catholic tradition. In that sense, it pursued a relatively cold, generic manner of exposition. The primary way it was identified as "religious" at

\textsuperscript{17} To this end, the bishops also established the Social Action Department within the NCWC, and John Ryan was chosen as its director. In addition to the educational task put before him, Ryan was also given the task of analyzing U.S. social conditions on an ongoing basis and assisting the representation of a Catholic perspective in social legislation. (Mich 1998:57-58)
all was by the body that sponsored it, the mention of a pope, and the identification of religion as a source of integrity and motivation in social reform. And in the end, most non-Catholics ignored any religious dimension of the document, clearly not perceiving such to be directed to them. Instead they focused on the significance of Catholics as a constituency in society—one usually known for its conservatism—now backing Progressive-style reforms. When it came to the religious dimension of those proposals, that question was taken up within the Catholic community. And it was to the Catholic community that the bishops then devoted further efforts at expounding the tradition of Catholic social teaching. Thus the Catholic bishops ultimately pursued two lines of exposition, one shared with the wider community and one for their Catholic flock, and each line of exposition unfolded according to a distinct logic. It is not unusual that a group will modulate its message according to a given audience. What is noteworthy here is how neatly the secularity of the interaction with one audience contrasted with the religious character of the interaction with the other.

C. Public Catholicism in America Prior to Vatican II

At their September meeting the bishops also decided to transform the NCWC into a permanent, standing organization. The decision to keep a standing national organization in existence in had profound implications. It provided the Catholic Church with a national address; it created a regular forum for communication and coordination among the bishops, who had been "beset by factionalism;" and the modest bureaucracy it sustained lent a degree of continuity, focus, and professionalism to the bishops' collective presence in the life of the American church and the

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18 They did so over the strenuous objection of some of their number. These latter bishops were concerned that such an organization would encroach upon their authority in their own dioceses. And they almost succeeded in having Rome weigh in on their side. For this history see McKeown (1980:579-583).
19 Prior to the creation of a permanent body, Cardinal Gibbons had presided as the de facto spokesperson for the American Church and as an intermediary for those who would solicit its cooperation on a society-wide level. He himself saw the body as a medium for institutionalizing that function. (McKeown 1980: 576-577)
nation (Kari 2004:37). Under its aegis they organized regular annual meetings. However, despite the obvious national platform that such arrangements provided, the bishops did not immediately exploit it to play a vigorous role in American public life. After the initial euphoria of wartime interfaith collaboration and a peacetime public relations victory, the energies of the Catholic leadership were taken up by the local diocese and its many pressing concerns. Just as the nation under Warren G. Harding adopted the motto "a return to normalcy," the bishops retreated from public engagement and bold proclamations of social reform. In addition, Catholic leaders once again found themselves under attack by a particularly virulent strain of nativism, soon reinforced by the controversy stirred up by Al Smith's presidential runs. During the 1920s they produced only three position papers provoked by urgent events of the day (though one was quite substantial). And even during the 1930s, a period which witnessed Catholic activism on many levels, the bishops remained relatively quiescent. A lengthy pastoral written in 1933 addressed the economic crisis of the day, but despite the urgent circumstances of the decade all other documents written totaled just over twenty pages.

Of the three documents produced during the 1920s, two were quite brief, but one, the 1926 "Pastoral Letter on Mexico" (U.S. Catholic Bishops 1926; U.S. Catholic Bishops [1926] 1983) was in fact quite noteworthy for its sustained attempt to bring religion and public policy into dialogue. It dealt with the persecution the Church was undergoing in Mexico under the Calles administration and how Americans ought respond. In form it was addressed to "the clergy and faithful"—to the Catholic community. Yet insofar as it made the case for Catholics to be concerned about justice in political society, for Americans to be concerned about the same, and for that concern to be rightly international in scope, it reached more broadly into public life. The bishops themselves spoke as pastors and as American citizens. They discussed the American

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20 In 1922 the bishops issued a statement of concern over the growth of the federal bureaucracy, and in 1924 they issued a resolution in sympathy of the Catholics undergoing persecution in Russia. Each statement was barely a page in length, and neither brought religion into public life in a significant way.
Constitution in the light of inviolable principles rooted in God-given human dignity and the law of God. They reviewed the role and contributions of the Church in Mexican history. And they spoke of America's obligation in its relations with other countries to uphold the sacred principles upon which it was founded.

The pastoral was intended primarily to make the case before American Catholics that they encourage their government to speak out to the Mexican government. It helped solidify a fairly unified response in the Catholic press and among Catholic leaders, but beyond Catholic circles the pastoral was simply ignored. Despite the pastoral and repeated efforts of key bishops and the NCWC staff to elicit some official response, the Coolidge administration maintained that the matter was an internal Mexican affair. On other matters it was prepared to expend moral and diplomatic capital, but the question of religious liberty in Mexico elicited almost no response. American Catholics became increasingly exasperated that the plight of the Church in Mexico elicited very little response among their fellow Americans, particularly because the theme of religious liberty seemed to accord so obviously with American values. Yet in the public arena Catholic and Protestant opinion about the matter remained sharply divided.21

Catholics attributed the lack of wider American concern over the persecution of the Church in Mexico in terms of anti-Catholicism. And indeed, the lack of a wider reception to the pastoral was certainly a function of the alienation between Catholics and other Americans at the time. On a popular level, the nativist resurgence was exacerbating the cultural, religious, and tribal tensions dividing Catholics and other Americans. Meanwhile, among the educated concern over the undemocratic credentials of Catholicism itself may have been the more pressing issue, as the controversy over Al Smith's run for the presidency was to reveal in due time.

During the 1930s the U.S. bishops continued to direct their joint statements to the

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21 For a discussion of the role of the NCWC during this period see Slawson (1990). Hennesey (1981:250-51) notes that what Catholics saw as callous indifference to the plight of the Church in Mexico, other Americans saw as commendable restraint.

Many of these statements set about defining the Catholic approach to an issue. They encourage labor unions to collaborate among themselves and government to look after its citizenry, while reaffirming an unwavering opposition to threat of communism.22 The 1933 "Statement on the Present Crisis" recognized the interdependence of the societies of the globe and of all sectors of society. And it encouraged wide participation addressing the plight of society, at the same time recommending the study of the full range of social and moral sciences available. Here the bishops displayed a keen appreciation of their own location in a larger social and intellectual milieu. The 1940 document offered an incisive set of reflections on justice in social relations and the place of religion in social life. As one historian notes, it was "one of the finest statements on social reconstruction published by the hierarchy of the United States" (McAvoy 1969:431, cited in Kari 204:48). Despite the cogency and insight of the Statement on the Church

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22 Some reviewers, both contemporary and present-day, note that the Catholic bishops were preoccupied, even obsessed, with the threat of communism. As they themselves make clear (U.S. Catholic Bishops [1937] 1983c), at the time not only did they see communism as antithetical to religious and human freedom; they were also concerned that economic instability would make America susceptible to its false promises.
and Social Order, it received little attention beyond the Catholic community, as was the case with almost all the other statements.

Kari (2004:48-49) argues that the Catholic leadership was frustrated with the lack of a wider reception to its social statements. That was certainly the case with its position on Mexico, where some concrete response from the administration and the wider public was sought. At the time, Catholic positions were out of sync with U.S. policy and the perceptions of the wider public, and religious commitments played a role in the wider reception of the Catholic position, or lack thereof. However, the Catholic positions on social relations and the economic justice were generally congruent with public conversations taking place during the Roosevelt years, yet even they received relatively little uptake. The one document that had generated considerable reception and commentary was the Bishops' Program of 1919.

The major difference remained the religious language of the pastorals and the rhetorical world that this language correlated with, a world that often stood over and against that of non-Catholics. With regard to the pastoral letters of the Depression years through the Statement on the Church and Social Order, Curran (2005:270) notes that "in the decade of the 1930s, the U.S. bishops frequently addressed the problems of the Depression and gave primary place to the solutions proposed by papal encyclicals." He adds that after the publication of Quadragesimo Anno (Pius XI 1931), another landmark papal encyclical treating themes of social and economic justice, the American effort to popularize its teachings dealing with industrial relations lent its cast to the pastoral letters of this period. In this respect the Statement on the Present Crisis is typical. Throughout it refers to the Pope, not only his teaching but also his office and moral authority. In its analysis of the causes of economic strife and international conflict, it refers to the

23 More broadly, Hennesey (1981:271-76) notes how Catholic views on international affairs differed from those of other Americans, reinforcing the sense of alienation. The growing popular perception was that while Catholics were hard on communism, they were soft on Fascism, and some even openly suggested this reflected a deep-seated Catholic penchant for authoritarianism. (McGreevy 2003:170-182)
creation of a social order “which spurns no less the laws of nature than those of God” (Present Crisis §7), quoting Quadragesimo Anno (§144). As is reflected in this quote, the document takes a natural law approach. It assumes that there is a given order which has its own integrity and principles of operation, but it in turn is caught up in a larger moral and ultimately religious order. However, whereas the Bishops' Program took advantage of natural law assumptions to treat the economic order in isolation, the Statement on the Present Crisis constantly moves back and forth between the economic, the moral, and the religious to demonstrate how they are related. It closes with reference to the Jubilee year,24 commending all who are able for visiting "the Eternal City to kneel at the feet of the Common Father of Christendom" (Present Crisis §101), which commendation would have had little resonance among non-Catholics, Christian or otherwise.

Certainly, as pastors the bishops' first concern was to foster the life of the Catholic community as such, not to pursue social activism. The rhetoric they employed both reflected and built up the social world they inhabited. Curran underscores the effort to ground new advances in Catholic economic and social doctrine in the American context, which served to build up its distinctive rhetoric. A similar Catholic cast often extended to the other pastorals and topics covered by the bishops. This religious language then contributed to the construction of a distinctive Catholic worldview. As the thirties progressed, some Catholic writers became increasingly self-righteousness, arguing that in the end Catholicism alone was the sure bulwark against secularism and communism because liberal Protestantism had lost its backbone and fundamentalism had turned away from rigorous intellectual method. Contemporaries then associated Catholicism with an ethos that was competitive, exclusionary, or monopolistic. And even when Catholic religious language did not immediately lend itself to such perception, given the severity of religious tensions as they mounted through mid-century, any identifiably Catholic

24 A Jubilee year is an anniversary or other year of religious significance, during which pilgrimage or other spiritual acts are encouraged. In this case 1933 was taken to be the nineteen-centuries anniversary of the death and resurrection of Jesus. (Present Crisis §100)
religious rhetoric tended to present an obstacle to the circulation of pastoral documents beyond the Catholic community.

Catholics leaders were certainly aware of the tensions in the air. When they crafted pastorals that were not only religious but religious in a pointedly Catholic way, did that indicate such documents were merely for internal consumption? Kari (2004) traces the history of American Catholic social teaching and points out developments that she argues indicate a continuous movement toward an increasingly accessible style, as if there were a gradual linear movement from an internal orientation to an overtly public one. A number of qualitative shifts were necessary for American Catholics to go public with their faith, but the history in question was not simply a continuous linear evolution. The bishops themselves were divided over how to construct their pastoral letters. Some, like the Americanists of an earlier generation, saw an important value in Catholic participation in American public life, while others understood their own role primarily in terms of building up the Catholic community—which meant fostering civic and moral virtues, to be sure—but not themselves directly engaging in debates in the public sphere. Nonetheless, on some level they always had an eye to the larger public when crafting their pastorals. Even when addressed to the Catholic faithful, not only did they address them as citizens of a wider polity, and not only did they address themes that would affect the life of that polity, but they wrote with an awareness that the larger public was looking over their shoulder. So even when their pastorals were not promoted in the same way as the Bishops' Program of 1919, they had a quasi-public character.

There were instances when the bishops also sought to engage or make their case before the broader public. They and other segments of the Catholic community made a sustained effort to bring the Catholic natural law and American constitutional traditions into dialogue in the public sphere to highlight the seriousness of the Mexican persecution of the Church in the mid-twenties. And in November of 1947 the Catholic bishops produced a "Statement on Secularism"
(U.S. Catholic Bishops [1947] 1983), one expressed in contemporary idiom25 and one which was covered by newspapers large and small across the country (for example "Bishops Blame" 1947; Catholic Bishops Assail Secularism" 1947); the New York Times ("The Bishops' Statement" 1947) even reprinted it in full. Coming in the same year as Everson v. Board of Education (handed down in February), the bishops' statement was part of an effort to move beyond the way the that debate had been framed as a Catholic attempt to broach "the separation of church and state" and thereby make "illegitimate" claims upon "public" funds. In their Statement on Secularism they discussed the danger of separating out religion from a range of aspects of human and social existence. The contemporary controversy lent the bishops' efforts at getting their message before the broader public greater determination, and it gave impetus to the newspapers to cover their statement. Here the bishops were not so much placing some other issue in a religious frame. The issue was religion itself. In order to reach a wider public they made their argument in broad moral, civic, and religious terms. Kari (2004:52, citing McAvoy 1969:439) reports, "The 1947 statement, by articulating an ecumenical position with which other faiths could concur, gained the bishops attention from other religious leaders."

With the 1947 statement a shift in style comes into view which had deeper implications. The 1926 Letter on Mexico was simultaneously a discussion of Catholic natural law doctrine. The socio-economic pastorals of the 1930s were replete with references to papal teaching. When presented to non-Catholics on one level they essentially served as invitations into the social and rhetorical world of American Catholicism. At that period in American history, such an invitation was not a selling point for most. By contrast, the 1947 statement did not require any such willingness to entertain Catholicism per se; instead, it reflected the willingness of the bishops to use shared categories to discuss an issue facing all religious groups in society.

25 Curran (Curran 2005:470) cites the statement as one example of "a tendency when addressing the broader American society to downplay the teaching of the popes and to appeal to sources that all people in the United States readily accept."
In 1951, the bishops issued "God's Law: The Measure of Man's Conduct," a presentation of natural law ethics in ordinary language which states the case for basic moral standards that can be discerned by human reason, arguing moreover that by submitting to moral standards human beings play their proper role in God's creation. Almost every paragraph contains reference to God and human responsibility before God; however, apart from two quotes—one from Augustine's *City of God* at the outset (§1), which set the scene of an empire facing barbarism without and moral decay within, and another from Cardinal Newman speaking of serving God in humility (§22)—the document eschews references to Catholic texts and tomes, as well as papal teaching and even Scripture. For the average educated American of the day, its line of reasoning was fairly transparent. Curran (2005:470) lists it along with the 1947 statement one as exemplifying a growing tendency for the bishops to speak in contemporary idiom. And in a society where many complained of materialism and moral relativism, apparently it struck a chord. It, too, received extensive play in the public media and favorable comment in other religious communities. This document was able to garner a public response which earlier ones did not.

During the 1950s the Catholic bishops published quite a few pastorals which provoked public discussion. Two, "Peter's Chains" ([1953] 1983) and "Peace and Unity: The Hope of Mankind" ([1956] 1983) dealt with the persecution of the Church under Communist regimes. They provoked widespread interest—a half million copies of Peter's Chains had to be reprinted—because of the tense political circumstances of the day. (Nolan 1983a:112,120) This interest contrasted markedly with the widespread American apathy that met the Catholic campaign concerning the persecution of the Church in Mexico in the mid-twenties. At approximately the same time, the bishops issued "Private and Church-Related Schools in American Education" ([1955] 1983), and while this statement ignited discussion, much of it was in the form of a public

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26 According to Nolan (1983a:211-212) it was carried as a feature story on the news services and reprinted in dailies in several major American cities. A number of popular magazines, including *Time* and *Newsweek*, also covered the statement.
rebuke at what was perceived to be special pleading for tuition assistance for parochial education.

Far more constructive was the discussion following upon "Discrimination and the Christian Conscience" (U.S. Catholic Bishops [1958] 1983). That statement, building on the stance taken in "Essentials of a Good Peace" ([1943] 1983), stepped forthrightly into the debate then taking place in American society, denying any legitimacy to segregation. At the outset it cited the "Negro race's" own determined advance to equal rights and equal opportunity (§3). It made reference to American history, tradition, and values (§5,10,17). It clearly stated that more than abstract constitutional rights were at stake. In arguing that the time was overdue to cut through myriad arguments and get to the heart of the matter—human dignity, justice, and the equal opportunities these imply—it appealed to the Gospel and basic Christian values (§4-7,18,19,24). At the same time, it made reference to Catholic tradition. It noted that European Catholic missionaries had gone to all lands and cultures without distinction (§8), and it cited recent papal statements specifically condemning racial discrimination (§8,15,16). While basing its appeal primarily on Christian values, the statement also appealed to people of good will and of all faiths (§9,24). Thus in style, while making room for a Catholic contribution to the debate, the statement also made an effort to meet others on common ground and to recognize the their own contributions. It was covered in all the major media and popular national magazines, and it was hailed as an important event by leaders of a host of denominations. (Nolan 1983a:123-125) In this instance the bishops contributed to public affairs as Catholic leaders, entering into quite constructive dialogue with American tradition and circumstances.

In sum, over the course of the four decades beginning in 1919, the U.S. Catholic bishops traveled an eventful path in their collective pastoral and public life. They began the period with a very successful contribution to the public debate—especially when compared to their preceding history. But at the same time, they did so in fairly secular terms, and it was primarily on those terms that the Bishops' Program of 1919 was received outside the Catholic community. The
pastorals they wrote during this period then evince a complex history. Depending upon their primary audience and purpose, the character of these documents varied considerably, as did their reception. There is no simple linear trajectory. However, roughly speaking the Catholic religious content shifted from authoritative claims and the promotion of a seemingly self-sufficient worldview to a more broadly humanistic, American, and ecumenical approach. Catholic prelates overcame traditional scruples about "indifferentism" and resorted to the idiom of consensus religiosity. And conversely, toward the end of this period the larger public seemed more receptive to the pastorals even when they contained a modicum of distinctive Catholic religious reference. The assumption here is that the rhetoric in these documents correlated with how the Catholic community oriented itself to surrounding faith communities and American society at large; and the reception of these documents was a function of the relations between Catholics and religious others, as well. Already, even before the Second Vatican Council American Catholics had begun to reposition themselves in their social world, and other American religious groups were receptive to this new possibility.

D. A Church in Transition: John Courtney Murray and Vatican II

Due to their membership in an international Church based in Rome, American Catholics had to face a challenge that set them apart from other American religious groups. They had to juggle their institutional ties to the Holy See with those that bound them to their fellow Americans. They had to make sense of their experience and practice as Americans to Rome, and they had to assimilate Catholic institutions and theology into an American context on an ongoing basis, since these were actively produced from a center or centers in other societies. In order to make minimal conceptual sense of such developments in American Catholic culture as internally grounded pluralism, apart from any attempt to explain in any definitive sociological way why they arose, it is necessary to take into account these two sets of valences.
Even when American Catholics were anxious to adapt to improved social circumstances and new possibilities in their relationship with religious others in society, they were bound by precedents, canon law, and institutional relationships governed and interpreted on the other side of the Atlantic. The cultural precipitate of centuries of controversy and contest littered their world. In the 1920s that problem had arisen in stark form when Al Smith ran for the presidency and found himself confronted by the encyclical *Immortale Dei* (Leo XII 1885), a document written by a deceased pope in another century in a very different context. Earlier in the decade John Ryan had also found himself grappling with Leo's teaching on church and state. In *The State and the Church* (1922) he tried to give the most promising cast he could to Leo's teaching. Therefore he upheld in theory the argument that since the state had a normative obligation to recognize truth, where the common good was served and not harmed it could publicly affirm the Catholic faith and restrict access to public life to other faiths. In practice, he argued that in the modern world there was no state where such conditions held; civil peace and concord, which are important aspects of the common good, would inevitably be harmed by restricting other faiths. Therefore they could and should be tolerated. However, such toleration was not something they could demand in justice. Rather, it was a concession because (and this was the fatal phrase) "error has no rights." This line of argument reflected an objectivist notion of truth, one that Church firmly held onto in its battles with modernism, relativism, and myriad other –isms.  

27 Ryan was saddled with it. So he argued for it with as much nuance he could. But in America it remained unpalatable. Clearly, while culture can be a toolkit of resources, it can also be a suitcase that constrains and weighs one down.

As the twentieth century progressed, Rome continued to be concerned about modernism, relativism, secularism, and "indifferentism," and when confronted with the Protestant-inspired

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27 The problem essentially lies in the failure to distinguish between moral and political rights. While no one has an objective moral right to assert that which is objectively known to be erroneous, political life takes place in history and in a practical realm where such objective standards may be precisely what is in dispute.
ecumenical movement it actually added more constraints that weighed down American Catholics.

That movement had its roots in the World Mission Alliance and several Christian youth associations (the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., and the World Student Christian Federation). Toward the end of the nineteenth century participants in these associations began promoting a drive for greater cooperation and unity, one for which they developed a platform in conjunction with the Edinburgh Missionary Conference of 1910. Originally an intra-Protestant movement, the ecumenical movement attracted the participation of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the head of Greek Orthodoxy in 1920. Meanwhile, the Catholic position on Christian unity, especially vis-à-vis Protestants, had long been that unity was to come about through the reconciling of non-Catholics with the Catholic Church and their "return" to communion with the Holy See. That position was undergirded by *Pastor Aeternus* (Pius IX and First Vatican Council 1870), the document promulgated by the First Vatican Council (1869-70) which defined the primacy and infallibility of the papacy. In view of that doctrine, Catholics could maintain that their church had all it needed to fulfill its essential role as Church; it was in a certain sense complete. As a result, with respect to ecumenism the Church was not seeking something it lacked; rather it was others who came as supplicants. Accordingly, Catholic authorities were not willing to countenance participation in a movement that seemed to suggest that all came as equals ("indifferentism").

In 1928 Pius IX issued the encyclical *Mortalium Animos* in which he endorsed the goal of Christian unity but reaffirmed the standing position regarding how it was to come about.28 Officially Rome remained consistent. When preparations were under way for the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948, many Catholics and other Christians had hoped Catholic representatives would attend. However, when the local Catholic ordinary, the

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28 “So, Venerable Brethren, it is clear why this Apostolic See has never allowed its subjects to take part in the assemblies of non-Catholics: for the union of Christians can only be promoted by promoting the return to the one true Church of Christ of those who are separated from it, for in the past they have unhappily left it." (*Mortalium Animos* §10)
Cardinal of Utrecht, was approached on this matter the Vatican intervened and expressly stipulated that official Catholic representation at any international gathering had to be approved by the Holy See; and it was not approved. Then in March of 1950 Pius XII issued a set of guidelines (*Instructio Ecclesia catholica*) which both praised the movement toward unity as the work of the Holy Spirit but then enacted a number of restrictions on how Catholics could participate in that work. While the Vatican retained the prerogative over official relations with other Christian bodies, it did recognize that Catholic theologians could meet with their non-Catholic peers, so long as their local ordinary approved. Yet during the years which followed the Vatican acted in various ways to restrain those individual Catholic theologians and churchmen who had worked on an individual basis to build ecumenical ties with other Christians.29

The aloof position of Rome with regard to other faiths increasingly became a source of awkward tension for American Catholics. Due to a number of demographic and social developments, by the late fifties their place in American society had begun to shift, and they sought to reorient their relationship with their fellow Americans accordingly. The cutoff of immigration in the twenties meant that the Catholic community began to lose its immigrant ethos. The post-World War II G.I. bill made higher education available to vast numbers of working class Catholics who would otherwise not have been able to attend college, opening up possibilities for participation in American society not available to their forebears. And the move to the suburbs that took place during this same period meant the breakup of the religio-ethnic urban enclaves that had ghettoized American Catholicism for so long. While tensions between Catholics and others did not disappear, the nativist dimension of such anti-Catholicism as perjured did. And for their part, rather than oscillating between hyper-nationalism and defensive contempt for American individualism (or secularism or whatever other contrast characteristic

29 For an accessible overview of the ecumenical movement see FitzGerald (2004). For a review of Catholic restrictions to involvement prior to Vatican II see Vischer (1970).
they might single out), Catholics began to feel more secure about and more at home in their American identity. And other Americans seemed more at ease about Catholics in their midst, as well.30 By the end of the decade political elites felt tensions had eased enough to once again chance running a Catholic for the presidency.

Thus while in an earlier era there was a certain congruence between Catholic religious exclusivism and the tribalistic tensions that set Catholics apart from religious others in American society, by the late fifties not only did ordinary Catholics begin to perceive this exclusivism to be incongruous; many Catholic religious leaders looked to nuance or downplay the rhetorical and institutional aspects of Catholic culture that reinforced it. Prominent clergy both Catholic and Protestant sought ways of bridging the divide between their communities. In the same year that Herberg published Protestant, Catholic, Jew, a French priest, George Tavard, wrote The Catholic Approach to Protestantism (1955), in which he stressed the unities rather than the differences between the faiths. He struck a note that had not been heard in some time, and his book was well-received in the United States. In 1957 the North American Faith and Order Conference invited two prominent Catholic theologians to attend as observers. Other joint ventures and efforts at dialogue followed. In 1960 Gustave Weigel, SJ, a Catholic theologian, and Robert McAfee Brown, a Presbyterian minister and professor at Union Theological Seminary, collaborated on An American Dialogue (1960), where each offered their reflections on the tradition of the other. In doing so they modeled dialogue on a level which directly engaged religious difference and religious values, rather than bracketing or minimizing them as had earlier many earlier endeavors. Thus at the dawn of the Second Vatican Council, while their theological differences did not simply disappear, leading Protestants and Catholics manifested a willingness to engage those

30 For example, Herberg (1962:41-42) reports that by 1956 the number of Americans unwilling to vote for a Catholic for president had dropped by a third since 1940, and the trend among younger voters was consistently and significantly downward.
differences at a far deeper level.\textsuperscript{31}

For the period prior to Vatican II, the career of theologian John Courtney Murray (1904–1967) exemplifies perhaps one of the best and most sophisticated American Catholic attempts to negotiate religious pluralism in public life. It also reveals the cultural limitations that hemmed in any such attempt, both on a theoretical and on a practical level. In his writing, Murray repeatedly addressed the problem of pluralism in society,\textsuperscript{32} and on a practical level he collaborated with people of a wide range of religious convictions to advance a social vision where religious diversity could find public expression. Yet his writing manifests certain limitations built into the conceptual apparatus that constrained the Catholic approach to other faiths. And his career suffered the disciplinary restraints that Catholic authorities placed on any such approach during this era.

For Murray religious difference led to fundamentally diverse ways of conceiving the good, and hence it was the fundamental source of diversity in society. Although the U.S. Constitution wisely prescinded from endorsing any one religion, that did not mean that a proper appreciation of the Constitution was that it was merely "godless." Religious faith was present not at the level of explicit reference but at the level of presupposition. To support that contention, Murray read the Constitution through the lens of the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration refers to God in four places, as Nature's God, Creator, divine Providence, and the Supreme Judge of the world. As Creator, God was the source of the sacred dignity of the individual presupposed by all America's founding documents (the Declaration the Constitution, and its Bill of Rights): "…that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

\textsuperscript{31} See Curry (1972:62-70) for a discussion of these developments and his assessment that Protestants and Catholics displayed a new capacity to engage one another's traditions on a theological level.

\textsuperscript{32} See Murray (1954b), (1956), (1958), (1960), and (1963), and the collected essays in Murray (1993).
As the Supreme Judge of the world the authors also appealed to God to vindicate "the rectitude of our intentions". According to Murray, the Constitution only takes up its proper orientation grounded by a recognition of the sovereignty of God, the sacred dignity of human beings, and the "freedom of the church," the last explicitly guaranteed by the First Amendment. In this respect the Constitution contrasts with the secularist creations of the likes of Robespierre, Lenin, and Hitler, who based their regimes on an erroneous conception of the absolute sovereignty of human beings. However, precisely because of the religious diversity of America's original circumstances and their concern for not encroaching on religious freedom (the very reason for non-establishment in the first place), the Founders could not articulate in a more positive way the religious premises upon which the Constitution was based.

This reading allowed Murray to argue that Catholic social teaching lent a depth to the authentic appreciation of what he called "the American proposition" that contemporary individualist and secular approaches missed. That is because natural law reasoning both allows for the integrity of some lesser entity but also shows how it really only comes into its own when oriented to some larger framework which it presupposes. In its original sense the American system presumed some transcendent moral frame. Since in Murray's day the Catholic natural law tradition was one of the few schools of thought which argued for such a possibility, Catholicism lent crucial support for preserving the core meaning of that system. Apart from Catholic thinkers, treatment of the American Constitutional system quickly devolved into individualist, pragmatic, and purely secular terms, without any higher reference or accountability. Then, stripped of their mooring in the premises Murray outlined (God's sovereignty, the sacredness of the individual, and the freedom of the church), the human dignity and social justice to which America was dedicated drift aimlessly. Hence he argues that these premises, rather than the merely formal and individualistic approaches found in Locke or Rawls, were the necessary foundations of an
authentic articulation of the American proposition.\textsuperscript{33}

By arguing for the essential affinity between the presuppositions underlying the American system and the Catholic natural law approach, Murray hoped to burnish Catholic credentials in the American context and American credentials in Rome's eyes. The latter was perhaps his most determined purpose. Murray was arguing that Catholic social thought could accept religious freedom, not merely as an evil to be tolerated, but as a positive recognition of human dignity within a larger system that need not deny the sovereignty of God. If separation of church and state were understood in this way, as serving some transcendent end, rather than as an expression of the absolute sovereignty of human beings and the rejection of God, then Catholics could fully embrace it. However, in attempting to make this argument, Murray ran up against the same precedents that Ryan had grappled with: the \textit{Syllabus of Errors} of Pius IX, \textit{Immortale Dei}, and other writings of Leo XIII, all of which contained statements underscoring the duty of the state to uphold the rights of truth (in the case of religion, Catholicism) and suppress pretensions of error (in the case of religion, other faiths). Murray (1951; 1953a; 1953b; 1953c; 1954a) dealt with these "resource" of Catholic tradition by pointing out that the terms used presumed a historical context which kept evolving. Thus the "state" to which traditional Catholic teaching referred was not the contemporary bureaucratic state adapted to modern circumstances. The term was not univocal; changed circumstances required an updated notion of the state. Murray set forth his argument in a series of articles published in \textit{Theological Studies}, the foremost American

\textsuperscript{33} Murray's argument does cover some improbable stretches. In his desire to read Aquinas into the Declaration of Independence he does not own up to document's full debt to the Enlightenment. (Beem 1999b:55-60) He glosses over the degree to which it is colored by individualist assumptions. (For example, the Declaration calls upon God to judge the signers' intentions, not the project they embark on; that makes God a god of sincerity to whom individuals are accountable, not a God justice to whom the nation is accountable.) Yet his portrayal is not completely tendentious. Lincoln likewise read the Constitution through the Declaration and understood it in terms of a higher purpose and accountability (for example, in his "Gettysburg Address"). And Bellah's (1967) treatment of civil religion is essentially an acknowledgment of the religious subtext and presuppositions woven into the national consensus on a sociological level. Still, there is a bit more ambiguity in play than Murray tends to acknowledge.
Catholic theological journal of the day, and one which Murray happened to edit. However, at that
time historical relativism was not in vogue in Catholic circles. Beyond that, Murray's writings
were stirring considerable controversy within the Church. When Murray was about publish the
fifth article in this series, the word came down from his Jesuit superiors in Rome that under holy
obedience he was not to publish any further on church and state. That was in 1954.34

Murray's career shows the limitations and possibilities of Catholic dialogue with
American culture in his day. First, as a Catholic Murray had to deal with institutional actors,
cultural resources, and constraints that were not located wholly within American society. That
underscores the complexity involved in making sense of cultural trends in American Catholicism.
Second, as part of a hierarchically ordered church, Murray submitted to its authority when his
superiors decided that the moment for pursuing the discussion he entertained was not opportune;
that was particularly poignant considering he was writing about religious freedom. Third, for all
his discussion of pluralism Murray did not give extended consideration to the relationship
between Catholicism and other faiths. As natural law thinker, his primary concern was with the
relationship between faith and reason, church and state, the temporal and the spiritual,
Catholicism and American tradition. He applauded the basic Christian piety that had remained an
integral part of American culture, but in he did not reflect at length on the meaning of religious
diversity or the relationship between Catholicism and other faiths. Rather, as Murray himself
repeatedly states—and this is the fourth point—"religious pluralism" (which he sometimes uses
as a synonym for the mere social fact of religious diversity) is in itself an evil to be endured. He
evinces little appreciation of the positive value of interfaith engagement. Though his discussion of
the development of doctrine reveals some appreciation of the unfolding of faith in history, that

34 Prior to the Second Vatican Council Murray's most mature statement on the foregoing issues could be
found in We Hold These Truths (1960). Also see his collected essays in Murray (1993). For an overview of
his social thought in theological context see Curran (1982:172-232). For a discussion of his thought and
American public life see McElroy (1989), Hooper (1993), and Beem (1999b).
never lead him to consider the value of dialogue with other traditions. In the end, he did not seem to think of other faiths as more than a nuisance of sorts. In other words, an appreciation of the positive value of other faiths, the basis of internally grounded pluralism, is not yet apparent in Murray's thought.

Though Murray did not publish on church and state after 1954, he kept writing on religious freedom and sending his work to Rome. And before the decade was out, Rome itself became a force for change. In October of 1958 Angelo Cardinal Roncalli was elected Pope, taking the name John XXIII. Within three months of his election he announced that he would convene an ecumenical council,\(^35\) arguing before a number of audiences subsequently that the time had come to open the windows and let in some fresh air. When he finally convened the Second Vatican Council on October 11, 1962, in his opening address of he used the term "aggiornamento" (or updating) to describe the process before the assembly. But even before the council met he had taken steps which involved reorienting the Church at its highest levels as it engaged the surrounding social world. This included creating a Secretariat to Promote the Unity of Christians in June of 1960 and appointing as its head Agustin Bea, then the highly respected rector of the Pontifical Biblical Institute. He also revised the liturgy of Good Friday to better take into account the sensibilities of the Jewish community. These development gave leaders of other faiths the hope that they could enter into genuine dialogue with Catholic leaders.\(^36\)

\(^35\) In other contexts the term "ecumenical" refers to relations between Christians of all churches and denominations. Here it refers to a meeting of all the bishops and other representatives of the worldwide Catholic Church. The original sense of the term derives from the notion of that which pertains to "the entire inhabited world".

\(^36\) At the same time, it should be acknowledged that his first encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram* (1959) gently reaffirmed the standing policy and posture on ecumenism, containing a warning against indifferentism, a proviso against participation in the ecumenical movement, and a call to separated brethren to return to Rome. However, as *Time* magazine noted ("Ad Petri Cathedram" 1959), rather than being precise and dogmatic, the language used was fatherly in tone, even homey: "All God's children are summoned to their father's only home, and its cornerstone is Peter." (§68) John XXIII's summons thus contrasted with the injunction to "come to the Eternal City to kneel at the feet of the Common Father of Christendom" (Present Crisis §101). Most Christians did not find the language of *Ad Petri Cathedram* as off-putting as earlier papal documents. All could agree on the call to dwell in one home together, and most could even concede an important place there for the Bishop of Rome as the successor of Peter. They simply differed over
Mich (2005:194) reports that John XXIII envisioned reaching out pastorally in three concentric circles, to the Catholic Church in its need for renewal, to all Christians in their need for unity, and to the world in its need for peace. His own social encyclicals were both part of that process and models for how it was to proceed. During his five years in office he wrote two, *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). *Mater et Magistra* immediately attracted attention, not for its analysis but for its tone. Commentators spoke of it being "modern," "realistic," "humanistic," "practical." There was debate over whether it was aptly labeled "doctrinal," as one might expect of an official papal encyclical; opinion was that it was better characterized as "pastoral." (Campion 1963:5-6) Whereas the earlier social encyclicals, despite their being comments on the social world, were often preoccupied with delineating abstract issues and formulating the apt concept, *Mater et Magistra* seemed to have left behind preoccupation with abstractions to reflect on contemporaries in their concrete circumstances. Rather than bemoan that the world was not as it should be, the document entered into conversation with the world as it found it. Certainly that was due in large measure to the churchmen who collaborated on the text, many of whom were trained in the social sciences. But observers take the change in tone as emblematic of the leadership of John himself. He would not publish a document that hovered over history or struck readers as a voice from the void; its voice came from within history, from one grappling with the world as it was with all its uncertainty. Theologians argue about revelation rooted in the present moment or rising above the horizon of history. Here the issue is not immanence versus transcendence. It is a question of alienation. The apodictic statement—the infallible pronouncement—does not require or admit a response. John left behind a style that was alienated and alienating, a style that too readily devolved into monologue.  

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37 See the discussion in Campion (1963), who survey some two hundred responses to the document.

38 For a recent discussion of *Mater et Magistra* see Mich (2005). For a contemporary reflection on the novelty of style of the pope and his encyclicals, see Hales (1965).
John XXIII's second social encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, was written in the wake of the Cuban Missile Crisis and the building of the Berlin Wall; it dealt with just order in society, relations between nations, and the call to peace.³⁹ It was the first encyclical addressed not just to Catholics but to all people of good will. Like *Mater et Magistra* it made a point of being rooted in present history, introducing into Catholic parlance the notion of reading the "signs of the times" (§39–45, 75–79, 126–129). And like *Mater et Magistra* it was crafted to open doors to dialogue, not to shut them. It warmly embraced themes that had often been raised in opposition to Church authority, such as freedom and human rights. Despite the Church's long-running contest with atheistic communism, it avoided ideology and polemic, instead seeking common ground. As a result, it was quoted with approval even in the press of Soviet Bloc countries. While some critics found it naïve for its optimistic tone, most welcomed its affirmative approach to the world.⁴⁰

John XXIII announced his intention to convene an ecumenical council on January 25, 1959 at the end of the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Preparatory commissions were eventually constituted and they worked for two years to draft a series of 987 "schemata" (proposals) for the assembly. In contrast to the First Vatican Council, Rome issued invitations to other major Christian bodies to send official delegates. One of those who served as a delegate was Robert McAfee Brown, the Protestant theologian who had collaborated with Gus Weigel on *An American Dialogue*.⁴¹ Others participated as observers in a less official capacity.⁴² It opened in October of 1962 and continued for four sessions each fall through 1965. The first session held official seats for some 2908 bishops and other delegates from around the world; on average at each of the sessions from 2,100 to more than 2,300 participated. In addition they had staff and

³⁹ The title is Latin for "Peace on Earth."
⁴⁰ For an excellent overview of *Pacem in Terris*, its context, and its historical significance, see Christiansen (2005).
⁴¹ See his *Observer in Rome: A Protestant Report on the Vatican Council* (1964)
⁴² The opening session included more than thirty-five official delegates, the number growing to fifty-two by the fourth session (including Nineteen American Protestants).
official periti (expert consultants). While they were originally to maintain the confidentiality of the deliberations so that they could proceed unhindered, leaks to the press (including cables sent to The New Yorker) soon made such precautions futile. Finally the American bishops themselves took control of the publicity to America and organized their own press conferences. Catholics were caught up in the significance of the events, following it closely, as did the mass media. On October 4, 1965 before the opening of the last session of the Council, Pope Paul VI spoke at the United Nations and celebrated Mass at Yankee Stadium. This first visit by a sitting pope to the United States further galvanized interest in the Council among Americans.

In his opening address rather than stress the notion of truth cast in stone, John argued, "The substance of the ancient doctrine of the deposit of faith is one thing, and the way in which it is presented is another. And it is the latter that must be taken into great consideration…" And in contrast to the Roman penchant for uniformity and conformity, he announced, "And everything, even human differences, leads to the greater good of the Church." (John XXIII 1962a; John XXIII 1962b) He again underscored the centrality of unity among divided Christians and of the need to engage the world. And he underscored that the purpose of the council was primarily pastoral, not doctrinal. Here the point to stress is the intimate connection between these themes. The outreach that John envisioned involved rethinking the rhetoric of the Church, a shift in emphasis from tautology and abstract (always justified under the rubric of upholding eternal truth) to a different rhetorical foot. This would enable it to change its posture in relationship to others: other Christians, Jews, people of other faiths, and other people of good will.

In the end, the council enthusiastically took up the Pope's call, proving more ready for reform than the Council planners themselves had anticipated. Within days of the opening the

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43 This modest acknowledgment of historical relativism was echoed by Cardinal Bea (1963:97): "Many of our theological formulations, which do indeed express timeless and definite truths, must nevertheless be understood and appraised with reference to the ideological background of the times in which they developed."
assembled bishops voted to scrap all the schemata prepared by the preparatory commissions, expand membership in the council commissions (which were to pick up where the preparatory commissions left off), and start over. The fall of 1962 was a tumultuous affair, and an unnerving one for many of the traditionalists. When Pope John died on June 3 of the following year some wondered whether the Council would continue. His successor, Archbishop Giovanni Battista Montini of Milan, who took the name Paul VI, announced his intention to see the Council through, and the sessions continued. In the end the Council authorized sixteen major documents and decrees which set in place far-reaching norms for the reform of Catholic life, and it witnessed other dramatic developments (such as the meeting between Paul VI and Athenagoras, Patriarch of Constantinople where both expressed regret over the Great Schism of the eleventh century).  

Four documents in particular capture the way the participants in Vatican II went about reworking the basis for Catholics' relationship with those outside the Catholic community. 

_Gaudium et Spes_ ("The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" 1965b) was an extended reflection on the role of the church in modern society. _Dignitatis Humanae_ ("The Declaration on Religious Freedom" 1965a) was the Church's long-awaited endorsement of religious freedom. _Unitatis Redintegratio_ ("The Decree on Ecumenism" 1964) evinced the renewed impetus toward Christian unity from the Catholic side. And _Nostra Aetate_ ("The Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions" 1965c) established a more positive framework for interreligious dialogue and respect. 

_Gaudium et Spes_ is often cited as one of the most remarkable documents of Vatican II.  

A lengthy document, it reflects on the challenges facing human beings in the contemporary world, ...
the response of the Church, and the responsibility of Christians. Its first line announces its point of departure: "The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the [people] of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ." (§1) Thus it begins on a personal, existential level, the level of ordinary believers ("the followers of Christ," not the "the Church" in all its vast abstractness) and pledges fundamental solidarity with all people, especially "those who are poor or in any way afflicted." Throughout it follows the lead of *Pacem in Terris* by beginning in with the circumstances of people in the present day, reading the signs of the times. Again, this posture of beginning with the historical and the empirical, a posture of listening, contrasted with the abstract, logical, deductive approach that so characterized papal and conciliar teaching for the preceding century and more. As Hollenbach (2005:286) observes, "The Council presented its normative ethical conclusions with a deep epistemological humility. This is evident in its readiness to distinguish its convictions about core ethical values from the multiple ways these values can be realized in diverse cultures and historical periods."

Listening also took place when it came to receiving input from non-Catholics. For example, in response to the observations of Lukas Vischer of World Council of Churches the drafting committee included a stronger emphasis on the demands of Christian discipleship. In fact, overall the document displays a far greater reliance on explicitly theological and confessional reasoning, one that correlates with the move away from deductive abstractions. Of course, confessional theology can be as deductive and abstract as natural law philosophy. Moreover, it would be a mistake to say the document abandons natural law reasoning in favor of biblical or eschatological to Christological arguments. Natural law reasoning runs throughout the document, as well, and the point of such reasoning had always been that the religious vocation is not some

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46 Also, despite a concerted push from some bishops, the majority avoided imperiously denouncing communism in the document. Here again they followed *Pacem in Terris*. 
"other" calling alien to the human. The goal of Catholic social teaching had always been to articulate a authentic Christian humanism. In a sense Gaudium et Spes exemplifies that claim precisely by weaving faith and reason into its discussion of human circumstances. It states, "Thus the mission of the Church will show its religious, and by that very fact, its supremely human character." (§11) However, as commentators almost universally agree, whereas in the past the posture papal and conciliar documents adopted often involved speaking at the world in syllogisms, here the Council was more willing both to listen and to witness its faith to the world: "One of the lasting legacies of Gaudium et Spes is that it brought a contemporary, historical and personalist theological methodology into the church's official social teachings. This was in contrast to the deductive natural law methodology of previous social documents."47,48 (Mich 1998:128)

Dignitatis Humanae (1965a), the Council's "Declaration on Religious Freedom," occasioned perhaps the most contention in the of any document. Many of the officials that had gotten the Vatican to keep John Courtney Murray from publishing on church-state affairs were still in influential positions. However, that mandate lapsed with the death of Pius XII, and John XXIII had other priorities. When Murray submitted We Hold These Truths (1960) to Rome, it was approved for release. When the first session of the Council was held, however, Murray was disinvited. Only through the intervention of Francis Cardinal Spellman, the Archbishop of New York, was he able to attend beginning with the second session. And he then served as a principle architect of the document.

According to Hennesey (1981:311), religious liberty was "the paramount American issue at the council." For the American bishops a key concern was their credibility before their fellow

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47 Again, this is true given that caveat that Gaudium et Spes did not completely jettison natural law principles. Rather it cast aside the deductive methodology that drew metaphysics and natural law theory into its service.

citizens. Even at the First Vatican Council in 1870 they had argued for an endorsement of religious freedom. Now the American delegation was in a better position to be heard. Not only did it have two centuries of experience in a religiously diverse society behind it; it was one of the largest national churches and represented the most powerful Western democracy on the globe. Yet other bishops were adamant that "error has not rights," or at least none that claim a place in public life. In the end, they were overridden, mostly. The final document affirmed the right to religious freedom, a right rooted in human dignity. It stated that government "would clearly transgress the limits set to its power, were it to presume to command or inhibit acts that are religious." (§3) However, it defined religious freedom as the right to an immunity from external coercion. (§2) In other words, it carefully avoided asserting the right to profess error. Indeed, instead it affirmed the duty to seek the truth (§1,3). Nonetheless, its affirmations of religious freedom, conscience, and human dignity were stated clearly enough that they finally answered the American critics of Catholicism on these points.49

Unitatis Redintegratio and Nostra Aetate are the two Council documents that specifically addressed people of other faiths, and American bishops were also especially involved in their deliberations. Again, both documents stress the positive, making overtures where in the past engagement might have taken place at the level of theological and theoretical difference. Unitatis Redintegratio decries the existing divisions between Christians as contrary to God's will, yet it also affirms that in a number of ways Christians already shared a unity in baptism, faith, witness, and service. In so doing it affirms the Christian character of other Christian "churches and ecclesial bodies." At the same time, the document reviews the varying circumstances of these many groups, noting that the relationship of Catholics to (and appraisal of) any given one varied accordingly. Throughout it refrains from imposing a solution to Christian disunity, instead

pledging to enter into dialogue concerning the relevant issues and differences.

*Nostra Aetate* follows a similar approach. It acknowledges that throughout history many peoples have displayed a "profound religious sense." (§2) It reviews certain tenets and practices of Hinduism and Buddhism, affirming that the "Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions." At the same time, it does add that the Church has the duty to proclaim that in Christ is the fullness of life and truth. (§2) Proceeding to Islam, it affirms, "The Church regards with esteem also the Muslims." The authors then list beliefs and practices Muslims and Catholics hold in common, and it expresses regret for a history filled with "not a few quarrels and hostilities." (§3)

The longest section of the document is devoted to the Jews. Here the American delegation was vociferously involved in crafting the text, and input from American Jewish communities was solicited. The document refers to the spiritual patrimony shared with Jews, which is considerable. It condemns persecution and anti-Semitism, and it rejects the idea that the Jews as a people are guilty of killing Christ, a belief that had been used to justify anti-Semitic persecution. A number of Jews also made clear to the drafting commission that Christian proselytizing of Jews was also a point of contention. Accordingly, while the document does maintain that "Jerusalem did not recognize the time of her visitation" [by God] and that many Jews even actively opposed the spreading of the Gospel, it avoids expressing the hope that eventually all Jews will convert to Christianity. (§4) Thus the document not only evinces a more constructive attitude toward Jews and Judaism; it also takes concrete steps to address a number of concerns of the Jewish community.\(^{50}\) Overall, apart from the specific points it makes, "In *Nostra Aetate* a Council for the first time in history acknowledges the search for the absolute by other

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\(^{50}\) For a accessible assessment and historical review of *Unitatis Redintegration* and *Nostra Aetate* by a Vatican insider, see Cassidy (2005). With regard to *Nostra Aetate* in particular, see Willebrands (1986). Oesterreicher (1986: especially 103-295) concentrates on Catholic-Jewish relations. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (2005) also has some relevant online resources.
men and by whole races and peoples, and honors the truth and holiness in other religions as the work of the living God." (Oesterreicher 1969:1) In doing so it set an enduring precedent.

Despite all these affirmations, in the end the Council defined no new doctrines and announced no new truths. Instead, its major development was to advance a new way to hold truth. American Catholic philosopher Bernard Lonergan described this new moment in Catholic thinking endorsed by Vatican II as "The Transition from a Classicist World View to Historical-Mindedness" (1967). The difference lies in that the former does not admit of arguing from a position or perspective—Its ideal form of reason is that mathematics.—whereas the historicist approach displays a reflexive appreciation of coming out of a tradition. It admits that its position has developed over time, and hence is open to the possibility of further development. Moreover, it realizes that truth is always contextual. Murray, who himself had wrestled with the development of papal teaching, put it this way in an interview:

"The question," Father Murray continued, "is not, is the Catholic Church the one true Church. The answer is yes, that is our belief. The question is what is the church, what is the true which is one.

"The theological way of putting the question today is not how certain are we. The question today is how much have we really understood, how much more is there to be understood in the traditional affirmations of faith, and, above all, how are these traditional affirmations to be related to my human interest and experience—the relevance.

The question is not how certain is that truth out there [emphasis added]. The question is what does it mean, and above all, what does it mean to me." (Murray 1967)

The old style of reasoning was suited to a defensive strategy. It marshaled objective arguments to "convince" (that is, to overcome) the other, while the personhood, interests, and historical location of the discussant remained behind the scenes, barricaded away off stage. Johann Baptist Metz (1980:18-19) argues that Catholic churchmen before the Council used natural law theory to deploy this mode of argumentation in order to resist the relativism of the modern era. To be sure, it is a defensive strategy. In Europe it may have been deployed to resist
secularism of the militant form, that is, those constituents in society who were actively working against the social position of the Church. In the United States interfaith competition may have recommended this defensive rhetoric for much of American history. In cultural contexts where no such hostilities exist, the impersonal, even alienated, style of this reasoning often strikes its audience as strangely detached and even irrelevant.

At the Council the new style reflected an explicit attempt to engage the other. The goal was relationality. It was not a capitulation to relativism. Most of the churchmen at the Council rather liked their Catholic truths, and they continued to condemn relativism during and after the Council. However, they spoke of leaving the fortress, immersing themselves in history, entering the social world more fully. In order to have a fruitful dialogue, they had to walk beside people and listen to what they had to say, doing so with a certain vulnerability, risking that what they heard might affect how they understood what they thought they already understood. This meant being willing to speak as one voice among others. Such a style is intimately linked to the capacity to develop the capacity essential for a pluralist hermeneutic, for internally grounded pluralism.

This shift in rhetorical style then correlated with a wide range of ecumenical and interreligious initiatives which Catholics pursued in the wake of the Council on all levels: through the Vatican, at the level of national churches, and more locally. On the international level the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity started under Cardinal Bea became a standing organization, now known as the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. It oversees a wide range of activities. Rome established a working group with the World Council of Churches and bilateral commissions to pursue dialogue with particular churches and denominations. These commissions engage in a variety of activities, from mutual understanding and joint statements to practical arrangements such as policies on inter-marriage, joint worship, and like matters. For example, in October of 1999 the representatives of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World
Federation signed a "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification"\textsuperscript{51} in which they recognized each other's theology of justification, addressing the objective issue that started the Reformation in the first place. Interreligious contact has involved symposia and annual meetings to pursue greater mutual understanding and sometimes address issues of concern that have arisen.

In the wake of these contacts the Holy See coordinated unprecedented interreligious overtures, such as the Pope's first visit to a synagogue, the Central Synagogue of Rome (Dionne 1986), his first visit to a mosque, the Grand Mosque of Damascus (Stanley 2001), and two World Days of Prayer for Peace held at Assisi, one in 1986 and another held in January of 2002 in the shadow of 9-11. During the World Days of Prayer Pope John Paul II gathered with representatives of many of the leading faiths of the world, in 1986 120 in number, in 2002 some 200. In 1986 his purpose was to show that the desire for peace is common to all faiths, that faith can and must be an important force for peace among all people. (Rosales 1987) In 2002 he had the added imperative of preserving peace among Christians and Muslims. ("Pope Leads" 2002) Though each Day of Prayer was organized to allow the various groups to pray separately according to norms of their own tradition, conservative Catholics and other Christians were highly critical of the "indifferentism" that now the Pope himself was caught up in.

Vatican II had a revolutionary impact on almost every area of Catholic theology. It certainly had an impact on the Catholic attitude toward Protestantism, where an almost wholesale shift from an apologetic to a dialogical stance has taken place. Since the Council the drive has been to seek common understandings or to rethink the tradition in light of the demands of ecumenism. As for a theology of other religions, the impact goes beyond revolutionary for the simple fact that before the Council there was almost no attempt to take other faiths seriously in their own terms. That is not to say there was no Catholic scholarship on other faiths. However, on

\textsuperscript{51} For the statement see Catholic Church and Lutheran World Federation (1999). For papers from a symposium on the Declaration held at Yale University, see Rusch (2003).
the level of theological reflection, such Catholic theology of other religions as existed, with very few exceptions, was dominated by deconstructive and missiological intent. At their most positive, some conceded that non-Christian traditions might have positive value for their adherents, by providing a foundation for the proclamation of the Gospel.

Prior to Vatican II a positive appreciation of non-Christian faith—in this case Hinduism—seems to have gone furthest in India. There, for example, two Belgian Jesuits (Pierre Johannis and George Danboy) founded a journal which explored the riches of Hinduism, and that as early as the 1920s. They understood their task not as converting others from Hinduism but as bringing out a Christian vision within Hinduism. Also in India in the 1950s French Benedictines established a monastic community into whose way of life they incorporated Indian culture and readings from such Hindu scriptures as the Vedas. They were joined by the British Benedictine Bede Griffiths, who continued to foster Christian-Hindu dialogue in writings that became popular throughout the English-speaking world. (D'Costa 1986:10-11) These efforts not only acknowledged the value of another faith for its adherents, but even that it had something to say to Catholicism and the human religious quest as such. But they were the exception that proved the rule. Only with Vatican II did the Church provide any positive warrant for their approach.

Even after Vatican II the main focus for Catholics was to work through the implications of the Council for the internal life of the Church. However, by the late seventies a growing Catholic theological literature began to take seriously the many ways in which Catholicism as it was currently defined ecclesiologically and confessionally operated within a larger religious universe. Thus the mainstream of Catholic theologians came to explicitly to acknowledge that Christianity extended beyond its borders, that salvation was possible for non-Catholics and even non-Christians, and that God was at work in what was good and true in other traditions. Now theologians were exploring the enduring (rather than the merely provisional) value of other faiths and what Catholicism had to learn from them.
The implications of Vatican II for religious coexistence in society are vast and continue to unfold. A retrospective look at John Courtney Murray's career reveals the depth of those changes. In the era prior to Vatican II he arrived at an understanding of the American proposition that went beyond the merely legal and technical, instead affirming that it had a certain religious depth. He argued that it could only be properly understood when placed within a larger framework acknowledging the sovereignty of God, the sacred dignity of the human person, and the freedom of the church. In his view such a Catholic natural law approach best grounded and safeguarded the integrity of American arrangements. These arrangements then established the "articles of peace" by which different religious traditions could coexist in society. But while he understood the human conscience to be inviolable and the freedom to pursue one's faith to be a sacred right, he did not reflect at length on the positive religious value of other faiths. As he affirmed in the interview cited earlier, that the Catholic Church is the one true Church was simply axiomatic.\footnote{Also see Beem (1999b:44) on this point.} For him the genius of the American system was that it could accommodate religious diversity, and he could affirm that in light of his faith, even while professing that what God willed was that all be members of the one true Church. Yet prior to Vatican II Church authorities put the break on his publishing. However, in the post-Vatican II era the Catholic Church has moved beyond the proposition that its sole purpose is to shepherd all into a single institutional fold. That has had implications for religious coexistence and the place of religion in public life that go beyond the rational and juridical outlines of Murray's own thought.

**E. Public Catholicism in America After Vatican II**

Prior to the Second Vatican Council public Catholicism in America either was generally silent about other faiths, preferring to address non-Catholic Americans solely as fellow citizens. Occasionally it emphasized common religious ideals and values. In rare instances (such as in the
Bishops' Program of 1919) it acknowledged the contribution of particular religious groups, but in essentially secular terms.53 That is, it carefully sidestepped religious diversity and refused to acknowledge the positive religious dimension of other faiths. Throughout this period the Vatican exercised its watchdog function with diligence. In the wake of the Americanist and Modernist controversies due machinery had been put in place. And though the historical and sociological factors at play which recommended such a strategy to Rome were not exactly the same as those in the United States, American Catholics operated under a siege mentality of their own. The notion of a Church entrusted with "the deposit of faith" and the marks of the fullness of the true Church accorded their orientation over against religious others in American society, as did the objectivist language of the "classicism" with which it was associated. With the Council, the Church itself at its most authoritative level put in place precedents and resources for a very different way of thinking about, talking about, and relating to people in other religious traditions.

The impact of the Council on American Catholicism is one that continues to unfold amid no shortage of controversy. As with theologians, so with ordinary Americans, in the initial years following the Council the explicit focus was not so much their relationship with other traditions as the changes to take place in their own church.54 However, even before the first session opened, the Council generated the expectation that relations between American Catholics and members of other faiths would be transformed. The creation of the Secretariat to Promote the Unity of Christians, the process of consultations it initiated, and the invitation to send representatives to the Council also raised interest in the Council among a wide spectrum of Christians. American

53 Of course, in natural law reasoning, the secular always implies and is ordered to the transcendent. But in this era Catholic social teaching would not explicitly acknowledge the theology and religious faith of others. 54 For an overview of the history of the American Catholic Church in the post-Vatican II era see Catholicism Carey (2004:115-170), Gillis (1999:95-126), and Dolan (2002:191-260). They treat a wide range of issue, including changes in the liturgy and Catholic devotional life, changes in religious life and the role of nuns, disputes over church teaching on sexual issues, protest over war and racism, and the role of women and lay people in the church. While changes in interfaith relations are sometimes noted in the course of these accounts, it is instructive to note that other take center stage.
Jews gained a stake in events when they, too, were brought into the consultations.

Since they accorded with basic American values and they had the strong support of the American episcopacy, the documents on religious freedom, ecumenism, and relations with non-Christian faiths immediately won widespread acceptance.\(^5^5\) At the same time, new style of that the openness of the Council and the historically grounded rhetoric of the documents evinced also served to announce a new relationship between Catholics and others. The modus of the Council, its rhetoric, and the substance of the documents all were of a piece. Changes in the liturgy which made room for greater participation of all and the changes in understanding of authority within the Church also complemented these developments. Indeed, for a group which emerged in opposition to the reforms of Vatican II and came to identify itself as "traditionalist," the source of their opposition lay not so much any one doctrine or change, but the shift from a Church that emphasized its mooring in the realm of absolutes to one that emphasized participation in the realm of history and ambiguity. But for most American Catholics, who were increasingly seeking their place in a society that emphasized diversity and change, especially during the 1960s, the Council sounded a new and welcome chord in their religious lives.

On the level of official practice and rhetoric, after the Council the American Church adopted a wide range of internal reforms manifesting an ecumenical spirit, as well as a series of unprecedented forms of collaboration with non-Catholics. Even before the Council had come to a close, Protestants and Catholics founded the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (whose first issue was winter 1964). While at this early stage interest among American Catholics in interreligious studies was limited, Catholic scholars at least began to write from a perspective that rose above

\(^{55}\) Varacalli (1983) argues that the reception of Vatican II in the United States was taken over by a new knowledge class that had arisen in American Catholicism. Casanova (1992) counters that while the existence of an educated Catholic constituency certainly was a factor in the support Council reforms received in America, the process unfolded under the leadership of a transformed and convinced episcopate. It was more a revolution from above than the result of "subversion" by a liberal intellectual class.
past Catholic-Protestant estrangement, and Protestants followed suit.  

This period witnessed new institutional ties and the creation of new forums for ecumenical dialogue and cooperation. Catholics have intermittently served in official roles within the National Council of Churches (though the more normal model is for Catholic agencies to engage in dialogue with the NCC). In 1964 the "National Workshop on Christian Unity" was created, and each year it sponsors a conference bringing together representatives of Catholic and mainline Protestant denominations for seminars and updates relating to ecumenical developments within and between member churches. Currently most if not all Catholic dioceses have an ecumenical officer who represents the diocese at these events and coordinates ecumenical activities locally. And at the state and local level Catholics have become more involved in regional councils of churches and other interfaith organizations, whereas in the past such participation had not been pursued. In New York the Jesuit theologate formed institutional ties with Union Theological Seminary, sharing library resources and allowing cross-registration. Similar arrangements eventually took shape in Boston and Berkeley.  

On the popular level, given the ecumenical spirit of the times, the rationale for maintaining a vast array of parallel Catholic institutional structures began to dissipate. For example, the Catholic Sociological Association, founded in 1938, found a new raison d'etre and in 1971 it rechristened itself accordingly as the Association for the Sociology of Religion. Former strictures against participation in non-Catholic religious ceremonies were dropped. Baptism in non-Catholic Christian churches was recognized as valid. And norms for marriage with non-Catholics were developed which emphasized a supportive pastoral tone rather than a punitive one. All this made a dramatic impress on the general Catholic population, which had been used to

56 On the Catholic side, see for example Dolan (1965) and McDonnell (1967), and on the Protestant side see Scharlemann (1964).
57 See Curry (1972:80-89) for further examples of ecumenical collaboration for the period through 1967. Several example from the foregoing were cited in his text.
myriad prohibitions when it came to "religious mixing."

In the larger society a number of trends were already underway. Wuthnow (1988) documents increasing cooperation in community affairs and civic life across denominational boundaries since the period after World War II. Hammond (1992) argues that beginning in the sixties increasing numbers of Christians have married across denominational boundaries, or even switched affiliation themselves, to the point where religious affiliation can no longer be considered a primordial aspect of identity. And Roof (1999) shows that increasing numbers of Americans understand religion to be an individualist enterprise, one which they pursue in community to the extent that it is congenial to their individual journey. All these developments essentially locate the value of a particular tradition within a larger religious field. While the Council reforms were not meant to promote such "indifferentism," the fact that Catholics currently participate in the foregoing trends at rates comparable to other American religious constituencies may reflect the extent to which official Catholic recognition of a sphere of human religious endeavor which transcends Catholicism and even Christianity itself has supported these trends.

Thus in the aftermath of the Council and on a number of different levels—in theological pronouncements and scholarly work, in institutional practice, in popular practice, and on the level of popular attitudes that were not officially endorsed by the Council but developed during this period—Catholic acknowledgment that the realm of the validly religious expands beyond Catholicism itself rose dramatically. The discussion here prescinds from a properly sociological analysis of why these developments took place. Though the American contingent had a dramatic influence in the Council with regard to the relevant developments, why these appeared cogent to the other participants in the Council when at earlier periods in history they would not have been is far too complex a question to raise here. Likewise, given immigration, educational, and other socio-economic trends, some suggestion has been made regarding why American Catholics were
so ready to adopt a more open religious horizon. Nonetheless, the question remains an open one. The purpose here has simply been to document the emergence of this new factor in American Catholicism and some of its cultural logic. That could not have been done without reference to the Vatican Council because American Catholicism is not simply an American phenomenon. Long before discussion of globalization became current, it was an integral feature of Catholic religious culture.

The decades following Vatican II witnessed an increasing output of pastoral letters and public statements by the U.S. bishops. Carey (2004:124, note 23) refers to 188 issued between 1966 and 1988 alone. According to Carey's breakdown, they addressed social justice issues, abortion, sexual morality, church mission (ecumenism, evangelization), spirituality (the charismatic renewal, the place of Mary in Christian life), and schools and religious education. The "social justice" ones alone made up 52 percent of the total. Some would consider the schools and abortion questions to be social justice issues, as well. Carey lists ecumenism, evangelization, the charismatic renewal, and the place of Mary as "internal ecclesiastical issues." In fact, ecumenism and evangelization explicitly concerned people outside the Church, and implicitly so did the charismatic renewal, since it was a trans-denominational movement. In addition, at least one document on Mary also had a wider intended audience, insofar as the bishops' purpose in writing was to share with other Americans their faith concerning her. (National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) [1973] 1983:§1) So if by public the sense is that which concerns or addresses others outside the Catholic community, then the vast majority of these documents were public, some to a greater degree than others.

Rather than track the characteristics of this large and complex collection of documents, this analysis will look at the way in which the U.S. bishops brought religious considerations into public life in two, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response* (1983) and *Economic Justice for All: Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* (1986). These two
documents are the most substantive ones produced by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops\textsuperscript{58} since the Second Vatican Council. They are commonly considered landmarks in public religion.\textsuperscript{59} Each involved a complex process of consultations and multiple drafts that unfolded over several years. And each received considerable public comment. Thus both provided premier opportunities for bringing religion into public life. Again, the analysis provided here will review the sense in which these documents were public (social location of author/speaker, topic, audience, and reception) and the sense in which they were religious (in a primary sense and in secondary ways through connection with a religious community and the events, persons, or texts associated with it).

The proposal to write a pastoral letter on war, peace, and nuclear weapons took place at a time when the Cold War suddenly heated up. In the wake of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, the second phase of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT II) between the United States and the Soviet Union stalled, and détente was widely viewed as discredited. In the fall of 1980 Ronald Reagan was elected to the White House with what he took as a mandate to conduct a muscular foreign policy. He pursued a massive military buildup, including production of the B-1 Bomber (which had been canceled by the Carter administration) and the MX Missile. In March of 1983 he proposed development of yet another weapons system: Known as the Strategic Defense Initiative—nicknamed "Star Wars"—its purport was to shield the U.S. strategic (long-range) nuclear arsenal from attack, thereby deterring any attempt at a first strike. The realistic capabilities of such a system were uncertain; its costs prohibitive; the prospect of accelerating the

\textsuperscript{58} In 1966, in accord with Vatican Council recommendations that national episcopal conferences "invested with certain juridical authority" be established, the American Bishops restructured the NCWC as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). The NCCB was the canonical person. A standing administrative body, the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) was also created. It was the entity the bishops incorporated under U.S. law, and technically they headed it. But in common parlance the USCC referred to the bishops' standing secretariat, one which in various moments of its history has been accused of functioning with a certain problematic independence.

\textsuperscript{59} Casanova (1994:184) lists them, along with Catholic public interventions on abortion, as "the three events that above all exemplify the new type of public Catholicism."
arms race sobering; and the fear that it might destabilize the strategic balance hotly debated. In the midst of these developments individual bishops began to speak out.

In 1979 John Cardinal Krol, Archbishop of Philadelphia, testified before the Senate in support of SALT II. Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle sponsored a famous pacifist protest in which he urged Catholics to refuse to pay the portion of their tax that went to military spending. Other bishops added to the chorus. By 1981 some forty bishops had written pastorals or published letters in the newspapers to address the arms buildup and the danger of nuclear war. (Kari 2004:72-73) The diversity of opinion among the bishops themselves on the wide range of issues connected with the arms race made collaboration a difficult prospect but a necessary task: The bishops had to be able to speak with a unified moral voice. Therefore the head of the NCCB, Archbishop John Roach of Minneapolis, tapped Archbishop Joseph Bernadin, then of Cincinnati, to head an effort to draft a pastoral. Bernadin assembled a committee of bishops representing a full range of perspectives, a staff, and a list of regular consultants which included Rev. J. Bryan Hehir, Sr. Juliana Casey, Rev. Richard Warner, and Prof. Bruce Russett. Hehir was director of the USCC’s Office of International Justice and Peace; Casey and Warner represented the perspectives of the female and male U.S. religious orders; Russett, a political scientist at Yale, offered an expert lay perspective. Throughout the drafting process Bernadin worked diligently to involve a full range of perspectives.

Bernadin prepared a first draft for the bishops to review at their 1982 summer meeting in Collegeville, Minnesota.60 When the contents of the draft made their way to the media before the bishops had even assembled at Collegeville, it caused a sensation. It seemed the bishops would be asked to challenge the centerpiece of U.S. Cold War military policy. The media, other churches, the European bishops, the Holy See, and of course, the Reagan administration became intensely

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60 Every year the U.S. bishops hold two meetings, a fall meeting in Washington and a summer meeting hosted by one of the local dioceses.
interested in the course of the statement. A second draft was distributed in October of 1982, in advance of the bishops' November gathering. In response to some of the criticism they received regarding whether they should even address such weighty and technical matters at all, the committee had honed its arguments. Then in January of 1983 at the Vatican's behest, the drafting committee went to Europe to meet with representatives of the bishops' conferences of nations that were affected by NATO policy. NATO defense policy explicitly relied on the very strategies of first strike and deterrence that the bishops were debating. A 150-page third draft was prepared for a special May meeting in Chicago devoted just to this pastoral. Again, it was distributed ahead of time, in April, so that necessary delicate negotiations would not be left to the final act.

Commentators, protesters, and the media gathered in Chicago *en masse*. The assembled bishops presented some 515 proposed amendments, most of which were then withdrawn. The final document was whittled down to a mere 110 pages and passed by a vote of 238, with nine dissenting votes—one of the highest margins of passage for any U.S. joint pastoral.

The comprehensive and inclusive nature of the drafting process of this pastoral was quite literally remarkable. For the first draft alone the bishops conducted at least fourteen panels at which a range of experts, including sitting Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and two of his predecessors, other Cabinet members, physicians, theologians, biblical scholars, and peace activists appeared. Once the first draft was released, bishops then conducted hearings and presentations in their own dioceses. In this case the very length of the drafting process actually served to generate momentum. Diocesan and secular newspapers, religious and popular magazines, and television and radio all covered the document and the debate. The bishops had had to make the case for the relevance of a moral and religious contribution to debates on defense and military strategy, and it seems that in doing so they highlighted the locus they themselves had
created for addressing a whole array of issues that had gone almost wholly unattended.61

Not only did the bishops meet with their counterparts in Europe. They consulted and
drew on the work of a range of ecumenical sources. In a talk at the University of San Francisco
less than a year after the final draft was released, Archbishop Bernadin (1984) commented on the
"ecumenical roots" of the pastoral. He notes how the Catholic pacifist tradition has drawn
inspiration and direction from the "peace churches," highlighting in particular the cooperation
between Catholics and Quakers in the peace movement. He cited the influence of the writings of
theologians John Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas (both Protestants then teaching at Notre Dame)
and of Jim Wallis. Yoder was cited in the final draft, as well, as were a range of Protestant
ethicists, moral philosophers, and historians whose focus was just war theory: Paul Ramsey,
James Childress, Ralph B. Potter, LeRoy B. Walters, James Johnson, and Alan Geyer. Certainly
recent advances in biblical scholarship made by both Catholics and Protestants were evident in
the discussions of Scripture of the document. Bernadin observes, "Among other things, the
pastoral demonstrates how the ecumenical dialogue has developed to the point where real
theological exchange shapes our views on key issues across ecclesial lines." Yet it must also be
admitted that in the main, the document explicitly draws on Protestant sources for pursing its
historical and philosophical analysis, not for its theology.

Despite the merits of this process, Casanova reports that certain Vatican officials were
displeased:

From a Catholic perspective [the public deliberations] represented a radical departure
from the traditional modes of doctrinal and moral teaching. Nothing illustrates that
better than the hostile reaction of Cardinal Ratzinger: "It is wrong to propose the
teaching of the bishops merely as the basis for debate; the teaching ministry of the
bishops means that they lead the people of God and therefore their teaching should not
be obscured or reduced to one element among several in a free debate." (Casanova

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61 Castelli (1983) documents the degree to which lay people were involved in the entire process. Lawler
(1985) reviews the process of the pastoral from a conservative perspective. Cheney (1984) discusses how
the bishops negotiated a multiplicity of voices within their own ranks and multiple audiences.
The process of the Peace Pastoral did contrast with that behind many a papal encyclical, where consultation took place off stage, and the identity of the writers remained secret. In part that was to preserve the sense that the pope was the "author." In part it may also have reflected a classicist notion of truth: The truth was to appear whole and complete, unsullied by the vicissitudes of historical process. And certainly, when it comes to the fundamentals of the faith, Catholic bishops do not put those up for discussion. However, none other than Paul VI specifically recommended that rather than look to Rome for timeless truth, local Christian communities should pursue precisely the kind of exercise that Bernadin implemented:

> In the face of such widely varying situations it is difficult for us to utter a unified message and to put forward a solution which has universal validity. Such is not our ambition, nor is it our mission. It is up to the Christian communities to analyze with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the Gospel's unalterable words for action from the social teaching of the Church. (Paul VI 1971:§4)

Meanwhile, conservatives in the United States were also concerned. And they had cause. One writer for *The Washington Post* put it this way: "[The bishops'] logic and passion have taken them to the very foundation of American security policy. And they are doing so on a basis—a moral basis—that admits of little compromise, once you accept it." (Rosenfeld 1982) From the beginning the bishops were warned that U.S. nuclear policy was a secular matter, a highly complex one, and therefore beyond their competence. Such is the rhetoric of technocracy, which if taken at face value would delegitimize democracy itself. The bishops did not back down, but in response to promptings of their own members, who were concerned about drafting a naïve and irresponsible policy statement, Bernadin included a full complement of technical experts among those who made presentations.

In their determination to move ahead, the bishops also signaled their independence from the Reagan administration and the conservative coalition they had come to be associated with for their pro-family and pro-life stances. This reflected the express determination of some bishops.
They were concerned about being aligned too closely with any one political party so as not to compromise their role as religious pastors. In retrospect, it was clear that in the past they had not heeded that consideration carefully enough in the United States, and as a result they reinforced the tendency toward religious tribalism that had set off immigrant Catholics from other Americans. Yet despite the priority of their religious role, the bishops pressed ahead with their statement on the "secular" matter of nuclear weapons. The White House reacted. It made several attempts at an end run around the bishops, appealing to the Vatican first through an envoy and then the President's personal representative. Reagan officials also recruited influential Catholics to speak out against the bishops in an effort to check or undermine the process. (Kari 2004:80-82; Lawler 1984:43-45)

That the bishops proceeded in the face of concerted opposition showed how far the Catholic community had come in assimilating its American identity. In the past Catholics were reticent to criticize the government, especially when it came to national defense. They were always subject to loyalty tests. During the Spanish American War, once the episcopate saw which way the wind was blowing most bishops fell in behind the Administration, making the best of a situation beyond compromise. Throughout the greater part of the twentieth century anti-Communism was then a way for Catholics to prove their loyal, pro-American credentials. The pastoral's unprecedented critical stance among these erstwhile implacable foes of communism came as an unwelcome shock to the White House, while it evinced a new maturity on the part of the bishops.

Debate over the bishops' peace pastoral revealed another realignment that had taken place in American Catholicism. Prior to the Vatican Council, within the Catholic community it was the conservatives who were critical of American society, while the more liberal "Americanists" championed American values, and also American interests, sometimes too uncritically. New York's Cardinal Spellman fit this mold in its declining years. Sponsor of Murray, proponent of
religious freedom, and friend of the Jewish community, he was also a staunch foe of communism and supporter of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. (Cooney 1984) However, as Casanova (1994:189-191) observes, the peace and economic pastorals showed that a significant redefinition of the spectrum of social thought within Catholicism was taking place. Now Catholic liberals were those taking a critical stance on America's economic and foreign policy, while Catholic conservatives waved the flag and championed capitalism. In that respect, Catholic use of the terms "liberal" and "conservative" was more in line with that of the surrounding society. That reflected that degree to which Catholics no longer occupied a separate moral universe, one with its own terminology, precedents, and conversation partners. Of course, while there is a congruence, that does not imply isomorphism. "Good" Catholics, those educated in the teaching of their tradition, will tend to be more liberal in economic and social policy issues, while more conservative on family and lifestyle ones. Nonetheless, in the post-Vatican II era Catholics clearly began to share the same moral and ethical categories as their neighbors.

Catholics clearly occupied a very different place in American society in the 1980s than they did at the beginning of the century, and as a result, in drafting this pastoral their bishops had to negotiate relationships with a wide range of constituencies that they would not have had to when they were "just" Catholic bishops. In their letter they addressed this complex issue. Aware of the anxiety of the times, in the first place they write as "bishops and pastors ministering in one of the major nuclear nations," adding: "we have encountered this terror in the minds and hearts of our people—indeed, we share it." (National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) 1983:§2) As pastors their letter is "both an invitation and a challenge to Catholics in the United States to join with others in shaping the conscious choices and deliberate policies required in this 'moment of supreme crisis.'" (§4) At the same time, just as their constituents, they are "Americans, citizens of the nation which was first to produce atomic weapons." (§4) Later they expand on their responsibilities as pastors and as citizens and the dual audiences they address:
Catholic teaching on peace and war has had two purposes: to help Catholics form their consciences and to contribute to the public policy debate about the morality of war. These two purposes have led Catholic teaching to address two distinct but overlapping audiences. The first is the Catholic faithful, formed by the premises of the gospel and the principles of Catholic moral teaching. The second is the wider civil community, a more pluralistic audience, in which our brothers and sisters with whom we share the name Christian, Jews, Muslims, other religious communities, and all people of good will also make up our polity. Since Catholic teaching has traditionally sought to address both audiences, we intend to speak to both in this letter, recognizing that Catholics are also members of the wider political community. (§16)

Because they are addressing two distinct audiences, the bishops point out that in their letter they will employ "two complementary but distinct styles of teaching" (§17). One might ask why they did not simply write two different letters, one based on "the gospel and the principles of Catholic moral teaching" for Catholics and another for "the wider civil community." The simple answer seems to be to be that on the one hand, Catholics themselves are members of that wider civic community, and on the other Catholic social teaching is not inaccessible to others, since it corresponds to "the law written on [every] human heart by God" (§17).

Bryan Hehir was a principle architect of the document, and in a paper he wrote several years later, "The Catholic Bishops and the Nuclear Debate" (1992), he expands on the logic of the two audiences and his understanding the place of Catholicism in American society. In his explanation he cites the working definition of religious pluralism that Murray provided at the outset of We Hold these Truths:

The coexistence within the one political community of groups who hold divergent and incompatible views with regard to religious question—those ultimate questions that concern the nature and destiny of man within a universe that stands under the reign of God. Pluralism therefore implies disagreement and disension within the community. But it also implies a community within which there must be agreement and consensus. (Murray 1960:x, cited in Hehir 1992:99)

By "religious pluralism" what Murray has in mind is "structural pluralism," the way a society holds together traditions that are simply "divergent and incompatible," along with the moral consensus that supports it. In truth, that consensus is a bit more than merely moral. The law written into each heart comprises a sense of the sacred dignity of the person and a fundamental
orientation to the divine. Beyond this legacy shared by all human beings—what the natural law
tradition views as the basis of "natural religion"—Murray does not affirm that these "groups"
have anything specific in their traditions that they can share with one another. Beyond the
recognition of a universal basis for "natural religion," Murray is unable to affirm internally
grounded pluralism. Of course, since Murray wrote, in *Nostra Aetate* (1965c) the Vatican Council
was able to list religious values that Catholics shared with Muslims, Jews, other Christians, and
other religious communities (the groups the bishops here name). However, here these religious
others are addressed not as people who offer Catholics a heritage of religious values and insights,
or as people with whom Catholics can share their faith. Instead they are addressed on a par with
other people of good will with whom Catholics share the moral law.

That is what the text says up front. However, in the way it is written it says something
else. In fact, the bishops write as men of faith, and it is that faith which is the point of departure
for the text. In other words, *The Challenge of Peace* does not begin with facts and an ethical
analysis, then add some pious sentiments. At the outset the bishops announce, despite the
looming anxiety and pessimism, "From the resources of our faith, we wish to provide hope and
strength to all who seek a world free of the nuclear threat." (§2) Then in the first section of the
pastoral they draw on Scripture to reflect on how hope is rooted in peace. In their discussion they
note that in the Bible, peace is more than the absence of hostility; it is a positive reality, one
associated with God's will for humanity (God's reign, God's salvation), a blessing and a gift; and
as such it is a blessing to which God invites each person who allows that reign to take root in his
or her life. Instead of a logical treatise, the bishops share with the reader a theological vision.

Only after the document has developed a positive vision of peace (§27-55) and of the
reign of God in the midst of history (§66-65) does it proceed to ethics, which can now be
adequately understood. (§66-121) In this last section it develops its famous just war criteria and
its teaching on pacifism. Once the document has developed these principles, it reviews the
circumstances of the day and reflects on how the vision articulated at the outset might provide some light and clarity (§122-199). Only then does it proceed to recommendations (§200-339). Throughout the document is deeply existential and historical in tone. It is written in language accessible to ordinary educated people of the day. Despite the initial affirmation that what people share is the moral law, in fact the document shares far more. Thus it suggests that faiths of different communities may be more than merely "divergent and incompatible."

Apparently the pastoral had a measurable, even a significant, impact, among active Catholics. (Wald 1992) Greeley notes that in the months before the pastoral was issued, 32 percent of both Catholics and Protestants thought too much money was being spent on the military. Then in the year after the pastoral the percentage for Protestants remained approximately the same while that for Catholics jumped to 54 percent. That seems to indicate that while the pastoral had an impact on Catholic opinion, most ordinary non-Catholics did not feel that it was relevant to them. Instead it was among religious elites it earned a considerable response. Bernadin (1984) noted appreciatively, "[T]he National Council of Churches commended the pastoral to its membership; several national church bodies passed resolutions about the pastoral, and the religious press generally gave us very generous support and coverage." The Union of American Hebrew Congregations awarded its Einstein prize to the NCCB for moral leadership. From the Synagogue Council of America to the Council of Methodist Bishops to a coalition of Evangelical organizations, other religious groups praised the NCCB effort and sought to emulate it on some level. (Kari 2004:96-97) The response provoked by the pastoral was substantial enough to generate literature in its own right (for example Lawler 1984; and Murphy 1987). Broadly speaking, the most negative responses that arose came either from within the ranks of conservative Catholics or from other critics on secular grounds; most religious commentary

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62 See Murnion (1983) for a commentary on the text.
63 That was slightly ironic given Einstein's role in developing nuclear weapons.
appreciated the integrity of this effort to bring faith into the public square.

_Economic Justice for All_ (National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) 1986) was finally adopted some three and a half years after _The Challenge of Peace_. Coming on the heels of the peace pastoral as it did, the consultations for the letter on the economy followed a similar model, and overall the project adopted a similar approach to relating religion and public life.

Plans for the letter had in fact been set in motion when the bishops met in November of 1980. Archbishop Rembert Weakland, the Archbishop of Milwaukee was eventually chosen to head up the project. Formal consultations began in 1982, and the first draft came out in November of 1984. A second draft was prepared for October of 1985. And the bishops finally adopted a third draft at their November meeting in 1986. The process was even more drawn out than that for the peace pastoral, and both the effort involved and the acrimony of some of the debate seem to have taken more of a toll. 64

Because the peace pastoral had garnered such widespread publicity, other actors in society were more attuned to the process and to the very phenomenon of Catholic social teaching. In December of 1983, at the end of the year that saw the release of the peace pastoral, Notre Dame hosted a three-day symposium entitled "Catholic Social Teaching and the American Economy" (Williams 1983), and that helped advertise the letter and generate interest. Other religious groups understood the process better and were brought into the consultations as early as August of 1982. Meanwhile, anticipating that the bishops would offer some critical reflections on the policies of the Reagan administration, the media was instrumental in stoking expectations well before the first draft came out. (Kari 2004:105) That in turn served to stir up conservative opposition.

One group mobilized early on in opposition to the bishops' effort. It sought to preempt

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64 For an overview of the production of the first draft see Kennedy (1985:50-65). For the history and reception of the economic pastoral see (Kari 2004:99-121).
them by issuing its own letter on the U.S. economy. The group was led by former Treasury Secretary William Simon and Michael Novak, of the American Enterprise Institute (a neo-conservative think-tank). It released its own "findings," entitled *Toward the Future* (Simon and Novak 1984), several weeks before the bishops' first draft was to be available. The group even made its case directly to the Catholic faithful, mailing a copy of their letter to some 19,000 parishes. Attempting to set the terms of the debate, in a sense they succeeded. Though the bishops politely acknowledged their contribution to the discussion but did not engage them, they were part of a chorus of critics that helped to frame the effort as the bishops versus the advocates of the free market. This chorus of critics were anxious that the bishops not threaten the progress made under Reagan in dismantling those Great Society programs that they argued were sapping the economic and social vitality of the nation. For their part, the bishops were making the appeal to bring in a perspective in thinking about the economy that often was lacking. However, very quickly their effort was cast as a frontal assault on the policies of the Reagan White House.65

This polarization was perhaps inevitable because of the posture the bishops themselves adopted. The letter begins, "We are believers called to follow Our Lord Jesus Christ and proclaim his Gospel in the midst of a complex and powerful economy." The image the bishops called upon was that of the prophet speaking truth to power. The example of Jesus "imposes a prophetic mandate to speak for those who have no one to speak for them[.]

(§52) The bishops summoned their flock as "Brothers and Sisters in Christ" to stand up for the poor and marginalized and speak out on their behalf. And it was that responsibility that they discharged in writing their letter. The bishops also noted that Scripture demands that the first to be taken into account must always be the poor and the suffering. (§87) This notion is summed up under the heading of "the preferential option for the poor," a phrase that arose in connection with liberation theology. It was repeated

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65 For example, one article in Business Week loudly proclaimed, "The Bishop's Letter: A Clear Challenge to Reaganism" (Patterson 1984).
nine times in the body of the document (§52, §170, §186, §252, §260, §267, §274, §291, §362).

The logic of the letter also drew on non-Scriptural sources. It drew on the principles of the natural law: "Our faith calls us to measure this economy, not by what it produces but also by how it touches human life and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person." (§Intro.1)66 This central tenet of Catholic social teaching is a dispassionate postulate that reasonable people could agree to. It worked in tandem with the prophetic stance and the biblical mandate on behalf of the poor to inform the logic of the document throughout. Finally, the document also made an appeal to American history and values. Just as the founders of the nation created a noble experiment to allow people to participate in the political system that controls their destiny, so contemporary Americans were called to expand participation in economic decisions that truly would serve the common good (§52; see also appeal to Lincoln in §I.9). As Casanova (1994:192) observes, this historically grounded appeal to fulfill the promise of America stands in contrast to a purely abstract discussion of economic systems in general.

The challenge presented to the drafters of the document was a tall one. On the one hand, they were required to meet not only the normal standards to which public rhetoric was accountable, but also the barbed criticism of conservative critics who asserted that they were out of their technical element. On the other, they had to show that religion had something to contribute to the debate beyond a technical analysis. That was not an easy balance. The first draft received some criticism from the bishops themselves because its technical details made it a dry read, and also because its tone seemed harsh and imperious. Subsequent drafts were more inviting, and the theological base was expanded and deepened. The final draft contained an introduction and five chapters. The introduction established the topic of the writers, their identity, audience, and purpose. The first chapter is a discussion of contemporary circumstances from the perspective

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66 There is an introductory section to the document with paragraphs numbered 1 through 29. Then the numbering restarts at the beginning of chapter I. Hence "§Intro.27" versus "§I.27."
of the bishops. The second offers a rich biblical and theological reflection on the meaning of
work and economic life. The third offers policy suggestions, the stuff of prudential judgments.
The fourth is a proposal to develop a more cooperative and communitarian economic culture.
And the fifth looks at how this vision is nurtured in the Church's own liturgical and communal
life and what the Church itself—as employer, investor, and so forth—can do to live it out.

The bishops clearly wrote with a particular constituency in mind, the Catholic faithful.
Yet they also addressed a wider public. In describing their purpose they indicated that they wrote
both to inform the Catholic conscience and to add their voice to the public debate about the U.S.
economy (§I.27), a duality similar to that articulated in previous documents. However, the
approach of the bishops evinces a deeper integration between the two. Here the bishops did not
act on the basis of two distinct roles, as citizens and as pastors. And they did not deploy two lines
of argument, each suited to a distinct role and target constituency.67 Instead, the prophetic calling
they announced mediated between both their purposes. On the basis of that one calling, the
bishops summoned their flock to witness with them, and they summoned them to witness as
disciples in the wider society. In their own witness, not only were the bishops claiming that the
economy must serve human ends. They were proclaiming that the God of justice demanded that
society see to the needs of the poor. In this schema, the faithful were called not merely to be
better citizens in the wider society, but to be disciples. There were not two universes, one inside
the Church where religion was an accepted category, and one beyond where only moral and legal
categories applied. Accordingly, the bishops articulated the witness they themselves bore to the
larger society in language suffused with morality, ethics, natural law, Scripture, papal teaching,
and theological insight.

The reception of the bishops' letter was remarkably ecumenical. In that respect, the very

67 Admittedly, the first and third chapters of the document retain something of a secular cast, but that is
because of the subject matter, not a shift in the audience.
vitriol of the neo-conservative attacks on the bishops may have been a help. It cast the bishops in the light of fighting for a place at the table for all religious groups. Moreover, Kari (2004:111) suggests that it was so ugly, in a way reminiscent of the nativism of an earlier day, that it may have aroused not only sympathy but also a sense of responsibility among members of other religious communities to come to the bishops' defense. Once again a full range of religious groups from the National Council of Churches to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations went on record in support of the bishops' efforts. (Nolan 1989:XXX)

Engagement was sustained at a deep enough level to leave a trail of scholarly interfaith writing on the economic pastoral. Strain (1989) contains a collegial collection of interfaith statements which, though they represent a spectrum of opinions, generally back the bishops' effort to bring faith to bear on public life. Gannon (1987), in a publication sponsored by the Jesuit Woodstock Center, offers a range of critical appraisals of the pastoral, including some from the perspective of other faiths. Curry (1984) presents a series of Evangelical responses, while Lutz (1987) does the same for the Lutheran community. In England the Jubilee Group (1985), a lively network of Anglo-Catholic social radicals, held an ecumenical symposium on the bishops' letter and published its results. In general, the respondents in these efforts were encouraged by the way the bishops endeavored to measure the economy with a truly human yardstick (though some did question the degree to which it was realistic to expect that any system would really respond to moral imperatives). Of course, churchmen who would go on record concerning an effort such as the bishops' would certainly do so in a balanced and respectful way. What is remarkable is the number and range willing to do so.

In part that was due to the sound biblical credentials of the vision they articulated, one shared by Jews and Christians alike. In his syndicated column "Ethics and Religion," Michael J. McManus (1986, cited in Kari:2004:116), had this to say: "Are you a Catholic, Protestant, or Jew? Then you should read the Catholic Bishops' Pastoral Letter 'Economic Justice for All.' No
document I have ever read does a better job of looking at the U.S. economy from a Judeo-Christian perspective." One thing is clear, the wide appeal of the bishops' letter was not substantially hindered but the institutional affiliation of the authors or the references to papal teaching or Catholic liturgy interspersed in the document. And even Novak and Simon's group was certainly not anti-Catholic. All were in fact prominent lay Catholics. They were not even opposed to Catholic social teaching in principle. The subtitle of their book, *Catholic Social Thought and the U.S. Economy*, underscores their claim to present the true reading of that tradition, not to deny it entirely. And in his last appearance before the bishops'—he made four—Novak commended them for keeping an open mind and apparently taking some of his considerations into account. (Mich 1998:324-325)

The style and the reception of the peace and economic pastorals highlight the remarkable course of evolution that Catholic social teaching traced from the Bishops' Program of 1919. When the Catholics bishops first addressed the public they did so in relatively secular terms, reserving religious language for their own community. In the 1980s they freely complemented their natural law approach with the vision of Scripture and the language of Catholic faith in individual documents intended for Catholics and the wider public alike. Thus while the Bishop's Program of 1919 is often cited for its progressivism, the Peace Pastoral is cited for bringing religion into a vital conversation of the day, even when apart from its specific recommendations. At the beginning of this period, the religious nature and the public nature of the bishops' social teaching cut in opposite directions: the more religious content, the more in-house it was; whereas the more successfully it went public, the more secular it was. That correlation has diminished substantially.

The trajectory is a complex one, both because of the number factors involved in the production of any one document and the shifting public climate in which the bishops operated. But the contrasts between the earlier and later periods stand out. While other religious leaders only wrote privately to the bishops and the NCWC staff in affirmation of the Bishops' Program,
in the 1980s they publicly endorsed and emulated the bishops' efforts. And while Ryan had cited Quakers because as religious leaders they brought moral integrity to their advocacy, in the 1980s the bishops wrote as people of faith. They brought to the debate "the preferential option for the poor" they found in the Bible and their prophetic duty to speak out for the poor and marginal.

Yet overall, when considering the place of religion in public life, there has not been a steady, unidirectional trend. In the early decades of the century other groups were able to bring religious language into public life, as the Social Gospel and Temperance Movements bear witness. In the mid-fifties, when the Civil Rights Movement had broad ecumenical support, its leaders brought religious language into public life. But for the first half of the twentieth century American Catholics continued to live in a their own relatively separate subculture—or subcultures—at an alienated remove from the rest of society. Only after other groups came to accept the place of Catholics in society and Catholics began to reciprocate did Catholic social teaching gain greater legitimacy in society. The one factor that has had a significant influence on this trajectory is the change in the relations between religious groups.

These relations have gone through a number of stages. There have been ebbs and flows. The World War I inspired new a moment of cooperation between Catholics and others. But then the moment faded and former patterns of religious competition reasserted themselves. Competition heated up again in the latter forties. But by the late fifties American Protestants and Catholics were beginning to build bridges. And with Vatican II, American Catholics adopted not only a theology which affirmed other faiths, but a rhetoric of relationality that enabled them to reorient their relationship with members of other faith communities.

Interfaith tensions have not completely disappeared in American society. And where they exist, they often reflect a deeper alienation that inhibits the constructive presence of religion in public life. However, Catholics do not find themselves at the center of such tensions the way they once did. The next chapter takes a closer look at the implications of these developments.
Chapter VII. Pluralism and Public Faith:  
The Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project

A. Prefatory Remarks

The involvement of American religious groups in environmental issues is a relatively recent phenomenon, historically speaking. For most such groups it dates to the mid-1980s at best. At the same time, that involvement has almost always been marked by a strong ecumenical and interreligious dimension. That is not to say that every religious group that has taken an interest in environmental issues has done so by also adopting a pluralist approach to religious diversity. Some have been careful to avoid doing just that. But that is precisely the point. Interfaith dialogue and cooperation became increasingly normative, so that as religious groups developed an environmental ethic, they had to negotiate that expectation. Some did so by placing limits or even erecting barriers to religious pluralism when deciding how they would promote environmentalism. And some even rejected environmentalism itself as a wellspring of new age religious relativism.

Like many—but not all—American religious groups, Catholics were relative late-comers to the environmental movement. And to the present day, the Catholic rank and file has not mobilized in great numbers to its causes. However, those Catholics who have gotten involved in environmental concerns, from academics and theologians to community activists and monks, have collaborated with people of other faiths to an extent that strongly contrasts with the norm before Vatican II. Catholic contributions to environmental issues in public life have been facilitated by this collaboration. At the same time, that collaboration has also been marked by certain limitations. Indeed, those limitations reflect a certain tension built into the dialogical model of internally grounded pluralism presupposed by mainstream Catholic leaders. Since that model presupposes bringing one's tradition into dialogue with the traditions of others, it means bringing along both the cultural resources and the limitations that the tradition-as-held entails.

This chapter briefly summarizes a number of key developments in the early history of
American religious participation in the environmental movement, developments that illustrate the degree to which an interfaith dimension was present in some quarters of the religious environmentalism, but not all. These developments also illustrate how Catholics tried to negotiate some of the challenges participation in environmentalism involved. The narrative then detours for a closer look at internally grounded pluralism within some current institutional settings in the Catholic world, in particular noting how they color Catholic engagement of ecology in those settings. Finally, it reviews the history of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project in the Pacific Northwest and the place of pluralism in that intervention in public life.

B. American Catholicism and the Rise of Religious Environmentalism

The religious environmentalism dates to a period when a number competing frames dominated the contemporary conception of what environmentalism was in the first place. Two of those frames dated from the nineteenth century. One, often designated "conservationism," was essentially an environmental ethic based on resource management. That frame was associated with such government agencies as the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management; it marshaled the rhetoric of science and the ideal of control and management for the end of supplying human needs. The other nineteenth century frame, "preservationism," was associated with John Muir, the Sierra Club, and the National Park System. Its central theme was the safeguarding of natural settings for their beauty and majesty. Preservationists argued that human existence was unestimably enhanced by resort such places. John Marshall, founder of the Wilderness Society, even argued that nature could be an essential resource for social renewal.

By the seventies environmentalism had come to be dominated by another frame, a frame that centered on a rather ugly word: "pollution." That frame, reform ecology, appeared early in the 1960s in connection with Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962). It is associated with the rise of such government agencies as the Environmental Protection Agency. Carson had alerted the
American public to the dangers of indiscriminate pesticide use, DDT in particular. More broadly, the frame of reform ecology warned that human activity threatened the planet itself. That included warnings about overpopulation.

The public understanding of what "environmentalism" was about continued to expand as the seventies proceeded. Beginning with the protests against above-ground nuclear testing, the campaign against nuclear weapons and nuclear power had long been associated with environmentalism. That link was made explicit and popularized by such organizations as Greenpeace (founded in 1971). The anti-toxics movement took the concerns raised by reform ecology and the various anti-nuclear campaigns and made them local. This movement took shape after Lois Gibbs formed the Love Canal Homeowner's Association in August of 1978 to fight for a community that had been fatally compromised by toxic waste. It brought home the extent to which human communities themselves were directly threatened by industrial activity. In the wake of the anti-toxics movement, another frame appeared: Spokespersons for minority communities mobilized to protest the disproportionate siting of industrial plants and waste landfills near minority communities. Studies by the United Church of Christ (Chavis and Lee 1987) and Robert Bullard (1990) confirmed this pattern of discrimination, setting in motion the movement for environmental justice (a term first coined by Benjamin Chavis in the UCC report).

In a retrospective and prospective look at U.S. "environmentalism" Robert Gottlieb (1993) challenged environmental activists and the wider community to think more comprehensively about their concerns. Clearly, environmentalism was about more than national parks and resource management. Gottlieb himself looked at industrial worker health protections and movements to safeguarded the health of the urban environment.¹ In a sense, everything that people do takes place in some environment. As a result, any broader discussion of the nature of environmental activism

¹ Brulle (2000:133-144) also includes early regulation of hunting and wildlife management plans as one of the first stages of American environmentalism.
soon gets caught up in the wide range of concerns and priorities at stake which are—or at least can be—labeled as in some sense "environmental."\textsuperscript{2} The nature of "environmentalism" depends as much on subjective construction as it does on the objective world.

In the sixties environmentalism was often framed in such a way that the involvement of mainstream religion was excluded. Even before the sixties the people involved in the preservationist variety of environmentalism tended to be religious free spirits, while the conservationist approach emphasized science, technical expertise, and management. Its guiding light was utilitarianism, not faith. Neither preservationists not conservationists forged extensive ties with mainstream religious bodies. Meanwhile, such organizations as the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, founded in 1923, have worked to promote a spirituality of the land,\textsuperscript{3} but they were not classed as "environmental." Even during the sixties and seventies, when the notion of "environmentalism" was undergoing revision and expansion, the antiauthoritarian, anti-institutional, anti-traditional ethos of the day promoted critique of traditional social institutions, not alliance with them.

This critical approach was reflected in a thoughtful yet provocative address of UCLA historian Lynn White to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Entitled "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" (1967), it was reprinted in *Science* the following year, and it made a splash at the time. White's article has been cited, almost obligatorily, in every discussion of religion and environmentalism published since. White argued that whereas paganism sacralized nature, Judaism and Christianity in turn demystified it. In Judaism and Christianity it is human beings who are made in God's image. According to White, this understanding led to an

\textsuperscript{2} For an overview of the way mainstream environmentalism has been framed in the United States, see Brulle (2000:101-236). Also see (Sale 1993) for a brief review of the environmental movement from the publication of Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) to the Rio Earth Summit (1992).

\textsuperscript{3} The Conference regularly publishes prayer and liturgical materials linked to the seasons and rural life. For an history of the early years of the organization see Witte (1948). Also see its magazine, *Catholic Rural Life*, and its website (listed in Appendix II).
anthropomorphism which made possible the rise of modern science, technology, and capitalism, along with the philosophy of the exploitation of nature they presuppose. In the midst of his discussion White tried to account for a major anomaly in the data, Francis of Assisi. Here was a Christian exemplar of giant stature who proclaimed solidarity with all creatures. White handled Francis by arguing that this icon of Christian piety was "clearly heretical" (1206). He closed by arguing that we "reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man." (1207) For some in the environmental movement White's article then served as a manifesto for parting company with Christianity to pursue a course apart. It did not make it easy for committed Christians and Jews to embrace the environmental movement then taking shape, either.

Despite the growing estrangement between groups who prioritized "environmental" issues and those involved in mainstream religion, some mainline American Protestant groups were active on environmental issues from an early date. Domestically, these churches were often involved in social advocacy, and internationally through the World Council of Churches they maintained relationships with member churches located in developing countries. As a result, the way they framed environmental issues often retained a close connection to social justice concerns. The involvement of the UCC in defining the frame for the environmental justice movement, cited above, is only one example. In the mid-1970s the National Council of Churches was active in opposing nuclear energy as unsafe. Among its members the United Methodist Church had a tradition of addressing environmental issues dating to the 1930s, and in 1972 it added to its social ethics position a category of principles relating to "The Natural World." In 1980 it took the further step of adding an office on environmental affairs to its national apparatus, one of the first

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4 When approached on the topic of Francis's "unorthodox" ecological views, Kenneth Himes, OFM, the chair of the theology department at Boston College, and himself a Franciscan, made the following observations. While White's article included some interesting points, White did not understand the spirituality of Saint Francis and its place in Catholic thought. Francis viewed all creatures as sharing a basic kinship because all stood together on the one side of that great relationship linking all creatures to God. What we shared was creaturehood. This was precisely mainstream Catholic thought.

See also the more informed discussion of Francis by Lutheran scholar Paul Santmire (1985:106-121).
religious groups to do so. Others followed suite, especially the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (PC USA). While during the sixties secular environmental advocates had been vocal about the dangers of overpopulation, focusing their concerns on developing nations, in the seventies the NCC created a "Responsible Life-style Task Force," turning the focus to the unsustainability of first-world lifestyles. This committee was eventually reorganized to serve as the “Eco-Justice Working Group” of the NCC, the coordinating and public policy arm of the NCC for environmental issues. By networking their moral capital and resources through the NCC, member churches were able to sustain a modest staff to keep the issues before their membership and the larger public.

Among evangelicals Lynn White's article occasioned "an immediate and dramatic response" (DeWitt 2006:77); they published articles and papers arguing that White misunderstood the notion of "dominion" in Genesis. It did not mean "domination" so much as "stewardship," that is, responsible care for creation. At the end of the decade Francis Schaeffer then published a comprehensive evangelical statement, *Pollution and the Death of Man: The Christian view of Ecology* (1970). (Larsen 2001:54-58,61-69) A further landmark was the Christian, interdisciplinary symposium on environmental issues held at Calvin College. It resulted in the publication of a volume, entitled *Earthkeeping* (De Vos et al. 1980), that laid the groundwork for subsequent evangelical thought on the environment. One of the participants in that symposium was Cal DeWitt, who went on to found the Au Sable Institute in 1979. Au Sable was responsible for organizing an ongoing series of symposia, the Au Sable Fora, that brought together evangelical scholars to contribute papers on faith and the environment. It also became the base for a network of evangelical scientists working at member colleges who combined resources to create an environmental stewardship program that students could participate in for course credit.

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5 See Moody (2002) for an overview of Protestant mobilization around environmental issues. These examples are discussed on pages 241-42.
Through the network faculty also shared resources and encouraged professional development so that member colleges could develop their own environmental studies programs. Member institutions grew from eighteen in 1980 to sixty in 2005.6 (DeWitt 2006:78-79)

In 1986 evangelicals were at the center of an effort to reach out more broadly and nurture an environmental ethic in the larger Christian community. Participants in the Au Sable Institute met with representatives of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, the NCC's Eco-Justice Working Group, and the Threshold Foundation to form a broad-based coalition, the North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology (NACCE).7 Negotiations among these groups over such notions as how to define Christianity threatened to derail the project, but the various representatives made it through their planning meetings to organize a conference for over 500 in 1987. ("A Brief Sample" n.d.; Lucas 1995: 190-91,253; Muratore 1987) When the first gathering took place, tensions again erupted into the open. This time the center of controversy was Thomas Berry, a Catholic priest and advocate of a creative but non-traditional theological approach. Berry was quite literally non-traditional in that he advocated bracketing the tradition and reinterpreting it in the light of the findings of science, especially cosmology and evolution. Meanwhile, Evangelicals involved in the environmental movement generally pursued a strategy of critical engagement with modernity. They eschewed the anti-modernist stance of fundamentalists, who frequently rejected science as secular and environmentalism as pagan. At the same time, they were wary of approaches that lost solid moorings in what they considered the essentials of the tradition: fidelity to Scripture and an ethic of individual responsibility to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Berry and those associated with him argued that unless Christians found a new paradigm they would be haunted by the problems created within the old one. More traditionalist Christians

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6 For the history of American evangelicals and the environmental movement to the end of the twentieth century, see Larsen (2001). DeWitt (2006), at the center of much of that history, provides some insight into the history of the Au Sable Institute and the Evangelical Environmental Network.
7 NACCE has since gone through a number of name changes since while retaining the same acronym.
accused Berry of being neo-pagan and attempting to eviscerate the authentic meaning of
Christianity from within. (Muratore 1988) In the end a faction coalesced around Berry. After the
disputes became too acrimonious, they broke with NACCE, and in 1989 they formed NACRE,
the North American Conference on Religion and Ecology (which also had a name change or two
but kept its acronym for the term of its existence). (Kearns 1996:61-62)

Berry was a brilliant but soft-spoken man, a deep thinker who had originally trained to
work in China, but then returned to the United States. He was deeply caught up in the questions
of culture, evolution, and the philosophy of another priest who had worked in China, the Jesuit
Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. When back in America he taught at a number of Catholic universities,
including Fordham (1966–79). And he was president of the American Teilhard Society (1975–87)
and founder of the Riverdale Center of Religious Research, which he ran from 1970 to 1995.

Long before others in the Catholic Church turned to ecology, he saw it as the locus for all his
thought. In his view, the earth and the cosmos provide the context in which all religions articulate
what they are about, so that science (science done right, science open to spirituality) and ecology
provides the apt meeting place for all human faiths. Once all religions began to rethink their place
in the cosmos, they would come to a more adequate self-understanding, and also find that they are
all caught up in a larger common story. Berry once argued that Christians should leave the
Scriptures on the shelf for twenty years or so to get back in touch with their actual experience of
existence. That comment alone burned many a bridge with traditional and evangelical Christians.

Berry was a profound opponent of the notion of the universe as a dead mechanism.
Instead, he argued that we should think about the universe, not so much as a collection of objects
to be exploited and discarded, but as a "communion of subjects" to be celebrated and revered.
Further, drawing on the traditional Catholic notion of community/communion as a manifestation
of the body of Christ, Berry held that the natural world is a living sacrament, the very
manifestation of God. And he argued that it was one far more tangible than any scripture, hence
his comment about the Bible. At the same time, once you take those notions seriously and begin to think them through, they have profound implications not only for religion, but for biology and ecology, and for physics and cosmology, as well. Thus Berry challenged both the understanding of traditional religion, and the traditional understanding of science. Armed with Berry's insights, many professional religious people—priests, nuns, ministers—thought religion finally had something to say to science.8

Inspired by Berry, Dominican Sister Miriam MacGillis founded Genesis Farm in Blairstown, New Jersey, an institute integrating Berry's thought into a program of education and spirituality. A wide range of Catholic religious, especially women, have been trained at this institute. Many have come to see ecology as a new arena to which they can dedicate themselves. The Sophia Center based at the University of the Holy Names in Oakland, California, is another center for creation spirituality greatly influenced by Berry's work, as are several others. The Sierra Club also published a book by Berry (1988) on spirituality and ecology.

Apart from Berry and Matthew Fox9 and their disciples, American Catholics remained relatively detached from environmental issues. Certainly, during the sixties American Church leadership was preoccupied with the Vatican Council reforms and the debates over their interpretation and implementation that ensued. During that period Catholic theologians and academics were also training their focus on social issues. They were intent on moving the social teaching of the Church into the new post-Vatican II moment. Any Catholic move in the direction of ecology were further forestalled by two judgments handed down from on high, the encyclical

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8 That may not be as true for scientists. I spent ten days at an educational retreat based on Berry's thought. Also present was a grad student in biology and environmental science. He found the synthesis problematic.

9 Fox was a Dominican priest and advocate of another version of creation spirituality. He was famous for counterpoising the notion of original blessing to that of original sin. Because he opposed his ideas to more traditional ones so directly, and because he was so outspoken, he ran into disciplinary problems with the Holy See and with his order. In 1994 he was accepted into the Episcopal Church by its Bishop of California. The Institute for Culture and Creation Spirituality he founded at Holy Names was the antecedent to its present Sophia Center.
*Humanae Vitae* (1968) of Pope Paul VI and the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. At a time when the environmental community was alarmed enough about overpopulation that some of its most vocal members were advocating not only population control (Ehrlich 1968), but also social Darwinism and neo-Malthusian policies (Hardin 1968; Hardin 1974), the Catholic leadership adopted a policy stance on reproductive issues that only served to deepen the division between the Church and the environmental community.

One promising portent, however, was the continuing work of the National Catholic Rural Life Association. The Rural Life Association was concerned to promote sustainable ways of living off the land, both in terms of sustainable agricultural practices and in terms of viable community life. This approach was reflected in a pastoral letter issued by the seventy-two U.S. Catholic bishops of the Midwest entitled *Strangers and Guests: Community in the Heartland* (Midwestern Catholic Bishops 1980). Drafted by John Hart, who later drafted the Columbia River Pastoral Letter, it dealt with many of the environmental issues faced by rural farmers trying to maintain their livelihood in the face of agribusiness. It included a warning against monoculture and a plea to preserve genetic diversity. It took an approach to environmental issues where social issues were integral, and vice versa. Overall, the pastoral presaged the more socially attuned, humane turn many in the secular environmental movement were eventually to take.

During this period the Catholic leadership in other parts of the world was beginning to address environmental issues, especially threats to the natural environment and their human implications. In 1987 the bishops of the Dominican Republic issued *A Pastoral Letter on the Relationship of Human Beings to Nature* (Dominican Episcopal Conference [1987] 1996) in which they spoke about respect for the land not merely in pragmatic terms, but in religious and moral ones, as well. The next year the bishops of a number of other countries (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines 1988; Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy 1996; Guatemalan Bishops' Conference [1988] 1996) also called attention to environmental issues from a religious
While the way that domestic environmental groups had framed environmental issues often put them at odds with Catholic priorities, on a number of fronts in the Catholic world theologians, bishops, and other leaders continued to forge a constructive link between environmentalism and social welfare. Pope John Paul II himself also began to establish ecological concerns as a priority, and in the end this proved decisive for the American Church. When Lynn White spoke before the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1966, the last line he delivered was: "I propose Francis as a patron saint for ecologists." Apparently John Paul was listening, because in 1979, only the second year of his pontificate, he complied and declared Saint Francis of Assisi the patron of ecology. (John Paul II 1979) Three years later, on the 800th anniversary of the death of Francis he called for a renovation of global consciousness that included a reverence for all life, specifically including respect for animals. ("Pope Urges Respect" 1982). In 1987 he addressed environmental issues in a statement while vacationing in the mountains of northern Italy, and again in his encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* ("On Social Concerns" 1987). Nonetheless, the real turning point came with his address for New Year's Day 1990, "Peace With God the Creator, Peace With All of Creation" (1990; [1990] 1996). This address was his first major statement devoted solely to environmental concerns. In effect, it constituted both a legitimation of environmentalism addressed to those Catholic bishops who remained critical of the movement and a rally to arms for those who had been waiting on the sidelines. And it came at a crucial juncture.

Both for the U.S. Catholic Church and officials at the Holy See, the cause of religious environmentalism was closely correlated with Catholicism's endeavors to work out a new and constructive relationship with other faiths. And the spiritual children of Francis, the gentle saint

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10 For a brief discussion of some of these statements see Hart (2004b:23-30). The documents themselves are available in the appendices of Christiansen and Grazer (1996a).
who had preached to the birds of the air and the caliph in Egypt, were at the center of these endeavors. In 1986 the World Wildlife Fund for Nature\(^\text{11}\) organized a celebration for the 25\(^{th}\) anniversary of its founding, and as its president at the time, His Royal Highness Prince Philip, related in an interview, the organization determined to turn the event into an opportunity to bring religious groups into the campaign for environmental protection: "Those who are already engaged in the business of the conservation of nature appreciate the immensity of the practical problems, but recognize that we must also have the vision and the motive force that can only come from spiritual sources." He added, "In many parts of the world the only person with influence is the local religious leader."\(^\text{12}\) (Drake 1986) Because of Saint Francis's ecological credentials and his appeal beyond Catholicism—indeed beyond Christianity—Assisi was chosen as the site for the World Wildlife Fund's anniversary cum appeal to religious leaders.

Beginning on September 26\(^{th}\) a four-day international conference and retreat for some 1200 people unfolded in Assisi. Representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism were present, and the organizers made a point of noting, "This is the first time that these five religions will get together to focus on one subject at one time."(Suro 1986a) In his opening address to the assembled, Rev. Lanfranco Serrini, OFM Conv., superior general of the Franciscans Minor, affirmed, "We are convinced of the inestimable value of our respective traditions and of what they can offer to re-establish ecological harmony." (Interfaith Partnership for the Environment 2000:8) Each tradition was present because of the contribution it could make from its own vantage. That starting point did not require a prior consensus or acknowledgment of some hegemonic frame. Yet they stood side by side not merely in the name of collaboration in secular affairs in purely secular terms. They were precisely taking the stand that religion had a

\(^{11}\) That is the name of the international organization. Its U.S. affiliate is simply the World Wildlife Fund.

\(^{12}\) Also see his retrospective interview with a staff member of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (Finlay 2004). The Alliance is the formalization of the network of relationships that developed in the wake of this and other WWF interfaith overtures. It remains the primary interfaith coordinating mechanism for environmental issues in the United Kingdom.
distinctive and vital contribution to make to environmental concerns. At the closing ceremony, Serrini added: "No one pretends that our respective beliefs are or can be held in common[.]" Nonetheless, "we do believe that religious concern for the conservation and ecological harmony of the natural world is our common heritage, our birthright and our duty." Then the "carefully choreographed" closing ceremonies included the blowing of the Jewish shofar and Tibetan mountain horns outside the Basilica of St. Francis, then the reading of passages from the New Testament, the Koran and the Bhagavad-Gita inside.\(^\text{13}\) "Wildlife Fund officials said that the Assisi events represented the culmination of a move to reorient the organization." (Suro 1986b) For an organization that counts Julian Huxley as one of its founders, that may indeed be the case.\(^\text{14}\)

The Assisi meeting of the World Wildlife Fund was probably also something of a reorientation for some of the religious leaders in attendance, as well. But in that respect it was a mere prelude for what was to take place the following month. It was exactly a month later, on October 27\(^{th}\), that the Pope himself hosted the first World Day of Prayer for Peace. As previously noted, there 120 religious leaders from around the world, representing a full range of Christian denominations and eleven other faiths (African animists, Amerindian animists, Bahá'ís, Buddhists, Jains, Jews, Hindus, Muslims, Shintoists, Sikhs, and Zoroastrians), once again gathered in Assisi. They went to different palaces, churches, and chapels in the city to conduct their own prayers, then regrouped for a final ceremony in which each group prayed according to its own rights while the others watched respectfully.

The Pope closed the day with some reflections of his own (John Paul II 1986). In the

\(^{13}\) Declarations of the participant faiths of the gathering were later published in by the Interfaith Partnership for the Environment of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in a booklet entitled *Earth and Faith* (2000). In the booklet, declarations from the Bahá'í, Jain, and Sikh faiths were added to those of the original five.

\(^{14}\) Huxley was a convinced humanist. However, it should also be noted that he did supply an introduction to the Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's *The Phenomenon of Man* ([1955] 1959). In that work the author developed a theological framework for evolution. Teilhard de Chardin was someone who served as a bridge between the worlds of faith and science. He was someone Berry sought to emulate.
main, his address assumed a dialogical model of internally grounded pluralism. Thus he affirmed that the impetus for the day's events arose from within his own tradition. "I profess here anew my conviction, shared by all Christians, that in Jesus Christ, as Savior of all, true peace is to be found." (§1) That was his starting point, where he locates himself. It was that conviction which then impelled him to reach out to others: "It is, in fact, my faith conviction which has made me turn to you" (§2) He then acknowledged that there were real differences between all those gathered. This was not an exercise in syncretism: "The form and content of our prayers are very different, as we have seen, and there can be no question of reducing them to a kind of common denominator." (§3) Yet he also searched for what united: conscience, whose imperative directs all to peace; and the truth that peace's "source and realization is to be sought in that Reality beyond all of us." (§4) In these last remarks, though he presumes to speak for the group, his reliance on the Christian notion of God and the natural law tradition is evident. It is perhaps inevitable that when people talk about commonalities between faiths they do so in terms of their own faith, and so introduce an element of internally grounded pluralism as subordination.

These arrangements were supposed to allow for a certain unity in diversity, avoiding the much feared "religious mixing". However, under the heading of "extraordinary cultural encounters" the New York Times was kind enough to report some liturgical faux pas, innocently enough, perhaps: "For example, the Buddhists, led by the Dalai Lama, quickly converted the altar of the Church of San Pietro by placing a small statute of the Buddha atop the tabernacle and setting prayer scrolls and incense burners around it." The tabernacle is where the Eucharist, the body of Christ, is reserved after the celebration of the Catholic Mass. The Times does not report whether it was empty at the time; nonetheless, the idea of using it as a pedestal for the Buddha raised a few eyebrows. Inside sources report other "cultural encounters" perhaps even more "extraordinary." These sources also indicate that after this event the Pope himself was "subject to the remonstrations" of certain unhappy members of the Curia.
Outside the Catholic community, others looking on asserted that their suspicions about ecumenism had been vindicated. Commenting on the gathering at Assisi, one group that describes itself as "a non-denominational, orthodox evangelical Christian group" had this to say: "John Paul II is deceived enough to believe his own anti-Christ leadership can amalgamate with other anti-Christ religions to bring world peace." ("Rome & Ecumenism" 2008) Dave Hunt and T. A. McMahon (1990), two authors who teamed up in the eighties to prevent Bible-believing Christians from being fooled by the seductions of the age (Hunt and McMahon 1985), were more sophisticated observers. Yet they rolled their eyes and warned that such events were part of a papal plot to establish an international, trans-religious empire. The involvement of the United Nations in these machinations, as evidenced by the participation of UNEP's Interfaith Partnership for the Environment in the WWF anniversary celebration, serve as further evidence that this is all linked to a satanic effort to establish world government.15

While Catholic officials were trying to balance tradition and interfaith outreach, in New York, in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, "a church second in size only to St. Peter's in Rome," Cathedral Dean James P. Morton was pursuing an even more ambitious interfaith-and-ecological agenda, to the evident the consternation of some of his congregants. Earlier in the year two Newsweek correspondents (Woodward and Witherspoon 1986) did a feature story on St. John's: "Envisioned by its founding fathers as 'a house of prayer for all people' of the city, St. John's is pursuing that mission with a vengeance." They counted these examples among others: "a thanksgiving service in the sanctuary by Japanese Shinto priests, and biannual dhikrs danced by whirling Muslim Sufis in the cathedral crossing; [as well as] ecological Lenten sermons on 'the passion of the earth'." Indeed, the Cathedral does not simply refresh the spirit of those of other faiths. Self-avowed atheist Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. reported, "I go there often to be refreshed by a

15 Many fundamentalist texts and websites fail to appreciate that there were two different Assisi meetings, and as a result their accounts often merge the events and participants.
sense of a nonsectarian community which has the best interests of the whole planet at heart."
Sociologist Peter Berger sneered these goings-on as "a nervous and guilt-prone search for some way, any way, of socio-cultural survival." However, it must be admitted that Dean Morton was able to bring new life and energy St. John's through an extraordinary array of programs, from the arts to aid for the homeless to spectacular animal pageants on the feast day of Saint Francis (October 4). Some of that energy and vision he attributes to people he encountered early in his term—he was installed in 1972—including Thomas Berry, who used to preach at the Cathedral:

I also met Thomas Berry that same year [1975], so in that period of the early 1970s, my mind got very changed in terms of understanding how one describes the universe. I went through some very serious reconceptualizing of man's relation to the Earth as it had been spelled out in the Judeo-Christian traditions. (AtKisson 1990b)

Dean Morton does not warm the hearts of traditional Christians, who accuse him of plotting with a host of global elites to usher in a New World Order (capitalization required). And in fact there is some truth to that assertion. In addition to his untraditional liturgical tastes, Morton was a board member of the New York-based Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival. This organization has sponsored meetings for different elite groups—scientists, politicians, industrial leaders, religious leaders—to promote creative thinking in order to address some of the challenges that face humanity. And the Global Forum did indeed have a number of United Nations connections. In 1988 a Global Forum was held at Oxford, and in 1990 Mikhail Gorbachev hosted the Global Forum in Moscow. (Tucker 2006:102) The purpose of the Moscow meeting explore the role the news media could play in promoting global survival in the face of ecological and other disasters. Gorbachev also repeated an earlier call for an international emergency task force that could be rushed to the scene of an ecological disaster. (United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 1990) The disaster at Chernobyl had just taken place in 1986.

Dean Morton was himself an organizer of the Moscow Global Forum. (Steinfels 1990)
Paul Gorman, a lieutenant of his at St. Johns, also attended. In 1984 Morton had asked Gorman to serve as Vice President for Advocacy and Public Affairs of the Cathedral. In Moscow he and Gorman were to follow through with a plan they had discussed with Carl Sagan, the astronomer and well-known popularizer of science. At the meeting Gorman worked with Sagan to draft a statement, "Preserving and Cherishing the Earth: An Appeal for Joint Commitment in Science and Religion." (Sagan and others 1990b; Sagan and others 1990a) After reciting a litany of environmental threats, the statement asserts:

Problems of such magnitude, and solutions demanding so broad a perspective, must be recognized from the outset as having a religious as well as a scientific dimension. Mindful of our common responsibility, we scientists, many of us long engaged in combating the environmental crisis, urgently appeal to the world religious community to commit, in word and deed, and as boldly as is required, to preserve the environment of the Earth. (Sagan and others 1990b)

With Sagan's help Morton and Gorman were able to recruit some 22 prominent scientists and Nobel laureates to sign. (Naar 1993) With those who signed after the conference the number grew to 33 (as per the versions cited above). This was all engineered by Morton and Gorman, but from the public side the image of eminent scientists and Nobel laureates—headed by the man who had been nicknamed Sagan the Pagan, no less (Naar 1993:22)—appealing for religious leaders to side with them to address humanities environmental woes struck a responsive chord. "The letter drew enthusiastic response from leaders as varied as Chicago's Joseph Cardinal Bernardin and California televangelist Robert Schuller," according to a retrospective piece in the Chicago Sun-Times (Connell 1992). The task of gathering a response to the appeal from religious leaders around the world was then assigned to five participants of the conference. They represented a variety of religious communities: Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, President Emeritus of Notre Dame University; Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky, President of the National Council of Churches; Elie Wiesel, Nobel laureate; Sheikh Ahmed Kuftaro, Grand Mufti of Syria and Co-chair of Global Forum; and of course, Rev. James Parks Morton, Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine
and Co-chair of Global Forum. Their success was impressive. Some 271 of the most prominent religious leaders from around the world responded in the affirmative to the appeal.

By anybody's reckoning, the people who attend the Global Forum and who participated in this effort hardly constitute some secretive cabal bent on world domination. Almost all were eminent figures, coming from different sectors of society or different societies completely, and having very different interests. However, when certain committed religious figures like Hunt (1998:195-216) put together the pieces they arrive at syncretism and global conspiracy. Of course, people like Morton give them no shortage of material to work with. And events that took place in Washington after the Moscow meeting provided more.

After the founders of NACRE broke away from NACCE (in 1989), NACCE took on a more traditional, evangelical cast. Meanwhile NACRE's founders had big plans. Its president, Rev. Donald Conroy, a former board member of NACCE, helped to plan a conference in connection with the dedication of the National Cathedral in Washington. That conference, the Intercontinental Conference on Caring for the Creation, was co-sponsored by the World Wildlife Fund, and to bring on board non-Christian groups the organizers collaborated with UNEP. Participants included H.R.H. Prince Philip, James Morton, Brian Swimme (a well-known disciple Thomas Berry), Carl Sagan, and Lester Brown (grand patriarch of the think-tank side of environmentalism).

When asked about the participation of emerging groups like Wicca, Conroy argued that they were more than welcome, since as the religion of aboriginal Europe Wicca influenced Christianity as it is. All could work together. The key was to "find out what other traditions are in your bioregion and how they connect with these values [of your own tradition]." (AtKisson 1990a)

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16 Kearns (1996:58-60) points to its theological traditionalism and the evangelical ring to its slogans, such as "to be saved means saving the creation."

17 As an aside, it should be noted that whereas Morton had to import elements of creation and other faiths into his medieval gothic edifice, the National Cathedral is famous for having them built into its very stone and stained glass structure. One window has an exhibit of Apollo 11 and an actual rock from the moon.
That utterance was classic Thomas Berry. Let the bioregion we share be the starting point for our integration. We are one "in the cosmos." Also classic Berry was the overall integrative approach of the conference:

It will have what I call an "eco-three" structure: ecologists, economists and ecumenists. The root word of all three "ecos" is the Greek word, "oikos," meaning "the household"—so it refers to the household of nature, the human household, and the household of faith. (AtKisson 1990a)

The insight was brilliant. And the vision for integration was an attractive one, especially in a social world that suffers from pervasive compartmentalization. This all made tremendous sense to Conroy. However, in the end, the approach the Washington conference represented was the route not taken. Ironically, while the stratagem that Morton and Gorman set in motion at Moscow came to fruition more successfully than they could have anticipated, it did so along lines that repudiated the eclectic approach to human faith that Morton had nurtured at St. John the Divine.

As the committee from the Global Forum gathered signatures, Paul Gorman took up a new position as executive director of a new entity, the Joint Appeal of Religion and Science for the Environment. Later in the year the Joint Appeal invited then Senator Al Gore to a breakfast symposium. The Senator also preached before the congregation. (Naar 1993:27) He went on to become one of the most important supporters of the efforts of Gorman and Morton. In October Gore and several other Senators arranged a Congressional breakfast involving the religious leaders, politicians, and other key players in order to promote and expand the Joint Appeal. On June 2–3, 1991 Morton arranged for religious leaders in the Joint Appeal to be briefed by the scientists. At this meeting the religious leaders made the commitment to explore how their respective faith communities could support a formal, institutionalized commitment to environmental concerns. Representatives of eleven major U.S. environmental organizations were present and endorsed their involvement. (Christiansen and Grazer 1996b:4; Naar 1993:27-28)

Finally, in May of 1992 the Joint Appeal convened again in Washington, and the
religious involvement had coalesced around four major religious constituencies: Jews, mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, and Catholics. The delegation from each constituency included senior leadership. They came prepared to do business. A commitment to work together for three years beginning in the summer of 1993 was hammered out. Some $5 million was to be raised to fund this commitment. The coalition was to be called the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (NRPE). (Christiansen and Grazer 1996b:4; Naar 1993:27-28) Funding was secured from (among other sources) the Pew Charitable Trusts, Stephen C. Rockefeller, the Turner Foundation, the W. Alton Jones Foundation and the New World Foundation. The NRPE was formally launched in September of 1993. Dignitaries included Chancellor Ismar Schorsch of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio representing the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB); Reverend W. Franklyn Richardson, general secretary of the National Baptist Convention; and leaders from the National Association of Evangelicals, World Vision, Sojourners, the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, and the Au Sable Institute, representing American evangelicals. Dean Morton and Carl Sagan were also present. Events included a high profile press conference hosted by then Vice President Gore. (Anderson 1993; Naar 1993:27-28)

In the end, the partnership proved so successful, and the task before the members so daunting, that its original three-year term was extended, then re-extended. As of this writing the NRPE continues in existence. Nonetheless, it is crucial to note the terms of its underlying arrangement. The NRPE was to remain a coordinating mechanism, allowing contact and communication, as well as joint fund-raising. But the program (outreach to constituents, policy decisions, any stance that represented the religious groups involved) was to be carried out by the member organizations that represented the four religious constituencies: the Consultation On the Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL), the National Council of Churches (NCC), the Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN), and the U.S. Catholic Conference (USCC).
It is also crucial to note the differences in how the story of the NRPE is told. Morton speaks of his three years of work to get the Joint Appeal off the ground. When he approached the other religious communities, "Initially their response was one of benign indifference." (Naar 1993:27) In order to spark interest, Morton tried a number of approaches. Apparently, the Moscow stratagem was not the first. For example, it was preceded by an appeal to religious leaders from UNEP. (Brown 1990) Yet it may not be that other religious leaders were impervious to environmentalism per se—Cal DeWitt had been doing serious pro-environmental work in education, networking, and theological reflection among evangelicals since the late seventies—Rather, it may have been the source of the appeal to collaborate that left them hesitant.

In this regard, it is also interesting to note how the religious communities tell the story. While the EEN was formed in August of 1993, just prior to the September launch date of the NRPE, DeWitt discusses its genesis as an American initiative undertaken in response to the creation of the International Evangelical Environmental Network (IEEN): "The IEEN, formed well before the launch of the U.S. activity, led to formation of the EEN in America." (DeWitt 2006:80, emphasis added) In his entire discussion there is nary a syllable about the NRPE.18 Walt Grazer and Drew Christiansen, who staffed the Environmental Justice Program for the U.S. Catholic bishops, emphasize that "the USCC's own environmental efforts were gaining focus and strength in the late 1980s and early 1990s." Then they add that "the Conference also joined the interfaith and ecumenical effort known as the National Religious Partnership for the Environment." (Christiansen and Grazer 1996b:3, emphasis added) There is no mention of the Moscow meeting or the Joint Appeal. Instead a footnote cites the NRPE staff as the source for this information and thereby defers further discussion of it. DeWitt, Christiansen, and Grazer clearly avoided portraying the environmental initiatives of their respective faith communities as

18 This is one of those rare situations where you can put the word "nary" to good use.
the result of an effort started elsewhere, and presumably they were anxious not to have those initiatives portrayed as an outgrowth of the goings-on at St. John the Divine.

Instead, each member constituency of the NRPE stresses the way in which its efforts are consonant with and grew out of its own activity and tradition. Certainly, for the evangelicals there is plenty of precedent. On the Catholic, as noted, the layer of precedent was thinner. Prior to these developments, Charles Murphy, a priest in the Boston Archdiocese and former rector of the North American College in Rome, had published *At Home on Earth: Foundations for a Catholic Ethic of the Environment* (1989). Also in the late eighties, the Domestic Policy Committee of the bishops' conference decided to take up a number of environmental questions, prompted by Cardinal Mahony, the Archbishop of Los Angeles. "Independently, one day at a meeting he said, 'I think we need to start attending to the question of the environment.'" The USCC staff then organized a consultation involving former EPA head William Reilly, Ambassador Richard Benedict (who helped negotiate the Montreal Protocol, the "ozone treaty"), Msgr. Murphy, Thomas Berry, and perhaps Lois Gibbs. "That was probably in 1989." (Grazer 2002a) Then in 1990 John Paul II did make his environmental address, not as weighty as a full-blown encyclical, but significant nonetheless. In the wake of that address and the urging of some of their own, such as Cardinal Mahony, the U.S. bishops committed to addressing environmental concerns. The next year they issued *Renewing the Earth* (1991), a pastoral on Christian environmental

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19 In a separate interview Drew Christiansen (2002) confirmed that Mahony's leadership was in fact crucial for winning support for work on environmentalism at the Conference. At the time, pressures from both the "right" and the "left" tended to squeeze environmentalism from the USCC's agenda. When those on the Catholic right outside the Conference would critique its involvements for lack of discrimination, one tongue-in-cheek defense was that at least they had not taken up the environment. At the same time, internally, the director of the social policy desk, who was no social conservative, did not view environmentalism as a serious issue. Instead he thought it would detract from the social justice priorities he had set. "The staff resisted, but at the same time Mahoney was the chair of the Policy Committee."

20 Since that statement, the Holy See has deepened its commitment to environmental issues. In 2002 the Pope issued a joint statement on ecology and justice with the Ecumenical Patriarch (the Orthodox patriarch of Constantinople), Bartholomew I, (John Paul II and Bartholomew I 2002) who himself is known as "the Green Patriarch" for his commitment to environmental concerns (Bartholomew I and Chryssavgis 2003). The Holy See has also published two volumes of papal statements on environmental issues (see Keenan 2000; and Keenan 2002).
responsibility. The pastoral's subtitle, "An Invitation to Reflection and Action on the Environment in Light of Catholic Social Teaching," indicates that—given the ongoing controversy over the compatibility between Catholicism and the way contemporary environmentalism was framed—the bishops wrote to root their brand of environmentalism solidly in the tradition.

Gorman clearly understood the importance of allowing each faith community its own voice. The idea of bringing religious communities together to form a common position had not worked, instead leading to the break between NACCE and NACRE. Thomas Berry and his disciples would supply a grand metanarrative allotting each tradition a place in some larger scheme. But in the end, that metanarrative—which has been designated "The New Story" (Berry 1987), then later "The Universe Story" (Swimme and Berry 1992)—had no appeal to most religious groups. Yet those groups were able to find a way to work together without either adopting a common position or being corralled under a larger metanarrative. Together they pursued a different strategy. In a 1995 interview Gorman put it this way:

The Partnership decided…"to be ourselves together. Each group would prepare its own educational materials to answer the question, for example, 'What would a distinctly Catholic environmentalism look like?'" (Johnson 1995:35)

When I spoke with Walt Grazer (2002a; 2002b), he was enthusiastic about the NRPE. He praised Paul Gorman for his sensitive but effective ability to animate and coordinate around the issues. However, he then stressed that each member constituency of the Partnership crafted its own message and pursued its own agenda as it saw fit. Again, as he put it, "We walk together, separately."

Precisely in order to develop a distinctive Catholic contribution to religious environmentalism, Grazer's office sponsored a series of leadership conferences. These conferences brought together clergy, others involved in pastoral work, academics, and church officials. Their purpose was both to bridge the gap between the academy and the institutional church, and to stimulate writing on environmental issues from the perspective of Catholic
tradition and social teaching. One early result of his efforts was "And God Saw That It Was Good", (1996a), an anthology Grazer helped to edit.

Yet the ghost of Dean Morton continued to hover over the Partnership. No matter how members stressed that their environmental work essentially reflected the religious vision, initiative, and theology of their own tradition, a few vocal detractors opposed to their efforts. They repeatedly raised the specter of syncretism, "world religion," "world government," and "enviro-paganism." In this scenario sinister elites attempting to foist their neo-liberal agenda on an unsuspecting America include not only Al Gore, John Paul II, and Maurice Strong (former director of UNEP and chair of the Rio Summit), but also the likes of the Dalai Lama, Jawaharlal Nehru, and, of course, Eleanor Roosevelt. (For example, see the following online "report": Lamb 1996.) Certainly, Dave Hunt writes from a convinced Christian perspective. But other motives enter in. The report by Henry Lamb, parenthetically cited above, is sponsored by the Environmental Conservation Organization, which is a Tennessee-based property-rights group, according to The Washington Times (McCain 2002). For some detractors the enviro-pagan epithet is a convenient ploy for undermining religious support for environmental causes they find inconvenient for other reasons.

One organization waiving the charge of heterodoxy was the Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES), a faith-based initiative formed in 2000 (Clark 2001; Larsen 2001:312-321). The ICES disagreed with the polices of the Partnership and most mainstream environmental organizations. It also disagreed with the way members of the Partnership interpreted the faith as a call to back these policies. On their homepage in 2004 they wrote,

These advocates are passionate about the environment. Unfortunately, their passion is often based on a romantic view of nature, a misguided distrust of science and technology, and an intense focus on problems that are highly speculative and largely irrelevant to meeting our obligations to the world’s poor. (Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES) 2004)

In 2000 the ICES sent a letter out to the member congregations of constituencies of the
Partnership, charging that it was seeking "to redefine traditional Judeo-Christian teachings on stewardship and, ultimately, our duties as responsible human beings" and to "supplement Judeo-Christian teaching with the theologies that frequently portray the earth as our mother." (Hill et al. 2000, cited in Larsen 2001:350-52) One of the leaders of the ICES, and a signatory to the letter, was Rev. Robert Sirico, a Catholic priest and director of the Acton Institute, known for backing a free-market, neo-conservative approach to social issues. Others have credentials as known religious conservatives. In response, Jim Ball, then director of the EEN, wrote a five-page letter to his constituents rebutting the charges and rehearsing the orthodox evangelical credentials of their efforts. (See the text in Larsen 2001:353-357.) The length of his rebuttal underscores the seriousness with which he took the charge.

In all this, two things should be note. First, in the public relations struggle waged at the time between the NRPE and ICES, both sides agreed that faith had a bearing on public policy. They just differed over the wisdom of certain policies and how well they represented the faith. Second, both sides also agreed on interfaith cooperation. Both organizations were interfaith coalitions. And finally, both sides agreed that fidelity to their traditions respective traditions was essential. That position then shifted the onus back to members of each faith community to work out how to combine interfaith cooperation and commitment to tradition. That would depend upon the history, resources, and circumstances of each tradition. In the post-Vatican II era American Catholics were operating under very different circumstances than early in the century, and the Council had provided them a new set of resources and precedents.

C. Pluralism in Contemporary Catholic Culture

Orbis Press is one of the most prominent Catholic publishing houses in the United States today. Many of the works it publishes are directed at a popular audience, but some of its series showcase ground-breaking works written by leaders in their respective fields, most often
theologians, ethicists, and engaged scholars writing about areas of social concern. Books in these series are read by educated lay people and in academic circles, both Catholic and non-Catholic. 21

Orbis is particularly well-known for its publications introducing Americans to liberation theology, the forms that Christian faith takes in non-Western societies, and the encounter between Christian and non-Christian traditions. One notable series it publishes is "Faith Meets Faith." In the cover leaf of the books in the series, Faith Meets Faith is described as "an open forum for exchanges" which "seeks to foster an encounter among followers of the religions of the world on matters of common concern." Although "rooted in a Christian theological perspective," it recognizes "the multiplicity of basic perspectives concerning the methods and content of interreligious dialogue" and does not endorse any single school or approach.

Many works which Orbis publishes specifically challenge Christian exclusivism. Recent publications in this vein include such titles as Many Mansions? : Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity (Cornille 2002), The Concept of God in Global Dialogue (Jeanrond and Lande 2005), and The Myth of Religious Superiority: Multifaith Explorations of Religious Pluralism (Knitter 2005). Other Orbis publications introduce readers to non-Christian perspectives on Christianity or interchanges on controversial topics involving representatives of non-Christian faiths. Such titles as Experiencing Scripture in World Religions (Coward 2000a), in which scholars representing six faith traditions introduce their respective religious texts, and Experiencing Buddhism: Ways Of Wisdom and Compassion (Habito 2005), in which a scholar and Zen practitioner presents Zen in existential as well as intellectual terms, provide the opportunity for other faiths to represent themselves in their own voice.

Prior to the 1960s, when Catholic theologians wrote about those outside their ecclesial community, they did reflect on how God might be at work in the heart of individuals who were

21 In the discussion of Orbis which follows I draw on an interview granted me by Susan Perry, Senior Editor at Orbis (2004). I also make use of books, materials, and other documents she gave me, and matter from Orbis's website.
not Christian, but they rarely reflected in any systematic way on how the God might be present in non-Christian traditions.\textsuperscript{22} As a result, there was certainly no line of publications anywhere in the Catholic world comparable to what Orbis publishes in America today. Orbis publishes primarily for a constituency that only arose within the American Catholic Church in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, a segment of the Catholic population that welcomed and promoted the reforms that the Council introduced into Catholic life.

Not only was the emergence of this constituency favoring religious dialogue a noteworthy development. Just as remarkable is the institutional setting of Orbis Press. Orbis is the publishing imprint of Maryknoll, more formally known as the Catholic Foreign Mission Society of America. Founded in 1911 as a joint effort of the Bishops of the United States "to recruit, send and support U.S. missioners in areas around the world," (Maryknoll 2006) Maryknoll has long been one of the premier channels for the American Church to participate in Catholic efforts to evangelize the world. However, in 1970, when Orbis was formally established, the Vatican Council reforms and over half a century of missionary experience were incorporated into the self-understanding of the publishing house. Social justice and sensitivity to the cultural and spiritual values of people beyond the bounds of European-inspired Catholicism became explicit themes in Orbis's efforts.

At the same time, Orbis remains firmly rooted in the Catholic tradition. Other publications of Orbis, such as its collections of spiritual reading for the Catholic liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent, present clearly Catholic spiritual resources and religious views. Orbis is a Catholic publishing house whose current understanding of mission and evangelization unites a

\textsuperscript{22} Karl Rahner, arguably one of the most important Catholic theologians of the twentieth century, occupied the liberal end of the spectrum of reflection on this topic for his generation. He proposed that non-Christian religions could be a means of salvation when and if they inculcated an existential orientation in the individual that was implicitly Christian. In other words, whatever truth and salvation they mediated was true and salvific only insofar as these reflected that which was fully manifest and explicit in Christianity. (Rahner 1979; Rahner 1983; Rahner [1966] 1969a; Rahner [1966] 1969b; Rahner [1973] 1977) Even Rahner did not argue for the independent value of non-Christian traditions in their own right.
witness to the values of the Catholic faith in the modern world with a deliberate effort to foster a mutually-enhancing dialogue with other faiths.

Orbis has also been at the forefront of efforts to introduce an ecological dimension into Catholic and Christian thought. In 1990 it published *The Greening of the Church* by an Australian priest, Sean McDonough. McDonough became sensitized to environmental issues while working in the Philippines, so much so that he ultimately helped to draft a pastoral letter on environmental issues on behalf of the Filipino Catholic bishops. The next year Orbis published an anthology *Covenant for a New Creation* (Robb and Casebolt 1991) which linked ecological theology with questions of ethics and public policy. Since 1991 it has published at least four books by American-trained theologian Denis Edwards, all developing the ecological implications of traditional Christian themes such as Christology and wisdom theology (see Edwards 1991; 1995; 2001; 2006). Another work fostering Catholic ecotheology is LaChance & Carroll's *Embracing Earth: Catholic Approaches to Ecology* (1994). David Toolan's *At Home in the Cosmos* (2001) brings together perspectives from science and Catholic theology in service to an environmental ethic. The more recent *The Holy Web: Church and the New Universe Story* (2000) and *Jesus in the New Universe Story* (2003) by Cletus Wessels rank among a number of Orbis publications which stretch Christian theology in light of the cosmology of Thomas Berry. Many of these works display a theology that, understandably, stresses the encounter with the Divine within creation; as a result, they have a decidedly "immanentist" tenor, one that runs counter to the emphasis on the transcendence of the Divine usually stressed by traditionalists.

Orbis's engagement with pluralism is also reflected in the works it publishes on ecology. Some of this pluralism reflects the diversity within the greater Catholic Church. *Rio Maria: Song of the Earth* (Figueira and Adriance 1994) treats environmental issues from a Brazilian theological perspective, while *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North* (Hallman 1994) brings authors from the industrialized world and the developing world into dialogue. The editors at
Orbis have been at pains to highlight voices frequently under-represented in American society, particularly those of the poor, women, non-Europeans, and people in developing nations. In the mid-nineties they published two books by the controversial Brazilian liberation theologian Leonardo Boff (1995; 1997) which linked the exploitation of the Earth with the plight of the poor. The anthology *Women Healing Earth* (1996) by Catholic feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Reuther is notable because in addition to linking ecotheology to women’s perspectives, it brings together representatives of a range of religious traditions. That latter dimension is present in an increasing number of Orbis publications on environmental issues since the mid-nineties. Of particular note are *Worldviews and Ecology* (Tucker and Grim 1994), which explores the ecological resources of a range of faiths and postmodern perspectives, and *Fugitive Faith* (Webb 1998), a series of interviews with an ecumenical range of contemporary American thinker-activists who address community and environmental issues from a faith perspective. James Martin-Schramm and Robert Stivers's *Christian Environmental Ethics* (2003) and Larry Rasmussen's *Earth Community, Earth Ethics* (1996) are important works by noted Protestant environmental ethicists. Finally, Jace Weaver's *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice* (1996) and Martinus L. Daneel's *African Earthkeepers: Wholistic [sic] Interfaith Mission* (2001) are examples of works introducing readers to non-Christian ecologically oriented theology.

While the foregoing series of titles and themes may be a bit dizzying to take in, it serves as a snapshot of the issues and concerns that occupy a small but influential constituency in the post-Vatican II American Church. This audience is actively engaged in the issues of a changing

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23 The editors of this volume, Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, also went on to organize a series of ten conferences through the Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions. These conferences each produced a major volume on ecological resources in a major faith tradition of the world. A standing institute, the Harvard Forum on Religion and Ecology, also grew out of this effort. Its goal is to "set the establishment of religion and ecology as an academic area of study and research in universities, colleges, seminaries, and other religiously affiliated institutions" (Forum on Religion and Ecology (FORE) 2000).
world and is willing to entertain a wide diversity of viewpoints. Thus Orbis's publications highlight adaptation and the development of new theological approaches: The Church is (or should be) greening; there is a new story of the universe (cosmic and biological evolution) with which theology must come to grips; there are more voices to be heard than the traditional coterie; and even the tradition itself should be treated more as a conversation than a soliloquy ("Catholic Approaches to Ecology"). These works also stress the social justice dimensions of Catholic social teaching, which in general seems to resonate with the orientation of those Catholics who are more prepared to "recontextualize" traditional teaching in light of pressing social realities.

Catholic colleges and university have long played a central role in the life of the American Catholicism. And like many other institutional settings in the Catholic Church, they underwent far-reaching changes in the wake of Vatican II. Most now serve a far more religiously diverse student body that before the Council.

In the Pacific Northwest one major Catholic university is Seattle University, an institution that describes itself as "a Jesuit Catholic university located on 48 acres on Seattle's Capitol Hill". (Seattle University 2006b) The institutional roots of the university date to 1890, when Father Leopold Van Gorp, procurator of the Rocky Mountain Mission of the Society of Jesus, made a down payment on the present site of the campus. At the time, the Jesuits were responding to an appeal of Aegidius Junger, Bishop of Nesqually (a settlement south of Seattle and then seat of the local diocese) to establish an institute for Catholic boys (Cronin 1982: 10-12, 15-16; Crowley 1991: 22-24). The idea was to provide an environment which would reinforce specifically Catholic tradition, values, and identity in a part of the United States where Catholics were a distinct minority. And indeed, in the decade or so since it has celebrated its centenary, Seattle University has made deliberate efforts to reaffirm its distinctive Jesuit and Catholic identity. These efforts include establishing what has come to be a Division of Mission and Ministry headed by a university vice president, providing for an expanded chaplaincy program,
and offering faculty opportunities to deepen both their own spirituality and their understanding of the university's Catholic and Jesuit heritage.24

However, while the founding Jesuits of Seattle University saw themselves as shoring up Catholicism in a sometimes hostile environment, at the present time, the Jesuits and their colleagues at Seattle University do not conceive of their efforts in quite the same way. That is not to say that they do not occasionally encounter suspicion from the religiously unaffiliated and religiously inspired antagonism from conservative Christian and other groups in the region. Nonetheless, in the milieu they foster on campus, they do not present Catholic tradition or Jesuit spirituality as being at odds with other traditions. That is, they do not conceive of their religious heritage in competitive or exclusivist terms.

Acknowledging that perhaps half of the university community is not Catholic, the university mission statement affirms that "we provide all members of the university community the means to deepen the understanding of their faith; and we identify ourselves as a university that welcomes and promotes free dialogue among persons of diverse religious and intellectual traditions." (Seattle University 2006c) This Jesuit Catholic university in fact boasts a School of Theology and Ministry that prepares lay and ordained ministers representing two regional ministerial associations and ten non-Catholic denominations. Its campus ministry staff includes both a full-time ecumenical and multifaith minister and a director of retreats who is an ordained Protestant minister. The school's Ecumenical & Multifaith Ministry webpage (Seattle University 2006a) notes that "Roman Catholic elements and programs are clearly identified as such". More generally, the school's rhetoric and institutional arrangements simultaneously affirm Catholicism and support a social milieu in which it is clearly one faith tradition in dialogue with others. I

24 In the following discussion I draw on interviews conducted with Professor Loretta Jancoski, Dean Emerita of Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry, and Rev. Patrick O'Leary, SJ, Chaplain for Faculty and Staff and the person who guided the institutional development of Seattle University's Mission and Ministry Division in its initial stages.
interviewed both Catholic and non-Catholic students on the campus. Admittedly, those who were willing to talk with me were quite enthusiastic about their experience at Seattle University. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that they were consistent in stating that Seattle University enabled them to challenge and broaden the religious horizons they brought to campus.

Gary Chamberlain is a professor of Theology and Religious Studies at Seattle University. As a faculty member on the committee which oversees the university's interdisciplinary Environmental Studies program, he teaches one of its required courses, "Religion and Ecology." The course has a number of components. Chamberlain begins with an exploration of the resources for an ecological ethic found in the major religious traditions of the world. In the latter part of the course he then offers critical reflections on Western Christianity and Western science, and he looks at both the debates and the fruitful dialogue which have taken place between the two. Though he devotes considerable attention to the way Christianity engages the Western scientific tradition and contemporary environmentalism, Chamberlain takes other faith traditions quite seriously. He argues that he makes use of the example of Christianity to open his students' eyes to the way any serious, longstanding tradition grapples with questions before the community. He hopes that as a result, those whose parents come from an Asian Buddhist background, for example, might then draw on the material presented in the first part of the course and thus better appreciate that Buddhism does indeed have something to say them in contemporary America. In this way, he has endeavored to design a course in which Catholic students, students from other Christian traditions, and students of non-Christian traditions can all grow in their appreciation of the religious dimension of environmental issues. And he hopes they will come to appreciate the particular contributions their respective traditions can make in grappling with those issues.\(^{25}\)

\(^{25}\) Professor Chamberlain shared these thoughts with this author during an interview conducted at Seattle University in October of 2004. The author has also drawn on the course syllabus and other materials which Professor Chamberlain provided, the Seattle University course catalogue, materials posted on the university website, and interviews with several of Professor Chamberlain's colleagues.
Gary Chamberlain's course is a concrete example of Catholic pluralism in the context of environmentalism. His public is a diverse one, including students from a range of religious backgrounds and many who are unaffiliated. The context is an academic one. Chamberlain does not promote a particular religious tradition, nor does he grade students on the basis of their religious sensibilities. At the same time, he does not treat religion as merely "academic"; clearly it is a matter of consequence. Chamberlain presents religious questions as worthy of consideration, and the material he supplies allows students to explore their own religious questions, as well.

Other faculty in the Seattle University community, both in the environmental studies program and beyond, cite Gary Chamberlain's course as exemplifying the values and the ideal of education the school seeks to promote. While he probes contemporary Christian, especially Catholic, theology, that focus is neither exclusive nor exclusivist. Rather, in "Religion and Ecology" Catholicism serves as a resource for a diverse student body.

Yvonne Smith makes her home in the territory of the Yakima Nation, in inland Washington State on "the other side" of the Cascade Range from Seattle University. She herself is a Yakima. Smith is also a very active member of the Catholic community, both at the local and at the state level.

As a member of the Kateri circle Smith explores ways of bringing Indian spirituality into "our Catholic ceremonies." She and others do traditional water blessings, smudge, and wear Indian garb. These innovations were prompted by the training Smith received through Northwest Kateri Ministry Training. The relevant workshops were sponsored by the Northwest Province of the Jesuits in collaboration with the local Catholic diocese; they were held at nearby Heritage College (now Heritage University). By way of legitimating this effort and emphasizing its value, Smith cites it as an example of "inculturation", a prominent theme in contemporary American Catholic theological discussions. It is clear that the practices of this group go beyond merely dressing Catholic worship in Native attire. The members of the Kateri Circle do not undertakes
their efforts simply to make the spiritual life of Catholicism palatable to a non-European American audience. Rather, they are committed Catholics who incorporate native spiritual traditions into their common worship because they understand these traditions to be good, true, and beautiful. Moreover, they do not believe that Catholic and Native traditions are mutually exclusive. As Smith notes, "Native spirituality in the Longhouse tradition and Catholicism go well, very well, together." In the life of the Kateri Circle themes of inculturation and interfaith dialogue debated in Catholic theological circles take concrete shape.

Smith was also encouraged to make the connection between Catholic and Native spirituality in another context. Smith represents her diocese at the board meetings of the Washington State Catholic Conference. When plans for a pastoral letter addressing proper stewardship of the Columbia River were raised at the Conference, Smith was determined to serve on its steering committee. The Columbia is integral to the economic, cultural, and ecological life of the entire region, and that is especially true for the Yakima Nation. Smith remembers thinking, "I'm going to be on the steering committee for this because that is my river." She explains that her people are very possessive of their water rights. Not only is water essential for farming; salmon come from the Columbia, and "salmon is the food of the Yakima nation". The Yakima take their sovereignty seriously, and many maintain that their treaty rights are frequently violated. In particular, water is a contentious issue. So at first, the impetus to get involved was practical. Smith wanted to make sure that the Native American point of view was represented and Native rights were respected.

Then as plans for the project unfolded, the biblical theme of stewardship, of being caretakers of the land, struck a deeper chord. For Smith, it resonated with the Native American understanding that the Creator had graciously located the River there for their use, not as an

26 The Washington State Catholic Conference is the local analogue of the U.S Catholic Conference. It is a standing organization which serves as the joint policy and advocacy arm of the three Catholic dioceses of Washington State (the Diocese of Yakima, the Diocese of Spokane, and the Archdiocese of Seattle).
object to be taken and possessed. Smith adds, "I never really thought of the Columbia River as a
spiritual thing, or water as spiritual thing, except at baptism, myself…until the bishops and people
kept using the term 'living water'. Because that's the term we use for water at baptism and
confirmation." When the people involved in drafting the Columbia River Pastoral Letter used
these images to get at the sacredness of the Columbia, Smith recalled the Yakima tradition of
using water in blessings. Then she realized, "That's right, that's living water, whether it's the
Columbia River or it's holy water. It has that same connectedness of bringing things together.
And I thought, that's good—this pastoral letter is going to make an impact." Thus through her
participation in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project of the Catholic Bishops of the Pacific
Northwest, Yvonne Smith was encouraged to deepen her appreciation of the sacramental
dimension the Columbia River, and of water itself, in Yakima tradition. She also gained deeper
insight into the religious dimension of the Native understating of stewardship. As she became
more involved in Catholic environmentalism, Scripture and Catholic tradition also helped her to
engage the spiritual resources for ecology of her own people, the Yakima.

I visited Orbis Press, Seattle University, and the Yakima Nation in the course of my
research on religious environmentalism. These three widely dispersed sites illustrate some of the
ways in which internally grounded pluralism has taken root in a range of American Catholic
settings since the 1960s. At each site this reorientation and openness to other faiths was shaped by
a unique institutional context, set of actors, and audience. These sites do not exemplify pluralism
in exactly the same way. Nonetheless, they clearly reflect a analogous developments of
persuasive depth and breadth. Pluralism is evident not only in high-profile public statements and
in-depth theological reflection among elites, it has found its way into the practical details of many
Catholic settings. And it is reflected in how environmental issues are treated there, as well. The
way environmental issues were treated in each of these settings clearly reflected the expectation
that this treatment took place before a mixed public, one including both Catholics and non-
Catholics. The next part of this study picks up with collaborative effort that led to the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, the effort in which Yvonne Smith determined to take part.

D. The Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project

The Environmental Justice Program of the USCC was born in the context of interfaith collaboration, but such collaboration as respected the members own traditions. It even encouraged them to deepen their engagement with those traditions. However, that is not to say that collaboration among the member constituencies was a mere formalism.

While each group had been doing something, none had a tremendous track record. It was a unique partnership. I've never seen anything work like that ecumenically in my life. It was terribly enriching. I mean, it was fun to be a part of, to work with these colleagues in these different communities...And it was remarkable Paul was able to organize us, keep us focused. His vision and charisma was a rallying point. (Grazer 2002a)

That collaboration was especially important during the early days of the NRPE. Far from weighing down the members, more than a necessary burden for fundraising and publicity purposes, the Partnership was a source of energy. It was enriching. It was synergistic.27

According to the terms of the Partnership, each constituency received an equal amount of the funding, and each was free to design its own activities. With that funding, the Environmental Justice Program was set up, and the position of its full-time director, to which Grazer was assigned, was covered.28 Grazer and his colleagues divided the work of the program into four areas: 1) public policy, 2) education, 3) leadership development, and 4) grants for local projects.

27 This cooperation continues. During our interview Grazer cited an upcoming scholars conference he would host in the fall in Minnesota. There delegates from the other constituencies served as participants and resources people. "Among the participants in the Owatonna meeting were Rabbi Irving Greenberg, president of Jewish Life Network; Ronald J. Sider, a theology professor at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary and president of Evangelicals for Social Action; and the Rev. H. Paul Santmire, a theologian, writer and former pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." (Filteau 2004)

28 As of the time of our interview that was no longer the case. Grazer's position was again covered by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). As an aside, in 2001 the Catholic national organize was again reorganized, and as a result the NCCB and the USCC were combined into the USCCB.
In this respect, the Environmental Justice Program was something of an exception at the USCC, which usually confines its efforts to policy work. The exception was made because of the unusual circumstances of the Partnership and its funding, and the perceived need to get up to speed on environmental concerns—Grazer called it "affirmative action."

On the policy side, his office put out a statement on climate change (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) 2001), a four-year effort, and complex one at that. At the same time, not all the efforts of his office resulted in published statements. For example, in the 1990s a push came to resist environmental regulation in the name of the Fifth Amendment, which specifies, "nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation." The issue was cast in terms of property rights. His office arranged for a position paper on the issue, one that both the Constitutional law involved and the notion of the common good in Catholic social teaching. The White House asked for a copy of the paper, and it was passed along to Senator Bob Dole, then the Majority Leader, and it seems to have been instrumental in getting pending legislation dropped. (Christiansen 2002; Grazer 2004b) His office is often asked to prepare testimony for such consultations or more formal appearances before Congressional committees.

Under education, the Environmental Justice Program developed basic materials—videos, resource kits, articles—that could be of use to parish groups seeking to develop a local program. It staff tried to produce materials that would have a long shelf-life because of the cost involved and because they did not anticipate being able to keep up producing them. In terms of leadership development, Grazer pursued several courses. As noted earlier, one was a series of scholars conferences (six as of the last time we spoke) to prompt Catholics academics to take up environmental themes. He also organized regional retreats for diocesan staff to come together to learn and pray about the call to Christian environmental responsibility. These efforts were quite successful. Most who attended remained involved with his office. In order to keep in touch, for
diocesan staff he also hosts an annual advisory meeting on environmental issues. This takes place in the context of the annual conference for diocesan social action directors. The conference draws four to five hundred overall; about thirty usually attend the environmental justice gathering.

In pursuing these activities, Grazer emphasized the centrality of two guiding principles. First, the thrust was to go local, in the sense of fostering responsibility and leadership at the local level. The Conference itself had no mandate to pass over the heads of diocesan staff and run programs at the parish level. Second, Grazer emphasized the necessity of integrating an environmental thrust into the existing structure and activities of the Church, not to create more structures. Peripheral structures and staff would be most vulnerable to fluctuations in funding, so to bank environmentalism on them could be self-defeating. Beyond that, to assign environmentalism as the responsibility of some ad hoc committee would be to absolve everyone else; rather, it should be everyone's responsibility.

The grants program his office developed began with awards for projects in the $500 to $1500 range. Grazer's office was flooded with proposals, so they tried to select those that represented a range of issues and geographic areas, projects that could then serve as models. They also took into account considerations of economic justice. In all, the Environmental Justice Program made roughly 150 such grants. Later, in what became the preferred approach, the staff decided to fund projects at the diocesan level. Grants for those projects ran in the $4,000 to $6,000 range and were more competitive. For that reason, the staff actually worked with prospective applicants to help them develop a strong proposal. One example was an upcoming multi-diocesan conference to be held in New Jersey. There were also several regional pastoral letters. The bishops of New Mexico wrote about environmental responsibility, then focused in on the environmental woes of their region. (New Mexico Catholic Bishops 1998) The bishops of

29 For a list of representative projects see Hart (2004b:132-133).
New England also issued a statement outlining some general principles, then citing local concerns. (Boston Province Catholic Bishops 2000a; also available in 2000b) And in the Pacific Northwest the bishops and their colleagues undertook the multi-year consultative process that resulted in the publication of *The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good–An International Pastoral Letter by the Bishops of the Region.*30 (Columbia River Watershed Catholic Bishops 2001b; also available in 2001a:609-619) Grazer spoke especially highly of that endeavor, adding, "In whatever you write, the Columbia River Pastoral Letter should at least be a chapter." In a somewhat more limit space I will attempt to give it its due.

In order to appreciate the social meaning of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, some preliminary appreciation of the context in which it unfolded is helpful. The Pacific Northwest has a distinctive religious ethos. Sparsely populated, it is a land of snow-capped mountain ranges, glacier-gilt volcanoes, a mighty river, and fecund coasts and bays. Residents of the region constantly refer to nature as a significant dimension of their experience. At the same time, it is a region where traditional religious affiliation ranks lowest in America. Because more people check "none" on surveys of religious affiliation than elsewhere, it is known as the "none zone." Killen and Shibley (2004:17-18) group together the Nones and those who claim a religious tradition but do not participate in congregational life. This "cluster" they designate "secular but spiritual," and as noted in chapter II, these people who do not participate in any religious congregation constitute the majority in the region. As Shibley (2004) stresses, despite their lack of affiliation, these people still entertain spiritual and religious values.

Finke and Stark (1992) had argued that over the course of American history, as the ways of civilization worked themselves into the frontier territories, religious participation inevitably rose. From this perspective, "In 2000, the Pacific Northwest reached the institutional religious adherence rate of the nation at 1890." (Killen and Shibley 2004:30) Of course, in 1890 the

30 For a brief commentary on these documents see Hart (2004b:46-47,49-54).
"unchurched" were rough-riding pioneers, whereas in 2000 they are often college-educated; nonetheless, there remains a certain truth to the comparison with the era of the frontier. A religious establishment of sorts consisting of mainline Protestants, Catholics, and Reform and Conservative Jews historically has played the role of the social conscience of the region. But that is only for lack of any other serious institutional competitors, not because this "establishment" speaks for the majority. (Soden 2004) Otherwise, "sectarian entrepreneurs," consisting of the older evangelical denominations and some newer post-denominational groups, form a cluster behind the "establishment." They vie for the unclaimed. (Killen 2004:15-16; Wellman 2004)

Some minority religious groups such as Mormons (regionally the second largest individual group behind Catholics, see Killen and Shibley 2004:38) also make a very strong showing in the Northwest. And if one includes Alaska in the region, Native Americans constitute 2.3% of the population and occupy a much more important part of the religious landscape than they do nationally (see Killen 2004). In sum, because of the prominent place that the natural world plays in the social world in the Northwest, and because of the place of nature in the spiritual lives of Native Americans and the "secular but spiritual" cluster, reverence for nature is a pervasive spiritual-and-religious orientation in the region.

In 1995 Walt Grazer's office organized a leadership conference on environmental issues for the Northwest. It took place at Mount Angel Abbey and Seminary, a Benedictine complex about thirty miles south of Portland. Staff of the Oregon and Washington State Catholic Conferences, representatives of the dioceses in the area, professors from Catholic universities in the region, and people from the national office attended. Hugh Feiss, the abbot at Mount Angel, hosted the meeting. Frank Fromherz, director of the Office of Justice and Peace for the Archdiocese of Portland and an advisor for the national Environmental Justice Program, helped

31 According to the Princeton Review, Portland famously and consistently boasts not one but two of the ten most godless college campuses in America, Reed College and Lewis & Clark College.
arrange the venue. Fromherz, who had done his graduate work under Robert Bellah, used to teach at Mount Angel. As someone who combined academic reflection and social advocacy in his own career, he heartily endorsed the idea of bringing together scholars and social action leaders at this meeting (Fromherz 2004). He became a key proponent of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, which eventually emerged from this meeting.

Russ Butkus (2004a), who was present at the meeting and later served as a resource person for the Columbia River Project, recalled that after several papers had been given, people at the meeting raised the idea of some project they could do in the region. The focus began with the idea of "the West," then "the Pacific Northwest," then the notion of water. Participants noted that "water" was a theme that have many practical and symbolic dimensions. At that juncture Hugh Feiss said the focus should be something concrete, in order to ground the project in the region, and the idea of writing about the Columbia River emerged. As Butkus explained it, the impetus arose not from a particular issue that begged address, so much as from the search for a way to speak to the people of the region and bring Catholic faith and social teaching to bear on local environmental concerns. Participants sought a project that would serve as a concrete instance for bringing local Catholics themselves to see how environmental issues are religious issues—and that from a Catholic perspective—while also providing a challenge for engaging and developing the tradition. A working group was formed to explore the idea.

The next year, 1996, the Environmental Justice Program hosted its leadership conference in Collegeville, Minnesota. At that meeting the discussion continued and plans solidified. On behalf of the working group, Fromherz and another member, Ned Dolessi, the Washington Catholic Conference director, approached Bishop William Skylstad of Spokane to secure episcopal sponsorship of the project. Skylstad was the obvious choice as the first bishop to approach. He had previously served as chair of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and he was involved when the Domestic Policy Committee of the NCCB set up the Environmental
Justice Program. Skylstad was enthusiastic, and he helped to get the other bishops of the region on board with the idea of a joint pastoral. A steering committee was formed, and in 1997 it filed an application for a regional grant to the national office. (Fromherz 2004) According to the "Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project Finance Report" a grant for $6000 was received from the USCC on August 18.\(^\text{32}\) The project was in motion.

The Skylstad and the working group set out to include all the dioceses in the Columbia River watershed. The idea was to let the bioregion itself define the scope of participation, rather than the boundaries drawn by human beings on a map. That meant including not only the dioceses of four states (Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana), but also two countries, the United States and Canada (since the Diocese of Nelson, British Columbia was within the watershed). An ecologically inspired and ultimately very fruitful idea in several respects, it also meant the Project would be all the more challenging. A Steering Committee was formed with Bishop Skylstad as its chair. It included representatives of the all dioceses and Catholic institutions of higher education in the region (not all of whom were themselves Catholic). The Steering Committee then hired a Project Manager, John Reid, who became a member. In addition, twenty-one other people were also called upon to serve as official consultants. These included four prominent theologians: Russ Butkus, an authority on Catholic social teaching and co-director of the environmental studies program at the University of Portland; Carol Dempsey, OP, an expert on ecology in the Hebrew Scriptures and also at the University of Portland; Dianne Bergant, a Catholic expert on biblical theology; and Sallie McFague, a noted Protestant feminist eco-theologian. Among native peoples, Yvonne Smith of the Yakima Nation served on the Steering Committee, and Chief Johnny Jackson, one of the four chiefs of the Columbia River

\(^\text{32}\) The undated report lists donations through July 9, 2001. As of that date, total revenue for the project was $131,117. Contributors included the NRPE ($3000), the dioceses involved in the project ($18,755), the Sisters of Providence ($10,500), several foundations ($15,000 from the Bullitt Foundation, $12,000 from the Humanitas Trust, $30,000 from the Beldon Foundation, and $35,000 from the Brainerd Foundation), and $862 from the Alliance of Religions and Conservation of the World Wildlife Fund for Nature.
tribes, was a consultant.  

The Catholic colleges and universities that contributed participants to the Columbia River effort all had a record of collaboration with and service to other faiths in the area. In this respect Seattle University was not alone. Heritage College (now Heritage University) was founded when the resources of Spokane's Fort Wright / Holy Names College, run by the Sisters of the Holy Names, were transferred to the town of Toppenish in the Yakima Nation in 1981. The purpose was to serve the needs of native peoples, and later also Hispanic immigrants to the region. (Heritage University 2004) The president, Kathleen Ross, SNJM, Ph.D., a talented administrator who was awarded a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (among others), is a Holy Names sister, but as of my visit to the campus there was no chapel and no specifically Catholic programming or course offerings. (Heritage University 2008) Instead, the campus focused primarily on its mission of practical service. Markian Petruncio (2004), associate professor of forestry at Heritage, spoke with me of his service to the Native American community and his participation in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project.

As noted earlier, Seattle University serves a diverse population, at least half of which is not Catholic. Loretta Jancoski, Dean Emerita of the Hunthausen School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University, was the university's representative on the Steering Committee for the pastoral. She spoke with me extensively of the ecumenical vision of the school and how that related to her experience working on the Columbia River Pastoral (Jankoski 2004a; Jankoski 2004b).

The University of Portland, founded by the Congregation of the Holy Cross (the same order that runs Notre Dame) is more traditionally Catholic in culture and curriculum than Seattle University. Its motto is "Teaching, Faith, and Service." It understands its mission to be to provide a Catholic academic experience for Catholic students and others who seek out or are open to the

33 For a complete list of the principle participants in the CRPLP, see Appendix III.
In the late sixties, however, then president and Holy Cross priest Paul Waldenschmidt, CSC, proposed an alternative vision. He would remake the university into a base for a consortium of church-affiliated schools representing different denominations. It would have one overarching department of theology teaching "the religions of all faiths." None of the other schools invited to participate accepted, however, and in succeeding years references to Catholicism found their way back into the school's mission statement. At the same time, whereas in the past only Catholic students were required to take courses offered by the Theology Department, as of 1970 a theology requirement was applied to all students, and the offerings of the department were correspondingly broadened. (Connelly 2001:93-96) Thus, while the University of Portland maintains a deliberate emphasis on Catholic tradition, that emerged in the context of its search for mission and identity in the context of religious diversity and the post-Vatican II reforms.

Russ Butkus, chair of the department when we met, had a very congenial and open disposition to other faiths. He was also very clear that he was a Catholic theologian, not in an apologetic or defensive sense, but in the sense that that was his area of expertise and his source for theological insight and guidance. He also co-chaired the faith-informed environmental studies program with Professor Steve Kolmes, a biologist and an Episcopalian. Both were enthusiastic about Catholic social teaching and about the trialogue between faith, ethics, and science they fostered together. Insofar as Kolmes and Butkus took Catholicism seriously as a living tradition, they concurred with what was clearly a central commitment of the school and the theology department. But that was not to the exclusion of other faiths. For example, when Butkus and Carol Dempsey (1999) published an collection of essays on "life in a sacred universe," they solicited contributions from authors representing the diversity of disciplines and faiths at the school. It includes such entries as "An Islamic Perspective of the Universe" by a Muslim author.

34 Here I draw in particular on an extensive interview with Vinci Paterson, Assistant Director for Faith Formation of the Office of Campus Ministry (2005).
Dempsey and Butkus were both consultants of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, while Kolmes served on its Steering Committee.

The Project itself unfolded in four phases. The first phase, from September of 1997 to September of 1998 was designated "Reading the 'Signs of the Times'/Reading the River." The Committee followed the recommendation of *Gaudium et Spes* to begin with concrete history and circumstances. They acquainted themselves with both the geological and human history of the river, reviewing "available historical, scientific, sociological, economic, cultural and theological literature[.]") Then they entered into consultations with people involved in economic and environmental decision making that affected the watershed, people involved in research on the region, and individuals and communities who were marginalized by the existing power structures. This included seven meetings in which representatives of key constituencies—industry, agriculture, education, and native peoples—were invited to testify.

Phase two (September 1998 to September 1999) involved reflecting on "the signs of the times" by bringing to bear religious considerations. It drew not only on "Catholic social teaching" and "the rich Catholic spiritual heritage," but also "Native American spirituality" and "the plurality of theological and spiritual resources" that were relevant. On May 12, in the middle of this phase, the Steering Committee released a sixty-six page document entitled "The Columbia River Watershed: Realities and Possibilities: A Reflection in Preparation for a Pastoral Letter." The title was deliberately chosen by the bishops to emphasize that it was not so much a draft but an initial summary of and reflection on the process so far. It in turn became a focus for further feedback. The final document then turned out substantially different from this text.

The third phase (September 1999 to February 2001) involved a series of "listening

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35 This account draws on a range of interviews, and on "Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project Process" (an undated document, prepared during phase four), given to me by a member of the Steering Committee.
36 That is the timeframe listed on the document I had been given. However, some of the listening sessions that were part of this phase took place as early as August 1999. (Columbia River Watershed Catholic Bishops 2001b:22)
sessions" where feedback to the transitional document was solicited. During this phase a proposed outlined of the final document (dated February 12, 2000) and two drafts (dated May 30, 2000 and December 12, 2000) were circulated within the Steering Committee. The final document was then released on February 22, 2001. During this third phase educational materials and a video were planned. The fourth phase, "Pastoral Letter Promotion," picked up from there. It consisted of the activities subsequent to the release of the letter, including press conferences and interviews featuring the bishops or members of the Steering Committee, other speaking events and town-hall style meetings, a "teach-in" at the University of Portland (March 3, 2001), and similar activities. In July of the following year members of the Steering Committee reunited to journey down the Columbia River together, to experience the grandeur of the river, and to call attention to its plight and the bishops' pastoral letter. (Reddy 2002)

Early in the process other religious leaders in the region were quite supportive. A number even proposed some form of collaboration with the Catholic bishops, according to Sr. Sharon Park (2004), executive director of the Washington State Catholic Conference. However, as the project was conceived, it was meant to be a vehicle for developing a specifically Catholic contribution to the larger discussion. So the idea of a joint statement was not pursued. Instead, other opportunities for bringing people of diverse faiths into the process were created. As noted, non-Catholics were included among the Steering Committee members and the official consultants. And opportunities for public exchanges were also created.

One such opportunity took place during the first phase of the Project. On May 2, 1998, Bishop Skylstad gave the annual Tobin Lecture in Portland, a series "honoring the legacy of Msgr. Thomas J. Tobin (1897–1978), one of the country's great figures in social action[.]

Skylstad spoke on "The Columbia—Flowing Waters of Life: A Gift and Treasure." One of the respondents

37 From a leaflet given to me advertising the event. Also see Hannum (1998).
was Jenny Holmes, Director of the Interfaith Network for Earth Concerns (INEC) of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO). Drawing on Scripture, Skylstad had presented a number of images of rivers as sources of life. He cited the river that rose up out of the ground to water the Earth in Genesis (the first book of the Bible) and the crystal waters that flowed from the throne of God in a scene of "the New Jerusalem" in the Book of Revelation (the last book). Holmes took these images and built upon them, drawing on her own expertise in the environmental struggles of the region. She also cited the U.S. Catholic Bishops' 1991 pastoral *Renewing the Earth*, and especially its "God-centered and sacramental view of the universe." In particular, she noted, "Protestants (myself included) have much to learn from Catholics about a sacramental view of the universe." She then singled out six other themes of Catholic social teaching and beautifully brought them into dialogue with the issues of the day and the thought Protestant scholars. She spoke of signs of hope "as we read the signs of the times." And she contributed some apt insights regarding key biblical themes (jubilee, Sabbath, stewardship, the New Jerusalem) and religiously inspired environmental activism. This was a compelling example of the kind of constructive interfaith call to action that took place in the context of the Project.

Attempting to establish dialogue with the Native peoples of the region was also a concern of the Steering Committee. In view of the integral place that spiritual and religious values had in Native American culture, any such dialogue would be more successful to the extent that such values were acknowledged. Already in 1987, Archbishop Hunthausen of Seattle and his coadjutor, Thomas Murphy, had joined other mainstream representatives of the Christian community in the Pacific Northwest in signing "A Public Declaration to the Tribal Councils and Traditional Spiritual Leaders of the Indian and Eskimo Peoples of the Pacific Northwest." (Northwest Christian Leaders 1987) This statement included an apology for "long-standing participation in the destruction of traditional Native American spiritual practices." It promised "mutual support in

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38 I was given copies of the four talks presented at this event.
your efforts to reclaim and protect the legacy of your own traditional spiritual teachings." That included a call for respect for Native traditions and their sacred places and support for Native access to public lands for ceremonial purposes. Finally, it even affirmed, "The spiritual power of the land and the ancient wisdom of your indigenous religions can be, we believe, great gifts to the Christian churches."

Already when the Steering Committee was formed it included Yvonne Smith. In addition, John Hart, the Project writer, was one member of the Steering Committee who had a particularly deep respect for Native spirituality. In our interview, he emphasized that the statement of the Northwest Christian Leaders represented "a very different perspective from that which saw all native religion as idolatry and devil worship." (Hart 2004a) Hart's own career reflects a lifelong attempt to engage the perspective of others. He did his theological training at Union Theological Seminary, originally a Presbyterian institution, now inter-denominational and affiliated with nearby Columbia. While at Union he was able to serve as a teaching assistant for Gustavo Gutierrez because he could speak Spanish, and he wrote his dissertation on Gutierrez and liberation theology. After receiving his degree he taught for some years at Howard University. Through his work on Strangers and Guests for the Midwest bishops he became involved in the International Indian Treaty Council, a UN NGO for Native Americans. He even helped the organization put together a five-part series for PBS documenting their struggle. (Unfortunately, when PBS changed leadership the topic was deemed too controversial and so canceled.) This collaboration and a number of personal experiences he had left him deeply impressed with Native Americans and their religious heritage. Hart continues to incorporate Native concerns and Native spirituality into his work. (For example, see chapter three in his latest book, Hart 2006.) He understood that in Native cultures an appreciation of the sacred dimension of nature was not simply a theoretical tenet; it was a living dimension of Native cultures. For these reasons, Hart was concerned that the pastoral, while meant to articulate a Catholic contribution to
environmentalism, did so in ways that honored Native traditions in particular.39

As the first two phases of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project unfolded, the Steering Committee held consultations to gather information about the river. It then drew on the religious perspectives of communities in the region in order to make theological sense of that "information." These "readings" took place at the University of Portland (November, 1997), Seattle University (February, 1998), Hanford, Washington (March, 1998), Toppenish, Washington (May, 1998), Umatilla, Oregon (July, 1998), Castlegar, British Columbia (September, 1998), Spokane, Washington (February, 1999) and Hermiston, Oregon (March, 1999). The testimony from most of these events was posted on the Project's website. Some dealt with specific environmental challenges: getting the facts straight about timber harvesting practices in the region; the cleanup at the Hanford plutonium production site; use of the river for irrigation and grain transport; the impact on the human and natural environment caused by prevailing agricultural practices; the catastrophic disruption to Native American culture caused by the dams on the Columbia and its tributaries; efforts at regenerating salmon runs; the complexity of ecosystem management in the region; the impact of mining on the environment; the importance of recreational fishing and its spiritual dimensions. Others tried to get at the deeper meaning of it all: the early encounters on the land between Native peoples and settlers of European descent; farming and harvesting the bounty of the land as a sign of God's blessing; the salmon runs as

39 Hart also stressed the Catholic inspiration of his work. Even as a young boy in Catholic grade school he was exposed to the social teaching of the Church. He related an episode in which he discovered that a history book he was issued differed from an identical book with an identical cover that his buddy at the public grade school had. The public school text was missing mention of the labor movement, the rights of working people, and the role of Catholic figures involved in that struggle. Hart attended Marist, a Catholic college in Poughkeepsie, where he took courses in Church history, theology, and spirituality. There he "imbibed a Catholic perspective." He was also impressed by the witness of Catholic nuns and priests protesting the Vietnam War. His work on Strangers and Guests led him to begin a deeper exploration of Scripture and the Church's statements. He had always had a deep appreciation of nature, and in that literature he found the language for articulating his experience. Accordingly, after his work on Strangers and Guests he wrote The Spirit of the Earth: A Theology of the Land (1984). Finally, Hart stressed that in his view what the Church brought to environmental questions was an appreciation of their social dimension and implications. (Hart 2004a) Drew Christiansen (2002) emphasized the same point.
ordained by the creator to sustain the Native peoples; the anguish of farm workers poisoned by radioactive dust and pesticide use. People spoke of these concrete places and events as ways they encountered God, and they spoke of the importance of story in sustaining a community.

On May 12, 1999 the Columbia River Steering Committee released its transitional "Reflection in Preparation for a Pastoral Letter." At sixty-six pages in length, it was a substantive piece. In anticipation of its release, the AP state and local wire and all the major local newspapers carried stories, as did the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Sun Times, and the Chicago Tribune. They then followed up after the release date itself. Other papers, such as the Salt Lake Tribune, carried major stories, too, and briefer mention also made its way into USA Today and other venues (the Toronto Star, other Canadian papers, and many smaller U.S. papers).

This coverage often waded heavily into the religious issues raised by the pastoral. Writers placed the significance of this pastoral against the historical backdrop of Native American reverence for the land and a tendency for settlers to view it in utilitarian and pragmatic terms. They noted how this statement contrasted with past accusations made by the environmental community that Christian had led to the exploitation of the earth. And they picked up on the language and theology of the document. Kim Murphy (1999) of the Los Angeles Times observed that the pastoral "reflects a growing determination by the church to inject issues of ethics, social justice and spiritual stewardship into what has historically been a debate about economics and the environment." The Seattle Times carried a thoughtful piece on the call to see all water as holy (Caminiti 1999). Writing for Spokane's main paper and for the Salt Lake Tribune, Kelly McBride (1999a; 1999b) published two articles in which she delved into the religious questions connected with the pastoral, and also the process, and the significance of pastoral letters as instruments of social teaching. And Mark O'Keefe (1999a), writing for the Portland Oregonian, discussed how the bishops saw the Columbia "as 'living water,' literally and spiritually, for Catholics and non-Catholics alike." He also delved into the sense of a term that the bishops were experimenting with,
the notion of a "sacramental commons." He noted that this notion would link the idea of a medium for encounter with God and with the idea of a common resource that all have a responsibility to safeguard. Interviewees such as John Harrison of the Northwest Power Planning Council added how important it was to have the bishops stake their moral authority on attempting an unbiased perspective amidst debates that seemed to admit no center ground. In a second piece, O'Keefe held out this hope for the pastoral:

Because new theology leads to new behavior and new alliances, this greening of Christianity eventually could influence such issues as salmon recovery, dam management, cattle grazing and nuclear waste. It could provide a spiritual language to describe the epiphany many experience hiking in the Columbia River Gorge or fly-fishing in an Oregon stream, no matter what their religion. And it could give fresh energy to an environmental movement that often suggests what we should do about the Earth without communicating why. (O'Keefe 1999b)

In August that year, the three major ecumenical associations of the region, the Washington Association of Churches, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, and the Montana Association of Churches, were invited to provide feedback at a "listening session" in Spokane. They commented on the notion of the "sacramental commons" and on another phrase used, the reference to creation as a "sacramental universe." The latter phrase, also used by Skylstad in his Tobin Lecture, underscored the sense in which creation itself was revelatory. According to Hart (2004a), even those who came from non-sacramental traditions supported the sacramental dimensions of the theology in the document and their potential contribution to public life.

The response of Native peoples to the Project was mixed. Many were not the least interested in participating in the consultative process. Hart's (2004a) sense was that they have talked and talked but no one really seems to listen. Some members of the Umatillas did put together a package (given to me by Smith) describing the success of their tribe in salmon restoration. But most who did participate often did so as individuals. Smith (2004) recalls a young Native woman in Castlegar who gave a beautiful testimony that emphasized "a more spiritual aspect of her vision of the Columbia than practical things." At the reading at Hanford, Armand
Mindthorn (1998), reminded his audience of the deep connection of his people to the land: "Scientists tell us today that we crossed a land bridge and we came to this land. No. We have always been here." When one session was held there in Toppenish, some Yakima testified, too. One brought pictures of the fishing campsite where her family caught and dried salmon. The campsite was in the Hanford Reach, the area currently dominated by the nuclear plant. She did not say much, but the pictures made the point that there used to be a Native way of life where the reactor is now located. Another Yakima who spoke was David Sohappy (1998), from a very important fishing family of the Hanford Reach and now an advocate for Native fishing rights. According to Smith he spoke because he was a friend of Hart. However, despite the fact that the session was held right in the winter lodge of the tribal complex, only one tribal council member came. He had lunch then left.

Despite these overtures and others, when the pastoral was finally released, it did not seem bring about a significant shift in relations. In fact, to share and celebrate the letter, Hart and Fromherz attended the annual Native salmon feast, but since they only did so after the pastoral was completed, it was viewed as major faux pas. (Smith 2004)

Once the transitional "Reflection in Preparation for a Pastoral Letter" was released, despite its heft, it provoked considerable public discussion and debate, and certain tensions within the Steering Committee itself, as well. These concerned the degree to which it should make specific recommendations, the balance between an appeal to the ethical will versus the religious imagination, and an emphasis on sacramental theology versus a theology of stewardship.

The concern over whether the document should make specific recommendations had hovered over the Project since its inception. Even before a single sentence was composed, a

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40 At another event, this one held on the campus of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Bishop Skylstad and Archbishop Brunett of Seattle sat cross-legged and shared a peace pipe with Indian Catholic leaders from around the country. (Geranios 1999) While this event was not specifically tied to the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, it took place at the same time and illustrates the effort at outreach these Catholic leaders were undertaking.
number of people had approached members of the Steering Committee to warn that another pro-environmental battle cry would not be helpful. (Park 2004) Most of these cautionary voices came from businessmen, miners, and farmers who were afraid that the bishops would take some dogmatic stance that would hurt their interests. They were relieved to hear that the bishops were pursuing a consultative process before they wrote. The bishops, as pastors, were themselves quite concerned about the well-being of the people in their parishes and dioceses. They also felt that in most cases resolving specific policy issues was something people had to work out among themselves in the public forum. (Skylstad 2004) Most Steering Committee members emphasized that they understood one key contribution of theirs to consist in highlighting appropriate principles to bring to bear, principles of faith and justice that might otherwise go unattended. But they did not see their role in terms of making specific policy recommendations. (Castagna 2004) The other contribution they brought was their honesty, both in terms of being honest brokers, and in terms of being honest about the ecological challenges that the people in the region faced. In their mind, those contributions accorded with leaving concrete decisions to the public at large.

Nonetheless, the transitional draft did contain a number of specifics. While not advocating the breeching of the lower four dams of the Snake River, it mentioned that possibility. (Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project 1999:43) Under each of twelve ethical priorities it proceeded to make recommendations, e.g. for family farm support, for energy conservation, for reduced pesticide and fertilizer use, for the eventual establishment of a park in the Hanford Reach, and so forth. (43-51) One Committee member in particular argued that there was no contradiction at all between general principles and the specific recommendations that gave them voice. (Fromherz 2004) However, the scientist in the group was particularly wary of recommending idealistic solutions that really did not secure the ends they purported to. He was also concerned that basing recommendations on hypotheses that had not stood the test of time might make the writers look foolish if their recommendations proved erroneous. (Kolmes 1999; Kolmes 2004) In
the end, the project chair also emphasized that they wanted a document with a certain lasting vision, not one that descended to the level of the battles of the moment. (Skylstad 2004) His voice and that of the scientist won the day, and the final document saw most of the specific proposals removed, including measures that the local churches would have pledged to undertake.

When it came to the level at which to pitch their appeal, one member of the Steering Committee, Frank Fromherz, entertained a fairly sophisticated vision. He thought the real contribution the pastoral letter could make was not simply on the level of the ethical. Rather, he thought that in order to really achieve its goals, it had to aim at the level of the imagination. Instead of working with the same unexamined assumptions, it might be necessary to rethink such notions as the common good, to untether it from its anthropocentric presuppositions. Somehow we had to be able to imagine a common good that took in the salmon and the deer and the watershed itself.\footnote{In his emphasis on an imaginative shift, Fromherz' insight was similar to that of Thomas Berry and his followers.} The notion of a sacramental universe was already present in the U.S. bishops' statement \textit{Renewing the Earth}.\footnote{``The Christian vision of a sacramental universe--a world that discloses the Creator's presence by visible and tangible signs--can contribute to making the earth a home for the human family once again.''} The notion of the sacramental commons was then a way of wedding this insight to the concept of the common good that was so central in Catholic social teaching. (Fromherz 2004; also see his discussion in Fromherz 1999)

When Russ Butkus was asked for comments on the transitional document of May 1999, one theme, or rather its absence, took him aback. There was nothing on stewardship.

"[I]t was so overwhelmingly Catholic in developing the whole idea of sacramentality that had come out in the bishops' pastoral in '91, right, which emphasized the sacramentality of the universe, and which was really quite beautiful…I responded that I love this language, but it is a bit arcane if you want to engage other Christian denominations on this issue. They're using the language of stewardship. So I wrote back and said you really have to include something on stewardship." (Butkus 2004a)

Butkus argued his point under a number of headings. He was not ideologically committed to a
particular view of stewardship or a particular interpretation of Genesis 1. But the language was a meeting place, a point of reference, not only for conversation with other Christians, but also with a whole host of environmental organizations that use the language (which he proceeded to rattle off). In addition, he thought that if you wanted to get something done, the stewardship language had ethical teeth to it. It was the language of responsibility, whereas the sacramental language was the language of personal experience. In his view its imperative side was weak. Fromherz (2004) disagreed. Fromherz held that when you see things a certain way, imperatives naturally flow out of that. You respect nature. You would not blacktop over a sacrament.

While the listening sessions involved a consultative process, and the transitional document was a summary of the process and an invitation for further commentary, the bishops themselves took ownership of the final draft. And when it came out, both Butkus and Fromherz were stunned. The sacramental language was gone. As Hart notes, on closer inspection, the concept was still there, but the terms "sacramental universe" and "sacramental commons" had been dropped.43 That development raises certain questions. If internally grounded pluralism means being open religiously so that with other faith communities of like disposition citizens can create a public space where religious difference can contribute to public discussions, what happened to what might have been a distinctive Catholic religious contribution to the public debate? one that was consonant with Native traditions and welcomed by the environmental contingent of many of the other religious groups in the region? If internally grounded pluralism promises that being rooted in one's own tradition does not exclude bringing its insights into public dialogue with the insights of other traditions, was this a defeat for pluralism? Did the bishops lose courage and as a result decide to adopt the more conventional rhetoric of stewardship?

On this topic the bishops and the members of the Steering Committee range from polite

43 Hart (2004b:51) writes: The bishops' letter referred obliquely to the "sacramental universe" described in...Renewing the Earth, although the term itself was not used. Creation "is from God and reveals God," and can be "a sign and revelation for the person of faith, a moment of grace."
discretion to dismayed speculation. On the speculative side some (who asked to remain anonymous) wonder when the bishops gave in to concerns about charges of pantheism. In 2000 the Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES) had just sent out its mailing attacking the members of the NREP for their orthodoxy. In addition, one prominent traditionalist Christian group, the Berean Call run by Dave Hunt, was based in Bend, Oregon, the diocesan see of one of the bishops on the Project. More generally, traditionalist Christians constituted a significant religious presence in the region. And some among the bishops themselves were not very comfortable with trends in creation spirituality. While they might have been open to the idea of expanding the orbit of Christian responsibility beyond human beings to take in more of God's creation, they were not ready to embrace the call to completely decenter human beings from God's creation. Speculation was that they were not convinced that the notion of a sacramental or sacred universe was entirely amicable to the faith they were called to safeguard and teach.

Such speculation aside, it is also certain that one bishop was adamant that the word "sacrament" should be reserved to the seven official sacraments of the Church. If everything is a sacrament, then what distinctive role is left for the Church? or so the argument went.

Finally, one further institutional constraint may have been operative. With regard to Renewing the Earth, one interviewee remarked that authorities in Rome were concerned that a bishops' conference had ventured out into new theological ground on its own. They argued that if every national conference did that on a regular basis, it would be difficult to maintain theological and terminological coherence in the doctrine of the Church. (Christiansen 2002) If the authority of a national conference to chart new theological territory was limited, all the more limited was that of a handful of regional bishops and a steering committee. The bishops simply may not have considered themselves authorized to launch a conceptual revolution on behalf of the entire Church.

The final draft of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter was impressive nonetheless. In
length and complexity it was scaled back, and its language was simplified. It was cast in an overwhelmingly positive and affirming tone. In its introduction the words "caring," "creation," "community," "commitment," and the "common good" dominate the landscape. The main text is broken into four sections. The first, "Rivers of Our Moment" is a review of the "signs of the times," the circumstances and challenges of the day. This includes "Signs of Hope." It also refers to the "Spiritual and Social Consciousness" of the day, which could be read as a willingness to engage and work with those who may not be involved in institutional or traditional religion, but who are open to spiritual values nonetheless. The second section, "Rivers Through Our Memory," hearkens back to the history and religious traditions of the people of the region. It mentions Native religions and some of their teachings, while it critiques the rugged individualism sometimes associated with the American mythology of the West. There is a significant section on biblical theology and stewardship, one on the Columbia and the common good, one on the notion of "living water," and one on Catholic social teaching. These sections bring Catholic tradition into dialogue with the other traditions of the region, thus laying the foundation for thinking through the task ahead. The Third section, "Rivers of Our Vision," then sets the moral parameters for how the bishops will view the challenge of securing the common good. The final section, "Rivers as Our Responsibility," then outlines ten "consideration" for proper stewardship of the watershed, with a significant discussion under each.

Though the pastoral does not include the term "sacramental commons," it was crafted so as to make an appeal to the imagination. It was issued as a booklet carefully laid out with color photographs of the region, and it closes with a four-page poem entitle "Riversong." The accompanying video features three of the people involved in the Project: Bishop Skylstad, who speaks of growing up in the region; Bishop Eugene Cooney of the Diocese of Nelson, who weaves sacramental images into the presentation; and Yvonne Smith, who speaks of her own uncles fishing along the banks of the Columbia during the days of her childhood. Other people
from the region discuss the issues with which the pastoral grapples, but they do so from a very human, experiential point of view. In addition, the theme of "living water" which Smith found so compelling for its resonance with Native tradition also found its way into the final document and into the video, where she herself was spoke about its meaning.44

The Columbia River Pastoral Letter was signed January 8 (a Catholic feast day, the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus), but was finally released on February 22.

E. Pluralism and Public Faith: Catholic Environmentalism in Dialogue

The Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project brought religion into public life in a social context where not only was Catholicism a minority affiliation, but religious affiliation itself was the minority position. In such a context, the public relevance of any faith or of traditional faith in general was not obvious, and the Catholic bishops could well have restricted their attention to their own constituents. There are in fact other religious groups in the Pacific Northwest which have taken the effort to promote an environmental ethic, and in their approach they have done just that, restricted their focus to their own. And to be sure, just among Catholics there was plenty of environmental ground to be won.

The bishops and the Project Steering Committee, however, deliberately worked to engage both the Catholic community and the surrounding polity. At the same time, they did not do so by developing two different messages, one based on religious principles for Catholics and one based on secular "common ground" for outsiders. Instead, they brought a thoroughly religious message into a wide range of internal and public forums. They did so because they assumed that that one message was relevant to Catholic and non-Catholic alike (though perhaps in different ways). Yet that message was not only religious; it often was cast in distinctly Catholic theological terms. The

44 For more on the significance of this notion and its implications for common life, see Hart (2006:79-96).
Steering Committee did not see that as a hindrance because they assumed that theology offered a very profound way of engaging the common humanity of all people in the Pacific Northwest. Moreover, throughout they positioned themselves as participating in a larger dialogue to which they were making a contribution. In other words, on many levels their efforts reflected the openness to the religious dimension of other faiths that was legitimated at the Second Vatican Council. Thus they could be distinctive in approach, but not exclusive. And the public spaces they entered had been shaped by other groups who had also been taken efforts to foster an interfaith ethos. As a result, in such public spaces the approach they took was a legitimate one.

Of course, there are more and less successful ways of adopting such a dialogical stance, and one can bring to bear further criteria for evaluating how thorough and consistent and inspired the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was in doing so.—For, example, was the listening to others as sophisticated as the contribution the effort made?—So far the focus has been merely to document that stance, acknowledging some of its idiosyncrasy and ambiguity. In the pages which follow, a brief effort will be made to gain some qualitative sense of the reception of the Project and its success at bringing religion, and indeed Catholicism, into public life. As an aside, it should also be noted that that is different from how successful the project was in promoting an effective environmental ethic, changing people's behavior, saving salmon, bringing about a transformation of consciousness, or any of the other goals the Steering Committee set for itself. While what the Project leaders set out to accomplish is not irrelevant to this assessment, the focus is the how the effort related to participation in the larger community and how it was received as a legitimate contribution to public life.

If one thinks of public life in terms of political life, then an obvious lacuna in the public reach of the Project seems to have been politicians and the state. There were no counterparts to Al Gore congratulating the leaders of the NRPE and posing for photo opportunities. There were no city or state declarations honoring the campaign. It is true that institutional religion is generally
not a prominent a part of the public culture in that part of the country. However, the Washington State Catholic Conference and the Oregon Catholic Conference staff did have some familiarity with state and local political culture and its various denizens. Whether or not they made an effort to mobilize support from politicians is not clear, but it should be noted that that would not accord with precedent. In the United States the standing practice for pastoral letters has been to focus in the first instance in audiences within the bounds of civil society. However, subsequently, staff of the local Catholic conferences have met with state legislators to discuss the implications of the pastoral for state water policies. (Skylstad 2003)

Reception in the Catholic media should be noted, both because it provides an basis for comparison and because its members are attuned to the phenomenon of public Catholicism. The local diocesan papers certainly gave the pastoral and every event associated with it diligent coverage. At the same time, while much of that coverage documented events associated with the pastoral and its outreach—the release of the document, parish efforts to implement it, the appearance of a bishop at a school or parish or faculty convocation—they usually did not enter into any deeper analysis of the public or even the theological significance of the document.

For more substantial coverage it is necessary to turn to national Catholic periodicals such as America (the Jesuit run journal of opinion) and the National Catholic Reporter. And as it turns out, these periodicals devoted more coverage to the transitional draft of May 1999 than to the release of the final document. The National Catholic Reporter included three pieces on the Columbia River Pastoral Letter in its June 4th edition. An editorial argued that with the pastoral "The Final Piece of Public Catholicism Falls into Place" ("The Final Piece" 1999): In addition to speaking out for life issues and issues of justice and human dignity, the Church has now committed itself to speaking out for environmental issues. And in so doing it has rounded out its portfolio of service to society at large. The cover story for that edition was entitled "Restoring the Sacred in Nature" (Schaeffer 1999). The article touts the new direction in Catholic theology
reflected in the draft's including the wider biological community in its understanding of the common good. (The third story was a discussion of the context and environmental challenges which the pastoral addressed.) Apart from these stories the Project received mention in some subsequent *NCR* articles, but no further treatment in its own right.

That year, the September 25 edition of *America* included two articles on the pastoral, one by Frank Fromherz (1999), and another by David Toolan (1999), author of an important book on ecological theology. Fromherz gave an example of what the imaginative shift he was after might entail. He told his own story of growing up in the region and how the experience of nature and of place shaped him to be the person he is. In writing of what we can learn from nature, he invested it with an importance that transcended its utilitarian value. Toolan wrote of the pastoral and its place in American public Catholicism. Eventually, America did provide some further coverage, giving Bishop Skylstad a feature article on "The Waters of Life" (2003) and Walt Grazer another on environmental justice (2004a).

In the secular press, between the release of the transitional draft and the final document, occasional mention of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project would show up in pieces written with press support from the NRPE. They follow a standard format: a list of activities that religious groups around the country were pursuing (in which the Columbia River Pastoral is included) followed by a quote from Paul Gorman driving home the relevant point—that religious groups were mobilizing behind environmental causes, that environmentalism also had a religious dimension, and so forth.

When the final draft of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter was released, local coverage was quite impressive. The (Vancouver, Washington) *Columbian*, the (Tacoma) *News Tribune*, the (Spokane) *Spokesman Review*, the (Portland) *Oregonian*, the *Seattle Post–Intelligencer*, and the *Seattle Times* all carried at least one article on the document, as did the *San Diego Union–Tribune* and the *Los Angeles Times* (two articles). Many of the local articles took a predominantly
community-interest approach: This important group in the community (which happens to be a religious group) came out in favor of environmentalism. The reaction of the relevant neighbors (religious groups and environmental groups) were reported. For the most part these articles did not delve too deeply into the theology of the document. But they did include some basic commentary. The Seattle Times noted that the final document emphasized a stewardship ethic, then added some discussion regarding different approaches to that ethic among Christian groups (MacDonald 2001). The Columbian included quotes that brought in the pastoral's religious message: "God entrusts the Earth to human care. People are the stewards of God's world." And: "If you don't look at it as a gift [from God], you're not going to treat it well." (McCauley 2001) Tacoma's News Tribune contained a particularly thorough discussion of the significance and theological content of the document, also including a sidebar with key quotes. (Maynard 2001) The Los Angeles Times also presented the basic theological themes of the letter. (Associated Press 2001)

Overall, the secular press coverage outdid national and local Catholic coverage for the final document. If one takes into account the coverage for both the transitional draft and the final document, while the national Catholic press was more attuned to the theological innovations afoot, overall the attention to theological themes and the religious significance of the documents was comparable. That is quite astounding.

One development specifically meant to bring publicity to the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was an award given it by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation. Through the Alliance the World Wildlife Fund selected 26 recipients from around the world for its "Sacred Gifts" award. The award was to acknowledge the contribution of religious groups to the cause of environmentalism. Recipients gathered in Nepal on November 15, 2000 for a ceremony and celebration. This event gave the Columbia River Project a certain international stature. It got picked up through ARC's network and was cited for ARC's purposes, analogous to how the
NRPE has promoted domestically the notion of religious environmental activism. (As an aside, John Hart (2004a), who represented the Project in Nepal, had this observation to make: "They were not trying to find or establish a common ground or common statement. In Nepal at the awards ceremony, each tradition present had its own role to play.")

Within the Catholic community of the region, a number parishes were quite inspired by the pastoral. Outreach to the Catholic community has public implications insofar as the pastoral encouraged Catholics to exercise their role as responsible citizens. At Christ the King parish in Richland, Washington, the social justice committee brought in their bishop, Carlos Sevilla, to speak about the pastoral to a packed audience. Richland is near Hanford, and many parishioners were scientists or people who worked in related fields. The organizers reported that many parishioners said that if Sierra Club had come out with this document they would not even have paid attention. It mattered that it was Catholic Church. (Christ the King Church social justice committee coordinators 2004) In Portland, Saint Philip Neri Church became quite involved in the promoting the message of the pastoral, redesigning their grounds along more environmentally sound lines and organizing an annual festival in which they invited ecumenical cooperation. (Bossi 2004; Cole and Oppel 2003) Joel Sosilak (2004), director of Friends of Cedar River Watershed, a community-based environmental group in Seattle, confirmed that the pastoral had made his efforts at recruiting Catholic parish involvement in his work much easier. He did not have to make the case that environmentalism and faith went together. The bishops had put environmentalism on the Catholic map. Yet despite these developments, Gary Lazzeroni (2004), director of Justice and Peace Ministry Resources for the Archdiocese of Seattle, informed me that his own office was pressed by other concerns, and that promoting the pastoral has not been a high priority. Staff in every diocese that I visited related a similar circumstance.

As for the Project's reception in other religious communities and the difference it made there, generally, it made a very positive contribution. In that part of the country the Archdiocese
of Seattle did belong to the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the Washington Association of Churches, while the Archdiocese of Portland belonged to the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO). At the same time, the Catholic Church in particular tends to have a massive institutional presence in its own right, and the decision to make the statement a Catholic one, understandable though it was, did reinforce a perception of Catholic separatism. Speaking in confidence, several interviewees also confirmed that the Columbia River Project also reinforced certain differences in style and approach between Catholics and other members of these ecumenical associations. Whereas Catholics tended to gravitate to the "theological principles" end of the spectrum, many of the other members emphasized more direct action and practical advocacy. Nonetheless, especially among those who were involved in environmental issues in these interfaith organizations, support for the Columbia River Pastoral was quite strong. Thea Levkovitz (2004), director of the Partnership for Religion and the Environment based at the Washington Association of Churches, spoke very highly of the Project. While her office did not exist when the pastoral was released, she found it to be an achievement that she could build upon in pursuing collaborative work with Catholics active in environmentalism. Jenny Holmes (2004), director of the Interfaith Network of Earth Concerns of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, concurred. She also mentioned that the pastoral and its video would be featured at the upcoming rural chaplains conference in December 2004.

Unfortunately, as irony would have it, just at the time that the Columbia River Pastoral was being released, the Archdiocese of Seattle became embroiled in a legal battle with Kings County over new environmental regulations. Those regulations would limit the size of churches and schools, and that would have severely curtailed pending and projected developments. While the County made an exemption for public schools, it refused to do so for private schools. When Archbishop Brunett of Seattle spoke out against these regulations, apparently he spoke as if he had the backing of the Washington Association of Churches. But then some of its members spoke
out in favor of the regulations, leaving him in an uncomfortable position. The ensuing controversy involved a few nasty exchanges. While the Archbishop pointed to the Columbia River Pastoral as an example of Catholic support of environmentalism generally, opponents turned it around to use it to urge him to comply with the regulations. Brunett and others in the Catholic community pointed out that per capita the impact of the planned projects was less than that of other institutions, and that since Catholics tend to have larger congregations than other religious groups, the legislation was in fact discriminatory. From there, some of the old anti-Catholic rhetoric reared its head. One letter to the editor argued, "The root of this hypocrisy is the bishop's—and the Catholic Church's—mistaken belief that the quality of religious services is directly proportional to the size of the structure in which those services are offered." It added, "If Brunett doesn't like that political process, perhaps he should try establishing his church in a less-democratic country." (Shurgot 2001) For a while the Archdiocesan representative to the Washington Association of Churches stopped attending meetings. (Jankoski 2004b) Despite the good will and efforts of the post-Vatican II era, some of the antagonisms of an earlier day could still be raised.

While the Columbia River Pastoral did not lead to an the immediate improvement in relations with Native peoples that had been hoped for, in part that was because the cultural form, a written document, was not one that appealed to Native sensibilities. In his testimony to the Steering Committee, David Sohappy (1998) remarked that long ago Indian people did not have written laws because "once you write your laws down, pretty soon you have piles and piles of laws and you don't know which one overwrites the other one, all conflicting one another." Certainly, Indians have written laws now, but the cultural preference is for a norms that people understand and can live out in their relationship with one another. Testimony limited by fifteen minute slots and formal documents that sit on shelves,
which historically have been used against Native people, did not really provoke much
hope or inspiration. However, in the wake of the pastoral some communication did take
place, and the Catholic bishops of the region began efforts to implement an annual
gathering with the tribal leaders from the watershed. (Skylstad 2003)

One observer of the Columbia River Project, Bob Stivers (2005), Professor of Religion at
Pacific Lutheran University and a member of its Environmental Studies Program, remarked that
while the Columbia River Pastoral was a positive document and a welcome development, it
lacked teeth. It was easy to affirm, like motherhood and apple pie, but it did not really stand up
and take a position. Stivers himself was co-author of Christian Environmental Ethics (Martin-
Schramm and Stivers 2003), a text which took a case study approach to bringing Christian
principles to bear on concrete environmental problems, working them through to practical
solutions. He had also worked on a statement adopted by the 216th assembly of the Presbyterian
Church USA on the water struggles over the Klamath River, "Resolution on Limited Water
Resources and Takings." In that statement he used ethical principles to work toward a
recommended solution to the controversy. However, Michael Treleaven (2004), a political
scientist teaching at Gonzaga University in Spokane, emphasized that the bishops' refusal to get
cought up in deciding practical solutions enabled their pastoral to play a more valuable public role.
He pointed out that if you compared the prior public exchanges that had taken place on
environmental issues in the region with the public discourse that emerged in the context of the
Columbia River Project, you could see that it had represented quite an accomplishment. It
provided a very positive frame to all parties, enabling them to concede that all had a stake in the
health of the bioregion.

Many other parties I spoke with confirmed Treleaven's observation. These comments
reported in Portland's Oregonian provide an illustration of the positive civic engagement the
Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was able to generate:
"Quite honestly we had some mistrust [of the Pastoral Letter Project]," said Bruce Lovelin, executive director of the Columbia River Alliance, which represents industries that depend on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

"We thought it was a piece that was going to come in and take some position on dam breaching," Lovelin said. "It wasn't paranoia on our side. Based on some discussions we had, that was a real threat."

Instead, Lovelin said the pastoral letter is a "well-written call for cooperation and for people to look beyond their own personal needs and to the greater common good."

Charles Hudson, spokesman for the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, said he was somewhat disappointed that the bishops failed to take a stand on breaching.

"It would be typical of the very difficult decisions that the region will face in restoring balance, equity and ecological health to the region," Hudson said. "You could make a case that the bishops should have addressed it as an issue of our day."

Still, Hudson said he welcomed the letter and the ongoing discussions he hopes it will create. "I think the tribes see the Catholic Church as one of many faith groups that are coming around to the tribal notion that when systems fail, as they clearly have in the Columbia basin, that there is a need to look to our faith and to look to the laws of our creators for guidance." (Cole 2001)

Higher education is another place that the Columbia River Pastoral has received considerable play. In Catholic universities in the region and beyond it shows up in classes in theology (Butkus 2004a; Chamberlain 2004), environmental science (Kolmes 2004; Trileigh Tucker 2004), and political science (Treleaven 2004). In May of 1999 the University of Portland hosted a conference entitled "Linking Environmental Studies, Theology and Science: A 21st-Century Challenge for Catholic Colleges and Universities," and there the transitional draft was featured. In the main participants of that conference were scholars from Catholic colleges and universities working in environmental studies and theology. (Schaeffer 1999) At the same time, non-Catholic institutions have picked up the pastoral, as well. When I visited Christ the King parish in Richland, Washington, the social justice committee coordinators noted that the pastoral had been used in the classes of the nearby Tri-Cities campus of Washington State University. (Christ the King Church social justice committee coordinators 2004) Russ Butkus (2004b), too, affirmed that it showed up in universities where he would not have expected it because they were not religiously affiliated.

The fact that it continues to be posted on the web and that it was released in three
languages (English, Spanish, and French, the last because of its Canadian involvement) has facilitated the pastoral's spread in a wide range of contexts. The press coverage the pastoral received, as well as its being promoted internationally by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation and its being listed on the website of the Harvard's Forum on Religion and Ecology (Forum on Religion and Ecology 2008), have given it exposure in academic circles outside the Catholic community. Jane Lubchenco, a world-renowned marine biologist at Oregon State University who was featured in the Project's video, has also been a promoter of the pastoral, especially in scientific circles.

That the pastoral has been able to play such a wide range of public roles beyond the Catholic community is especially remarkable in view of predominantly Catholic and religious character. It certainly contrasts with the National Catholic War Council's Program of Social Reconstruction of 1919 and the reception that document received. There natural law language left the underlying theological concerns merely implicit. Coverage in the secular press, though favorable, refrained from any discussion of Catholic theology or social teaching. That treatment contrasted with the treatment in the Catholic press. Even the contrast between the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project and the premier pastorals of the U.S. bishops of the 1980s, the economic and peace pastorals, is noteworthy. While many observers certainly emphasized the importance of the bishops' bringing a religious frame to bear on the issues, much of the reception, both secular and religious, focused the practical proposals being forwarded. In writing the Columbia River Pastoral, the bishops prescinded from entering too deeply into practical issues (though they certainly heard about them in great detail). Yet the fact that they concentrated on broader ethical principles and their theological grounding did not make their pastoral a non-event, a document of interest merely to Catholics. And the fact that they could be so publicly Catholic, not just religious, shows that it is possible to bring religious difference into public and still promote constructive dialogue.
Chapter VIII. Concluding Remarks

A. Pluralism in Public Catholicism

The Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was a successful initiative that was both public and Catholic. It brought environmental issues before the Catholic community, framing them as religious issues. It highlighted interests that all members of the community, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, shared in common. It provided a context for people in the Pacific Northwest who had been at loggerheads to speak and to listen to one another. And the overall process brought two significant religious themes, sacramentality and stewardship, into public life (though the former was not explicitly foregrounded in the final document). Its religious message was taken up both by the secular press and by other faith communities. And though it did not meet all the expectations of Native Peoples—and that despite the determined efforts of several Steering Committee members—in its aftermath it did create the opening for further dialogue. And the religious dimension of the Project supported that outcome precisely because it reflected an openness to Native spirituality. Overall, the Project created the occasion for Catholics to become more involved in the affairs of their community and region, and it deepened the quality of engagement in the larger civic culture. Moreover, its religious dimension did not hinder its public impact. Rather, most observers saw the initiative as one bringing a unique and helpful religious perspective to the environmental issues of the region.

When placed in the context of the history of American Catholic pastorals the Columbia River Pastoral Letter reveals a significant evolution. In the nineteenth century Catholic pastorals addressed institutional Church affairs and matters of individual piety, and they were written solely for the Catholic community. They did not address the affairs of the nation. Indeed, as de Tocqueville reported, early in the century many Catholic leaders understood the key to their place in the new order to depend on their maintaining a low public profile. They were especially
reluctant to comment on public affairs because as Catholics they were viewed with suspicion. To be sure, theological differences were not the only factors in play. Insofar as many Catholic bishops and clergy were foreign-born or the children of immigrants, Protestant suspicion of Catholics was further compounded by nativism. Catholics' immigrant status served to reinforce the notion that Catholicism itself was something foreign to America, despite the refusal of the authors of the national constitution to endorse or proscribe any faith in particular. Given these tensions, many Catholic leaders often argued that the survival of the Church in America depended upon its remainingapolitical. Even as the nineteenth century progressed, Catholic affairs and the affairs of the wider community remained to quite separate, as in the case of slavery. Catholic leaders argued that slavery was an American civic affair and not a Church matter, and they made that argument that despite consistent papal teaching condemning the enslavement of non-Europeans and affirming their dignity as human beings.

It was only in 1919, after the first Roosevelt administration and the Wilson administration had wooed Catholic support for national war efforts, that the U.S. bishops considered themselves in a position to issue a document on national affairs addressed to the entire citizenry. Yet even then they ultimately issued two documents, the one addressed to the wider public and the other addressed to the Catholic faithful. The former employed a natural law approach that essentially left its religious frame implicit, while only the latter included a full-blown religious appeal. Then for the succeeding decades of the twentieth century up until the Second Vatican Council, the more public a pastoral—either in terms of its intended audience or in terms of its reception—the less religious it was. In 1926 when Church leaders did produce a document that included a discussion of natural law and natural rights, one that was articulated in a way that explicitly drew upon Catholic tradition, the larger population proved unsympathetic to its appeal on behalf of the Mexican Church. It failed to win over support. Instead, it was largely ignored.

Yet it must be admitted that there was no simple linear trajectory in the character of
American Catholic pastorals and their reception. Many factors affected how religious their content was, to whom they were addressed, how widely they were received, and how these factors interacted. Thus the 1958 pastoral condemning racial discrimination both manifested a religious character and won widespread commentary and reception. Its overtly religious dimension did not present an obvious obstacle to its wider public appeal and impact. Of course, while it cited papal teaching, it was based on biblical principles that most Jews and Christians could affirm; there was little distinctively Catholic theology in the document. And it was issued in the midst of a movement what was already imbued with religious rhetoric by the Black community itself. Coming as it did at a time when American Catholics and American Protestants were beginning to make determined ecumenical overtures, it represented an timely effort to stand shoulder to shoulder with other Americans in a shared moral and religious cause. In that it stood in notable contrast to the aloof attitude toward public affairs that had characterized the Catholic Church in an earlier century.

A real turning point in the social dimension of Catholic pastorals occurred during the 1960s, the period of Vatican II. The pace of pastoral production increased markedly. And though many of these documents were written in response to the internal reforms set in motion by the Vatican Council, others reflected broad involvement in the affairs of society. During this period, the 1983 peace pastoral and the 1986 economic pastoral served as very successful attempts at reaching both a Catholic audience and a wider public. Both pastorals also manifest a very clear religious dimension. They were explicit efforts to bring religious faith to bear on public issues. And while the peace pastoral explicitly contained "two complementary but distinct styles of teaching," each geared to a separate audience, the economic pastoral integrated biblical theology, liberation theology, an appeal to American values, and an examination of the Church's own life into a more or less continuous discussion. While such elements as biblical theology were shared by a wider circle of believers, other elements such as the liberation theology were distinctively
Catholic. And in neither the case of the peace nor the economic pastoral did their religious or Catholic content undermine their wide reception outside the Catholic Church.

In the case of religious environmentalism we witness a movement that Catholics entered with other American religious groups as part of a collaborative effort right from the outset. There were some false starts in ecumenical cooperation in the mid-eighties, especially when evangelical environmentalists rejected proposals for collaboration advanced by certain Catholic proponents which the former perceived to compromise the integrity of the biblical tradition. However, when the Catholic bishops and their staff embarked on the route of collaboration, they deliberately avoided any form of pluralism that involved metanarrative or subordination. Instead they explicitly adopted a dialogical form of internally grounded pluralism that allowed each faith community to speak in its own voice. The Columbia River Pastoral Letter is an example of a religious public initiative informed by this ethos. And while it did stir concern, especially among those who feared the stance the bishops might take, its overt religious content, Catholic and otherwise, did not significantly conflict with its public nature. In this instance the public accessibility function of American Catholicism seems to have leveled off. Going public did not lead to a significant trade off in the area of religious content, nor conversely did the presence of Catholic theology seem to hinder the public appeal of this initiative. That result conforms to the larger trend in Catholic public involvement in the post-Vatican II era.

Throughout the overall history of Catholic involvement in public life (or as in the case of the nineteenth century, its relative absence), the key independent variable controlling the degree to which Catholicism was welcome as a religious presence in public life was the tension between various American faith communities. While after the Revolution Catholics experienced a welcome into public life that fired a genuine appreciation for American democracy, that welcome was merely relative: It was relative to the severe restriction and even legal prohibition of Catholicism of an earlier era. Then as Catholic-Protestant tensions rose over the course of the
early nineteenth century the brief spate of republican Catholicism that had flowered in the post-Revolutionary moment withered. Only when the overtures of certain Americanist bishops later in the century helped to mend relations, and only given the collaboration which World War I occasioned, did an American Catholic public teaching tradition emerge.

Even after this tradition emerged, it suffered the vicissitudes of Catholics' relations with other faith communities. In this history, it was the endorsement of a religious openness to other faiths sanctioned by the Second Vatican Council that constituted a decisive turning point. On the basis of the conciliar reforms, the American Catholic Church was able to adopt an internally grounded pluralism that both reflected and expressed a deliberate effort to overcome the estrangement that had existed between the Catholic community and other significant American faith communities. Among Protestants and the Orthodox an ecumenical movement had already begun, so that the Catholic effort was able to participate in this larger development in American religious culture.

Since Catholics have always constituted a key piece of the American religious puzzle, this reorientation of Catholics to religious others and religious others to Catholics has had significant implications for the larger public culture. After the secular hiatus of the 1960s and 70s, this improvement in interfaith relations has been a crucial factor in bringing religion back into public life. Of course, that is no secret revealed by astute sociological analysis. Religious actors themselves have realized that their own competition and intolerance of one another has been in large measure responsible for driving religion from public life in the first place. Thus when confronted by the rise of the Moral Majority, with whose positions he was not in particular sympathy, Richard Neuhaus counseled members of the more liberal traditions to exhibit patience:

To put it differently, our quarrel is primarily theological. Unless that quarrel is transformed into an engagement that moves toward dialogue, we will continue to collaborate, knowingly or not, in discrediting the public responsibility of religion. We will discredit it by finding ourselves in awkward support of those who would exclude religion from the public square. And we will discredit it by giving a
monopoly on religiously informed political action to the most strident moral
majoritarians who show few signs of understanding the problems and promises
inherent in the American experiment. (Neuhaus 1984:19)

Fundamentalists had been driven from public life earlier in the century, and in Neuhaus's view
ultimately that did not enhance the public square or religion's place therein. In this new moment,
like Neuhaus Catholics have also been quite overt in their realization that religious openness to
others goes hand in hand with participation in public life. Accordingly, they undertook a broad-
based, ecumenical consultative process in connection with the economic and peace pastorals. And
interfaith sensitivity has been a constituent dimension of Catholic religious environmentalism
since those efforts gained steam in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

That is not to reduce internally grounded pluralism to a strategic decision adopted as part
of the effort to go public. The culture of internally grounded pluralism has reached deep into the
life of the American Catholic Church. It is manifest in myriad ways, not simply in official policy
statements. Nonetheless, in the pastoral letters we witness a profound shift in style: from reliance
on the theological philosophy of natural law to resources firmly and sometimes distinctively tied
to the religious framework of Catholicism; from statements of timeless truth to perspectives
rooted in historical circumstances; from the voice speaking out of the void to a voice in
conversation. Coupled with this dialogical model is a different hermeneutic of truth, one that
assiduously tries to avoid relativism while acknowledging that the Truth may have a fullness to
which we have only partial access. Catholic thinkers have increasingly embraced historical
consciousness, that is, the notion that truth emerges in the midst of historical process. As opposed
to the model adopted during an earlier period, which emphasized the self-sufficiency of the
"deposit of faith," this model is less defensive and more open. In acknowledging that there is an
open aspect to how truth is grasped, it makes room for the appreciation that dialogue with others
can make an essential contribution to the grasp of that truth. Such a hermeneutic is reflected in a
culture that facilitates listening, speaking from within a social location, and participating in a
larger dialogue. It functions not by denying differences, but by locating them in a tradition. Instead of making absolute claims, claims are made from "in my tradition." And claims of the other are then heard "within their tradition." Of course, if differences are just left there as stark differences, then there is no real dialogue. The next step is to engage these differences, to begin to grapple with how they might, or perhaps might not, cohere. It may not be the case that everyone is right about everything. But at least such an approach does not require any party to surrender its integrity at the outset in order to participate in dialogue. Participants still run the risk of being changed by the encounter that will ensue, but at least they can do so on their terms.

Such a cultural dynamic was evident in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project. It was evident in the way that the Project participants located themselves in the history of the land and its people. It was evident in the way they embarked on a dialogical process of consultation, one which deliberately included the testimony of members of other faith communities. It was evident in the way they drew on Catholic tradition as a contribution to a larger discussion. Internally grounded pluralism did not require stepping out of Catholic tradition to affirm that all faiths share some equal status, as a stance associated with structural pluralism might require. It did not entail a blanket affirmation of other faith traditions. Instead, the position from which internally grounded pluralism is articulated originates from within a tradition. Accordingly, it simply requires a willingness to hear the voice of the other as a legitimate religious voice. Of course, that can entail or lead to taking up a more critical perspective on one's own commitments.1 And it can eventually lead to the affirmation of the truths of other faiths. However, admittedly, in that respect Catholics tread cautiously.

How internally grounded pluralism then supports bringing the content of religious faith into public space is not particularly mysterious. If a religious group present its position with a

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1 In this respect internally grounded pluralism is analogous to the mode for negotiating cultural differences proposed by Charles Taylor. For an excellent discussion of different approaches to multiculturalism and a summary of Taylor's own hermeneutically informed approach, see Madsen (2003).
certain openness, and the larger religious public entertains that position with a similar openness, then religious differences clearly do not have to lead to the dialogue of the deaf. So much is practically tautological. What is far more interesting is the fact that it has actually taken place, standing common sense and sociological theory to the contrary. Indeed, this development within Catholicism serves as empirical confirmation that even the most institutionally bound religious traditions can adopt an open posture, running counter to the model of religion maintained by most proponents of secularization theory. Through its various initiatives, not only has the Catholic Church functioned as a force in society—as a moral force or a constituency with voting muscle—it has functioned as a specifically religious voice in public life, successfully bringing to bear transcendent perspectives on secular concerns. Moreover, while most versions of secularization theory predict that the place of religion in modern public life will progressively diminish, the entire trajectory of Catholicism's public presence in American society has also defied secularization theory. Over the course of American history, that presence has gone from almost zero to being very robust and articulate.

Of course, during the same period the trajectory of evangelical Protestant public culture has followed a different trajectory. During the nineteenth century a pan-Protestant hegemony over American public values and culture was taken for granted. Disputes over the appropriate shape of that normative influence, along with escalating Protestant-Catholic conflicts, eventually undermined that informal "establishment." What this underscores is that trends concerning "religion in general" are often not at issue so much as which religion and what are the relations among religious groups in a given society. The emergence of internally grounded pluralism represents a new moment in the relations between American Catholics and American Protestants, in particular. Over the long term that portends a radically different civic culture than has existed in American society up until the Vatican Council.

That is not to claim that all religious differences have become inconsequential, or that
religious leaders of all faiths are engaged in an ongoing celebration of one another's traditions. In his discussion of the rise of the Moral Majority quoted above, Neuhaus was quite clear that very serious theological differences exist among Christians. And likewise, the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was marred at its closing when a dispute broke out over land regulations. Then the archbishop charged his detractors with anti-Catholicism. In his discussion of religious mobilization over the Endangered Species Act, Moody (2002:249) also notes how mainline Protestant activists took issue with the idea that evangelicals could take credit for that victory, arguing that it may really have been their own quiet, behind-the-scenes work that turned the trick. Even cooperation does not dispel all rivalry. More significantly, when it comes to the ecumenical movement itself, any observer will confirm that it moves at a glacial pace, if at all. Among Catholics in particular participation in the ecumenical movement has fallen to pro-forma levels in many arenas. Genuine goodwill has not sufficed to will away differences that turn out to be difficult and deep-seated. Nonetheless, these differences are no longer held in the same oppositional way they once were.

It should also be clear that not all religious groups have adopted a pluralist orientation. In the first chapter I described a campus where a more sectarian ethos prevailed. There school officials maintained a culture that integrated faith, science, and service in a mix that many students found quite compelling. That synthesis supported them in their own personal integration. However, it came at the cost of a lack of integration with the larger society. Accordingly, I came across repeated signs of estrangement on the campus. Administrators interrogated me about my motives or did not return requests for interviews, a reaction I did not come across elsewhere. While I attended a class in the environmental studies program, the professor ridiculed the mainstream science on global climate change. He argued that it was in fact driven by ideology, rather than empirical data. In interviews students repeatedly criticized the moral standards of the larger society. And when I walked into the admissions office the staff there just happened to be
talking about a famous court case where a student of the school was denied state financial aid because he was majoring in theology. The state claimed that his doing so constituted religious training akin to seminary preparation, and therefore it could not be funded. However, it did not make a similar determination regarding theology majors at other universities. As a result, people in the admissions office felt their school had been singled out for persecution. This alienated orientation to the larger society was then reflected in the institutional culture the school fostered. While students were involved in service work, that service was closely tied to denominational affiliates, and also to missionary efforts undertaken by the church. Beyond that the denomination itself was not known for its involvement in public life. It certainly did not undertake initiatives like the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project.

It is indeed an irony of history that in contemporary America the Catholic Church has been able to overcome much of the estrangement that once typified its existence, while this denomination, which was founded in America and which in many respects remains quintessentially American in culture, no longer seems to find itself quite at home in the United States. In any case, it does suggest that there may be no single, obvious direction to the course that religious evolution will take in the years and decades ahead. The purpose here has not been to suggest that internally grounded pluralism is the universal future awaiting all faith communities. Nonetheless, it is a profound development within Catholicism, one that has profound implications both on a practical level for American public life and on a theoretical level for the sociology of religion.

B. Internally Grounded Pluralism and Civil Society

In the West the early modern social order of came into being through a series of allied processes, and prominent among these was the structural differentiation that disengaged the Church from its sometimes supervisory role over other key institutions of society. Advocates of
the involvement of religion in public life argue that religious institutions can still participate in public life, but in and through the arena of civil society. Many within contemporary faith communities even argue that they can even do so more authentically from within such an arena than when wedded to the structures of societal governance. The research presented here bears on the role of religion in civil society in five ways.

First, it shows that religious systems are not so closed that their terms and ideas are inaccessible or unimportant to non-members. In fact, their distinctive religious insights can be taken up as resources even by those outside the tradition. Religion can enrich the larger debate. Of course, it may require considerable effort to make available or assimilate resources across religious and cultural boundaries. It remains a question of judgment when some distinctive insight will be a contribution or remain opaque to outsiders. However, the notion that religious systems are closed universes of meaning is simply not the case. Evangelical environmentalists have been able to make very persuasive use of the notion of stewardship. And in the context of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project Catholic leaders had at least begun to make available to a wider audience the notion of sacramentality.

Secondly, religious organizations often can provide a vital perspective on the nature of the common good that secular organizations have difficulty articulating. When conducting my field work, in order to gain some perspective on the distinctive contribution of religious environmentalism, I also visited secular environmental organizations. I was interested in gaining a non-religious perspective on the impact of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project. At the same time, I wanted to compare how people in secular and religious environmental organizations spoke about their work. One exchange I had at the Seattle office of Earthjustice, a prominent national environmental organization, proved revealing. I asked why it was important to save a certain canyon, or reintroduce the wolf to this or that location, or even save a species in peril. To my interviewee these seemed the obvious things to do. But when pressed she could not give any
larger reason. She was not bereft of any answers to the "why" question. However, those involved in the religious efforts I researched often had much fuller answers. They were able to draw on religious frames that provided an overarching vocabulary and vision; it brought a certain coherence to their various insights. In his discussion of the importance of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter, a columnist quoted earlier noted that one hope was that "it could give fresh energy to an environmental movement that often suggests what we should do about the Earth without communicating why." (O'Keefe 1999b) Religion often does provide a larger vocabulary and potentially shared frame of reference for articulating one's reasons of the heart.

For this very reason secular environmental organizations themselves began the campaign to enlist religious groups in the environmental movement. In a famous talk he gave at a symposium on Religion, Science and the Environment, Carl Pope (1997), the director of the Sierra Club, issued a formal apology for disregarding the role religious organization might play in promoting a sustainable environmental ethic. In his view, many years that could have been spent working in collaboration had had been lost in mutual suspicion and disdain.

In the third place, religion also holds the promise of bringing in the whole person. For many people religion provides the frame for making a connection between objective issues in the social world, issues "out there," and issues that are salient for people on a more existential level. Religion can help connect up grand causes with what Habermas calls "the lifeworld." Making such a connection is what religious professionals are in fact trained to do. The members of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project Steering Committee were specifically concerned with crafting a process and a document that engaged people in their homes and churches and communities. Indeed, while Earthjustice has published many excellent legal briefs, it cannot boast one that it ends with a poem.

Fourthly, religious environmentalism has also been able to cross a divide that has often stymied the secular environmental movement. It is able provide a frame large enough to speak
about both the natural world and the social world coherently. There are also secular organizations that have taken a creative stab at bringing the two together. Greenpeace waged its anti-nuclear campaign in the name of peace and the environment (hence the name "green" + "peace"). But while that frame worked for a particular campaign, and very successfully, it was not readily transferable to Greenpeace's other endeavors. By contrast, religious environmentalists have been able to talk about how the human good and the good for nature cohere within some larger unity. In the context of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, that meant being able to offer a vision that did not sacrifice one good to the other. Rather both fit into a larger, structured worldview.

Finally, religious organizations often have the capacity to bring together a range of stakeholders in the community in a way that other organizations do not. That is not to say that religious organizations are not at times partisan themselves. However, they also have an avowed purpose beyond their own partisan ends. Thus the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project was able to bring people to the table in a way that no other effort in the region had. One priest of the Seattle Archdiocese put it this way:

The Methodists, the Lutherans, the Presbyterians all marveled at the process…that the Catholic bishops were able to get people to sit down together and realize they had common interests, common ground—people who you would think hated each other based on previous interaction! (Weekly 2005)

Religious groups are able to play such a role for two reasons. In the first place, they are often trusted members of the community. As people noted in the case of the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project, they can served as trusted brokers when they support dialogue. Second, the frames they provide not only connect issues, or the human good and the good for nature. They also connect people across entrenched interest groups. As several people involved in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project observed, it was in the context of participating in the Project that people realized that for all their differences they had a common stake in preserving the wellbeing
of the larger community and the health of the Columbia Watershed.

Thus the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project exemplified many of the positive contributions that religion can make to the environmental movement and to public life. These were not simply incidental to that particular project. They were rooted in the social nature of religion as a shared commitment to an end which transcends any given secular purpose.

C. Internally Grounded Pluralism and the Sociology of Religion

The role religious groups can play in society is not incidental to the nature of religion. Because religion operates within a large frame of reference, by definition the largest of frames, religion has the capacity to pull together a wide spectrum of interests and stakeholders. At the same time, in sociology theory, the "absoluteness" of the orientation of any religious system led theorists such as Peter Berger to speculate that religion must be an all-encompassing structure, one which can admit no rivals. However, if religious systems are more open than previous models adopted in the sociology of religion suggest, then a better conceptual model is necessary in order to make sense of that openness.

Here the notion introduced at the outset this study has certain advantages. By defining religion as a frame of meaning oriented to term of reference that is held to be transcendent, this definition underscores how religion can contain symbolic resources that are systematic yet also open. This notion underscores that no religious system can be constructed in such a way as to completely capture the term to which it is oriented without ceasing to be a religious system. A transcendent term is just that, a term that cannot be bounded. Thus, while in monotheistic traditions many religious spokespersons claim insight into the will God, they also regularly affirm that their own church or temple or group does not own God. Instead they worship God. Likewise, classical Daoist scriptures teach about the Dao while simultaneously affirming that no one can really grasp the Dao conceptually; rather, it is ineffable. Indeed, in the history of religion many
traditions contain affirmations that would be difficult to make sense of according to other sociological models. Because the language of religion is replete with this notion of a transcendent term, it has resources both for comprehensiveness and openness. The real sociological question may not be what enables religious systems to be open, but what leads such systems to close down or develop defensive postures at certain moments in their history.

When sociology first began to coalesce as a discipline, social theorists were wont to view religion simply as a closed, rival ideology. It was dismissed as "traditional," in the sense of an inherited form, something passed on, but essentially lifeless. The "traditional" was counterpoised to the "modern," so that to the extent that anything traditional perdured in the modern era, it did so as a relic from the past, a projection of the ethos of another era, perhaps of sentimental or purely humanistic interest, but not a vital force. According to this perspective, those religious cultures that did exhibit some vitality, such as fundamentalism, were simply engaging in rearguard action as they marched into retreat. Such a perspective reflected the degree to which sociology itself was caught up in the grand narrative of modernity. Its assumptions about religion remained deeply embedded until the 1960s, and as a result these assumptions often forestalled a proper appreciation of the way that religious culture does adapt to and even change a changing world. Recent trends in the sociology of religion reflect an about face, and contemporary theorists now stress the capacity for cultural innovation that religious systems do manifest.

Internally grounded pluralism represents one such innovation. It is an innovation which enables religion precisely to respond to the circumstance of religious diversity in modern, constitutional democracies. It enables religious groups to work together for the common good, not merely provisionally, but for internally grounded reasons.

The significance of this development does not exhaust itself in the impact that it has on a given social cause or movement, be it civil rights or the environment. The trend of Catholic involvement in American public life runs precisely counter to what secularization theory would
have predicted because there is a role that religion can play in the social order that may be unique. The fact that environmentalists, who were once considered among the most secular of social activists, have been willing to embrace faith communities as partners represents a startling turn around.

But more significant is the collaboration that has emerged between religious groups themselves. That collaboration is significant because it was not really secular activists who were most effective in removing religion from American public life. Through the course of the twentieth century it was religious rivalry that led to that outcome. At the turn of the century rancor between religious conservatives and religious liberals led to definitions of secular neutrality that refused any accommodation to the former. Then by midcentury Catholic-Protestant rivalries were intense enough that denuding public space of any religious reference was seen as the only way to keep civil peace. The assumption behind such a proposal was that the religious symbols of one group were simply sectarian and intolerable to members of another. However, the acceptability of religious symbols beyond the bounds of a given religious group may in fact turn on how various religious groups construct one another. If religious groups themselves hold their religious constructs in ways that are more open to one another, rather than in a competitive or hegemonic manner, then the assumptions behind the proposal that public life demands "secular neutrality" may not be as cogent. That religious groups have been able to collaborate in promoting civic culture and the wellbeing of society, doing so precisely in religious terms, points to expanded possibilities for religion in modern public life. If religious groups have the capacity to function in a more collaborative way in society, and even find room for one another in some larger religious universe, then they have achieved an innovation that is well-suited to the circumstances of Western modernity.
Appendix I: Terms Used in This Study

This appendix summarizes how key terms are used in this study. In their respective disciplines in the theological and social sciences these terms have been given a range of formulations during a long and complex history. The definitions given here reflect the understanding of the author of the contemporary common sense of these terms, or the determination of how these terms are used in the present project. No attempt to summarize or adjudicate the meaning of these terms is intended.

Catholic social teaching: The body of Catholic thought concerning the social order, and especially the realization of the biblical mandate of justice. Catholic social teaching combines reflection on justice in society with a sustained philosophical approach rooted in the natural law tradition. Though Catholic thinkers prior to Leo XIII (pope 1878–1903) certainly reflected on the modern state and industrial society, in Leo's own writing new lines of thought for engaging the modern world were opened up. For that reason, modern Catholic social teaching is commonly dated to his pontificate, at least when it comes to the highest authoritative expressions of the tradition.

Consensus religiosity: Least common denominator religious positions.

Ecumenical: Having to do with relations among Christians, especially improving those relations and realizing some larger unity and confraternity.

Engaged theology: Theological reflection that takes the concrete circumstances of the local as a vehicle for probing and developing the tradition itself.

Exclusivism (in Christian theology): The notion that salvation (understood as the reconciliation between humanity and God) was definitively achieved in and through Christ, and this salvation is only available to individuals who are explicitly members of the Church.

Inclusivism (in Christian theology): The notion that salvation (understood as the reconciliation between humanity and God) was definitively achieved in and through Christ, yet this salvation is available to all human persons through some implicit unity with Christ and the Church.

Interfaith (in this study): Encompassing both ecumenical and interreligious (relations, questions, and so forth).

Internally grounded pluralism: Pluralism rooted in the praxis of a faith community which acknowledges a religious universe extending beyond the borders of their own practice, tradition, and community.

[Internally grounded] pluralism as dialogue: An openness to the voice of religious others, which allows them to represent themselves in their own terms and makes an effort to understand accordingly. It suspends judgment at least until hearing and understanding have taken place, offering neither approbation nor condemnation in advance. Just as others are allowed their own voice, so the interlocutor is allowed to operate out of a tradition, which indeed, he or she is bound to acknowledge. This in turn implies an awareness of being located, of historicity and social location.
[Internally grounded] pluralism as metanarrative: This is a strategy for negotiating religious diversity under the rubric of some overarching schema applied to all traditions. This schema articulates announces in advance what all religions essentially do or are essentially about.

[Internally grounded] pluralism as subordination: A willingness to acknowledge religious others only in terms of one's own categories. The other tradition is mapped using one's own coordinate system. The other has no independent voice.

Interreligious: Describes relations, dialogue, questions and so forth arising between distinct faith traditions.

Mediating structure: A practical entente for working out relations between parties, one that is reasonable in the sense that all parties can acknowledge the values at stake, but which may not order those values as any one party would like. It does not have to be a self-grounding, self-consistent philosophy in its own right. It may reside within some larger social philosophy, or it may mediate between same.

Pluralism (in Christian theology): The notion that salvation was achieved in and through Christ, but may also have been achieved in and through other salvific figures or events. Open to a wider understanding of the very nature of "salvation." Goes beyond both exclusivism and inclusivism in Christian theology.

Pluralism: The term is often used as a synonym for mere diversity in its bare facticity. In this study the understanding that diversity is always incorporated into some larger unity is an explicit dimension of the meaning of pluralism. Pluralism then refers to propositions in the social world for how diversity is or should be accommodated, as well as to corresponding social arrangements.

Public religion: first used page 2; defined page 125 "religion's participation in the public sphere," but can also include dimensions Casanova associates with political society.

Public theology: Theological reflection which is able to fully serve as public discourse, unhindered by sectarian or other prejudices that would render it "merely" private.

Public (when applied to the actions or attributes of a given religious group): That which is relevant to, includes, affects, or is addressed to members of other religious groups. It is always a matter of degree.

Regime: A set of normative set of rules that order social relations in a relatively stable and authoritative way. Here the concern is with regimes that determine how religion can be brought into public life.

Religion (in this study): A system of thought, practice, and social relations in which a transcendent term or framework occupies the center of meaning. In the United States most often that central term is the God of Jewish and Christian faith.

Religious diversity: The presence of a multiplicity of religious groups or identities in a particular society or other context.

Secular: That which is understood in terms of a bounded system of meaning. The link with any
transcendent term or framework is eschewed.

Secular neutrality: Describes arrangements which bracket all reference to religion or any transcendent term so as not to explicitly favor any one tradition. The purpose of such neutrality may be to provide a common ground for the equal participation of religious groups in society, or it may be to protect privileged institutions from the influence of religious elites. In any event, insofar as those arrangements may historically derive from and remain congenial to some religious terms or systems and not others, they are never as completely neutral as they purport to be.

Secularism: A militantly secular ideology, one that would preclude connection to any religious term or frame.

Secularity: An approach to social policy that prescinds from religious reference but does not deny its very possibility.

Spirituality: The root meaning of this notion is an orientation to those values in human existence that are not purely material or physical. By that token they are not necessarily religious (understood in reference to a transcendent frame of meaning), but religious values are often spiritual. The really interesting point to note when it comes to "spirituality" is not the definition but the use to which the term is put.

Structural pluralism: The regime of laws and norms that govern the place of diverse religious groups in given society (or perhaps some other context); the overarching structures to which all religious groups in a society submit.

[Structural] pluralism as inclusion: A regime which allows minority religious groups to have voice so long as they do not threaten hegemony of the dominant group.

[Structural] pluralism as participation: A regime which allows minority religious groups to have a legitimate voice in the arrangements that govern all.

[Structural] pluralism as toleration: A regime which allows minority religious groups to exist but not have any voice in the arrangements that govern them.
Appendix II: Websites of Relevant Institutions

The World Wide Web websites used as primary sources in this study are listed below, indexed according to the name of the host institution. Since this study closely follows how various institutions present themselves and portray their participation in the larger society, it makes reference to the statements of those institutions that appear on their respective websites (in addition to other informal publications such as brochures, memos, newsletters, syllabi, and so forth).

If a primary source item cited is an official document (some finalized text given a formal title), it will be listed separately in the Bibliography that follows. If the primary material is more informal, I simply refer the reader to the relevant website. If the specific location of the information from a website (how to navigate to it from within the website) is relevant to the discussion where it is cited, it will be noted in that discussion or in a footnote.

Secondary resources (newspaper, magazine, encyclopedia, and journal articles, and other such materials) taken from the Web are integrated into the Bibliography. Citations for these resources include the entire web address (the URL) according to the format recommended by the American Sociological Association.

In this study a "website" is defined as a single main address on the Internet (usually the World Wide Web) corresponding to some entity (a person or organization) that has posting the relevant material. A whole series of webpages may be organized hierarchically under that site. The particular webpages contain the actual information one may view. They usually contain the address of the website as the prefatory part of their own URL. The address of what is usually called the "homepage" of the hosting entity may be identical to that of the website itself, or it may contain a further specification such as "/main.html" or "/index.html".

Since a website is here defined in terms of the entity that is posting the material, and not in terms of the structure of the URL itself, a website as defined here does not have to end in "dot com," "dot educate," or any of the other "dots." Thus Seattle University has its own website, "www.seattleu.edu," one which does end in "dot edu." At the same time, the Environmental Studies department of S.U., a subsidiary but distinct entity in its own right, has its own website, "www.seattleu.edu/artsci/eco," which does not end in "dot edu," but which I nonetheless list here as a "website."

I follow the above conventions as the most expeditious and least intrusive way of specifying numerous web-based sources. By their nature they present a challenge because they are constantly updated, changed, or even deleted.

In general, website references were retrieved from when initial research for this study was begun through the period when the first version was drafted, roughly from 2004 through early 2007. All website listings were current during this study and up to the time of its present publication, unless otherwise noted.

Note: Prefatory articles have been dropped from the website names.

Harvard Forum on Religion and Ecology. See "Forum on Religion and Ecology (FORE)."
Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES). www.stewards.net.¹
Vatican. See "Holy See."

¹ Now the Cornwall Alliance.
Appendix III: Participants in the Columbia River Pastoral Letter Project

The bishops of the Columbia River Watershed, signatories to the final document:

Archbishop Alex J. Brunett, Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington
Archbishop John G. Vlazny, Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon
Bishop Eugene J. Cooney, Diocese of Nelson, British Columbia
Bishop Michael P. Driscoll, Diocese of Boise, Idaho
Bishop Robert C. Morlino, Diocese of Helena, Montana
Bishop Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J., Diocese of Yakima, Washington
Bishop William S. Skylstad. Diocese of Spokane, Washington
Bishop Robert F. Vasa, Diocese of Baker, Oregon
Auxiliary Bishop Kenneth D. Steiner, Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon
Auxiliary Bishop George L. Thomas, Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington
Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen (Retired), Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington
Bishop Thomas J. Connolly (Retired), Diocese of Baker, Oregon

The Project Steering Committee (in alphabetical order by surname):

Bishop William Skylstad, Diocese of Spokane, Washington, Chair
Mr. Joseph Burns, Diocese of Baker, Hermiston, Oregon
Mr. Robert J. Castagna, Oregon Catholic Conference, Portland, Oregon
Rev. Scott Coble, SJ, Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington
Mr. J. L. Drouhard, Justice & Peace Office, Archdiocese of Seattle, Washington
Prof. Frank Fromherz, Justice and Peace Office, Archdiocese of Portland, Oregon
Ms. Donna Hanson, Social Ministries Office, Diocese of Spokane, Washington
Prof. John Hart, Carroll College, Helena, Montana
Prof. Loretta Jancoski, Seattle University, Seattle, Washington
Prof. Steve Kolmes, University of Portland, Oregon
Rev. Pat Monette, Pastor, Westbank, British Columbia, Canada
Sr. Sharon Park, OP, Director, Washington Catholic Conference, Seattle, Washington
Rev. Ron Patnode, Pastor, Sunnyside, Washington
Prof. Mark Petruncio, Heritage College, Toppenish, Washington
Sr. Cecilia Ranger, SNJM, Marylhurst College, Marylhurst, Oregon
Mr. John Reid, Project Manager, Reid & Associates, Inc., Seattle, Washington
Ms. Yvonne Smith, Diocese of Yakima, Wapato, Washington
Mr. Wes Towle, Diocese of Nelson, Nakusp, British Columbia, Canada

1 Taken from the final document, The Columbia River Watershed: Caring for Creation and the Common Good–An International Pastoral Letter by the Bishops of the Region (Columbia River Watershed Catholic Bishops 2001b), pages 19–22.
Project Resource Consultants (in alphabetical order by surname):

Mr. Loren Bahls, Helena, Montana
Prof. Dianne Bergant, CSA, Chicago, Illinois
Rev. Carla Berkedal, Mercer Island, Washington
Dr. Russ Butkus, Portland, Oregon
Sr. Judy Byron, OP, Seattle, Washington
Mr. Pat Clancey, Ennis, Montana
Prof. Carol Dempsey, OP, Portland, Oregon
Rev. John DuLong, Revelstoke, B.C.
Rev. Hugh Feiss, OSB, Jerome, Idaho
Mr. Walt Grazer, Washington, D.C.
Mr. Richard Harmon, Portland, Oregon
Chief Johnny Jackson, Underwood, Washington
Rev. Charles Lienert, Portland, Oregon
Mr. Jim Male, Portland, Oregon
Ms. Debrah Marriott, Portland, Oregon
Prof. David McCloskey, Seattle, Washington
Prof. Sallie McFague, Nashville, Tennessee
Mr. Gary McNeil, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Mr. Sabino Sardineta, Cornelius, Oregon
Mr. Wilbur Slockish, Jr., The Dalles, Oregon
Ms. Mary Jo Tully, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Portland
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