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J. N. Andrews Honors Program

Andrews University

Honors Thesis

Religious & Political Attitudes towards Women in Power

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HONS 497

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Behavioral Science & Political Science

Abstract

This paper examines the influences of religious and political attitudes on attitudes towards women in power. Specifically, I measure the ideology and general favorability of Conservative Christians (Seventh-day Adventists) towards various political candidates and ideological positions. This question is worth analyzing, considering relatively recent events regarding the role of women in politics and corresponding discussion in religious circles on the role of women in church leadership. A survey method was used to test whether there is a relationship between attitudes towards women in power in politics (female political candidates) and women in power in religion (women's ordination), as well as to measure additional variables that might predict any relationship. 351 subjects in three separate groups indicated attitudes towards ten religious and ten political statements using a 5-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The results were analyzed using a Pearson's correlation coefficient, while also running the non-parametric Kendall's tau-b because of possible violations of parametric assumptions. The hypothesis that a strong positive relationship exists between attitudes towards religious women & political women in power was supported by a statistically significant positive correlation at the level of more general attitudes between women's ordination and female political candidates, but not when specific candidates were considered. Finally, favorability towards women in power and more "liberal" ideology were positively correlated to some degree, which suggests changing attitudes towards women in power have an ideological basis that may be consistent with trends within Conservative Protestant circles.

Religious & Political Attitudes towards Women in Power

What is the relationship between the attitudes people hold towards women in power in religious and political arenas? This question is worth asking considering recent events on the role of women in politics. A woman almost won the nomination of a major party for president in 2008, while another woman was on the ticket as the vice president for the Republican Party (another first). This is significant because back in 1969 only 53% of Americans said they would vote for a female president (Kohut, 2007). Previous research has shown a strong positive relationship between opinions on religion and politics (Deckman, Crawford, Olson & Green, 2003). Regarding Conservative Christians, and specifically Seventh-day Adventists (SDA) in the current study, this question can be asked concerning other controversial issues relating to gender. One of these issues is the ordination of women. In other conservative protestant denominations this has been a controversial topic now that there are conservative women in politics. The current study examines attitudes towards women in power in both religious and political arenas, as these issues often divide along ideological lines and in the case of religion, are “more than theological” (Baker, 2008, p.1). The results of this survey should clarify some of these issues.

Literature Review

The relationship between religious and political attitudes with the United States is complex and spans many factors. Research has demonstrated that Conservative Protestants (who can also be referred to as Evangelicals) tend to have specific paradigms on ideological issues related to gender attitudes (Woodberry & Smith, 1998; Lewis, & De Bernardo, 2010). Specifically in the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) church the issue of women’s ordination elicits heated debate, and yet very rarely have attitudes towards this practice been studied in relationship to attitudes towards secular/religious ideological issues or political candidates. This is significant due to events that have

transpired in the last few years regarding the role of women in power, and the reactions of various individuals towards these events. Most of the research regarding women and politics, however, has tended to focus on representation in legislative bodies (Tremblay & Pelletier, 2000), and a study from twenty years ago showed women occupying proportionately fewer positions of power in organizations, especially at the highest levels (Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). This has been true in religious organizations as well where women have not traditionally been given equal treatment within the system (Dudley, 1996). The condition for women in the political realm has been even worse both in terms of political office and appointed positions (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999). A change does appear to be occurring, however. For example, in 1969 only 53% of Americans said they would vote for a female president though today that number has climbed to 88% (Kohut, 2007). The advancement of two women, Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin, in the 2008 Presidential elections in the United States demonstrates that attitudes towards women are changing. This new situation of prominent female political candidates at the national level has provided another variable that can be tested both in relationship to attitudes towards women's ordination and other specific ideological issues such as the legalization of same-sex marriage (Olson, Cadge, & Harrison, 2006). One of the outcome variables for this experiment is attitudes toward female political candidates. This has previously been operationally defined to mean voter perceptions on the question of whether men are better suited emotionally for politics (Seltzer, Newman & Leighton, 1997), if the voter would vote in favor of a qualified woman from their party (Seltzer, Newman & Leighton, 1997) or comparing specific female candidates (Atkeson, 2003). That is, while many perceptions of female political candidates have been measured through approval surveys, those surveys tended to focus more on the ideology of the candidate rather than perceptions towards the candidate generally.

There is evidence that attitudes towards women in power are influenced by ideology, for example countries with more left-wing governments seem to have more women represented in their legislatures while at the opposite end countries with large populations of religions which highlight conventional roles for women appear to have fewer women in government (Kenworthy & Malami, 1999). Ideology can be multi-definitional, but it usually refers to “a high degree of consistency among political attitudes-attitudes on a wide range of issues falling into clear liberal and conservative tendencies” (Nie & Andersen, 1974, p. 541). This same constellation of attitudes has been found in the religious realm as well (Froese & Bader, 2007). Conservative attitudes have often been described as “moral standards traditionalism” which refers “to a cognitive orientation that draws a strong contrast between right and wrong ways of living” (Brint & Abrutyn, 2010, p. 330). For example those with Conservative attitudes towards morality and secularism were found to be more likely to oppose same-sex unions (Olson, Cadge, & Harrison, 2006). On the other side is “the nurturing outlook of liberal politicians” which seeks to extend social rights of citizenship and acceptance to all members of the community and emphasizes both pluralism and inclusiveness (Brint & Abrutyn, 2010, p. 331). With the issue of abortion, the ideological divide was also found with Democrats and Liberals having stronger pro-choice views, while Republicans and Conservatives held stronger pro-life views (Hess & Rueb, 2005). Even in the general sense there is already a large body of literature showing that political actors (including voters) with orthodox beliefs and affiliations tend to support the Republican Party while those who identify as religious liberals and secularists disproportionately back the Democratic Party (Layman, 1997). This has led some researchers to conclude that the impact of religious orthodoxy on political behaviors should be increasing, with doctrinal conservatives identifying and voting with the Republican Party and

doctrinal liberals doing likewise with the Democratic Party (Layman, 1997). Indeed, there is a tendency for religious people to vote Republican (Seltzer, Newman & Leighton, 1997).

There has also been a little research done on the relationship between attitudes on women's ordination and female political candidates. What research exists focuses on differences along ideological lines as is previously noted (ex. liberal feminist views vs. religious conservative views). The main argument seems to be that when it comes to ideology there is a distinct difference between male and female clergy on ideological issues. Schlozman, Burns, and Verba (1999) as cited in Deckman, Crawford, Olson & Green, (2003) p. 625, point this out by mentioning how some of the largest gender differences center around feminism and concerns often related to the religious right. They explain how women clergy are less likely than their male counterparts to support teaching scientific creationism; have a greater opposition to abstinence-based sex education, greater support for public schools, and stronger affirmation of gay rights. Since many conservative Protestant denominations are outspoken in their opposition to women's ordination, the SDA church for example, it is revealing that the women clergy frequently appeared to possess viewpoints on key issues that directly contrast with those of the religious right. Discussion of this issue in the press suggests a relationship as well. Banks (2008) in noting the view of conservative Southern Baptists opposed to women's ordination, while also in favor of Sarah Palin for vice president, mentions that there are still some conservative callers who complain that a woman "has no business being in politics", (Banks, 2008, p. 1) and implies that these same people are against woman's ordination due to their conservative viewpoints.

Attitudes towards religious women in power will be operationally defined as favorability towards women's ordination. Most research done in the past has centered on specific churches or the number of delegates at the Seventh - day Adventist (SDA) General Conference sessions

supportive of women's ordination (Dudley, 1996). I have defined this by concentrating on lay members and church leadership alike. As previously stated, my population was controlled as I only surveyed SDA. In the first study I looked at a couple extra dependent variables to analyze this issue in relation to the favorability of a specific candidate. I reasoned that this could be a somewhat effective control for political attitudes. I have chosen attitudes towards women's ordination as outcome variable religious attitudes towards women in power because it reflects an issue where women are increasingly taking positions of authority within religious organizations (Dudley, 1996). This is a change because theologians have historically given various religious reasons for this gender caste system (Dudley, 1996). It is possible that resistance to the ministry of women is a specific example of a "more pervasive conservative sex role ideology" (Nason-Clark, 1987). Since conservatives generally give less favorable views of women politicians (Woodberry & Smith, 1998), I want to see if this generalization holds true in the SDA church.

To further understand this relationship I analyzed attitudes towards women in power (religious and political) and correlated these attitudes with specific ideological positions. I hypothesize (1) that there will be a strong positive correlation in favorability towards both religious and political women, and (2) that favorability towards women in power will correlate in a strong positive direction with favorability towards various traditionally "liberal" attitudes while a negative correlation will exist in favourability towards women in power with traditionally "conservative" attitudes.

Methodology

Subjects

In order to measure attitudes on religious and political issues I obtained responses to an on-line survey of attitudes from three different samples. The first sample was a convenience and

snowball sample of 93 individuals who fell within a range of ideological attitudes among American Seventh-day Adventists collected during the Fall of 2008. Subjects were restricted to SDA adults (age 18+) who were American citizens. I used my own personal and family e-mail contacts, as well as the social network facebook to find participants to take the survey. This helped assure that there would be more demographic diversity.

The second group was a convenience sampling of 96 students within general education undergraduate classes at Andrews University who were also American Seventh-day Adventists collected during the Spring of 2010. I also was able to collect a third convenience sample of 162 students from Andrews University using the same demographics as the second group in the Fall of 2010.

Design

I ran a correlational study comparing respondent attitudes towards religious and political issues. In order to avoid response bias, the survey questionnaire, which I created, was made up of twenty statements dealing with various religious and political issues in an [agree/disagree] format. Subjects responded using a 5-point Likert scale. However, more than half of the questions were unrelated to the issue of women in power in order to discourage response bias.

Analysis

I will present three different analyses of the data from this study. In the first analysis I will examine the relationship between attitudes towards women with religious power (as measured by the statement "I have a favorable opinion of women's ordination") and attitudes towards women with political power (as measured by the statement "I support/have a favorable opinion of women running for political office") looking only at the results from my first sample.

In the second analysis I examine the relationship between general attitudes towards women in power and specific attitudes towards national female candidates from the 2008 Presidential election in the United States using my first 2 samples. The general attitude was measured as in the first analysis above, while attitudes towards specific female political candidates were measured by statements concerning Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin.

The last analysis examines general attitudes towards women in power (religious/political) in relationship to specific ideological positions of the survey respondents. I analyze correlations of the general attitude statements with favorability towards six ideological attitude statements (belief in a literal 6-day creation, agreement with contemporary music in church worship services, agreement with the idea that there are many paths to God, approval of the Democratic Party, approval of the Republican Party, and approval of the right of same sex couples to legally marry). The 6 ideological statements were chosen *a priori* because they have been reported to involve polarization, as well as a spectrum of viewpoints (Brint & Abrutyn, 2010; Herek, 1987; Layman, 1997; Lewis, & De Bernardo, 2010). This analysis will be done first as an aggregate of all 3 groups, and then separately, only focusing however on the relationship between attitudes on women in power and ideology. I chose to not include the variables on specific female political candidates in Study 3, because of their polarizing effect on my results in Study 2, as will be discussed later.

In order to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between these variables I conducted two types of statistical tests. First, I ran a correlation matrix, which showed which variables were related as well as the strength of that relationship. This was done using the parametric Pearson's correlation coefficient test. Additionally, in order to ensure that any relationships I found in my data were not due to violations of assumptions within the Pearson's correlation, I simultaneously ran the corresponding non-parametric test Kendall's tau-b. The second

step in this analysis was to perform an ordinal stepwise regression with attitudes towards women in power as the outcome variables, while all the other variables (ideological) as the predictor variables.

My hypothesis for the first study was that those who favor women's ordination would have a higher favorability towards female political candidates. For the second study I hypothesized that favorability towards women's ordination would be strongly correlated in a positive direction with favorability towards specific candidates with a positive relationship existing with favorability for Hillary Clinton and a negative relationship for favorability towards Sarah Palin. Finally, for the last study I hypothesized that favorability towards women in power (both religious & political) would be strongly correlated in a positive direction with favorability towards traditionally liberal attitudes such as the Democratic party, same-sex marriage, the idea that there are many paths to God, and possibly favorability towards contemporary music in church worship services. I also posited that there would be a negative correlation in attitudes towards women in power with favorability towards more traditionally conservative attitudes such as a literal 6-day creation and the Republican Party.

Findings

Variables

Overall it appears that the responses to political attitude statements tend to be more normally distributed with some variation within the individual samples. On the other hand, the responses to religious attitude statements were often either very skewed or bimodal. In addition, the email sample (Sample 1) differed between from both the college samples (Samples 2 and 3).

Study 1 (Sample 1)

The hypothesis for a positive relationship between those favoring women's ordination and favoring female political candidates was supported, though the correlation was not quite as strong as

hypothesized. There was a moderate correlation between attitudes towards women in power in religion and in politics ($r=.345$, $p<.001$). The Kendall's tau-b indicated a similar relationship ($r=.269$, $p<.002$).

Table 1

| | | I have a favorable opinion of Women's ordination. | | | | | |
|--|--------------|--|----|----|----|----|-------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total |
| I support/have a favorable opinion of women running for political office. | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 7 |
| | 3 | 8 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 17 |
| | 4 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 25 |
| | 5 | 13 | 4 | 7 | 4 | 11 | 39 |
| | Total | 38 | 12 | 16 | 11 | 16 | 93 |

Study 2 (Samples 1 & 2)

First Hypothesis that favorability towards women's ordination would be strongly correlated in a positive direction with favorability towards female political candidates was supported (Sample 1: $r=.345$, $p<.01$) (Sample 2: $r=.605$, $p<.01$). Second hypothesis that favorability towards specific candidates would be strongly correlated with favorability towards women's ordination not supported. Specifically the hypothesis that a strong positive relationship between favorability towards women's ordination would exist with favorability for Hillary Clinton and a strong negative relationship for favorability towards Sarah Palin was not supported. (Sample 1: Clinton: $r=.136$, $p=.19$; Palin: $r=.160$, $p=.13$) (Sample 2: Clinton: $r=.142$, $p=.17$; Palin $r=-.045$, $p=.66$)

Figure 1

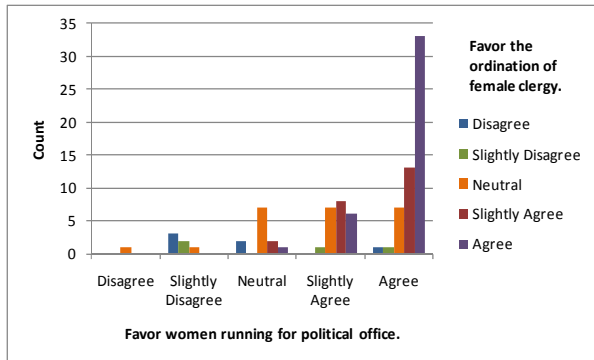
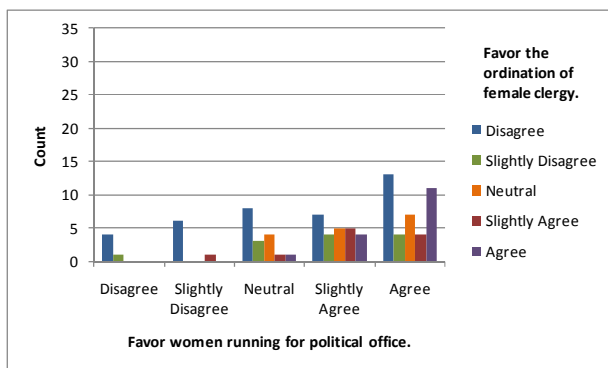


Figure 2



Study 3 (Samples 1, 2 & 3)

Full Group (Aggregated Data of all 351)-The hypothesis that favorability towards women in power (both religious & political) would be strongly correlated in a positive direction with favorability towards traditionally liberal attitudes such as the Democratic party, same-sex marriage, the idea that there are many paths to God, and possibly favorability towards contemporary music in church worship services was partially supported. Those who favor women’s ordination are 1.93 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.491, p<.00$), 1.24 times more likely to favor the idea that there are many paths to God R6 ($r=.352, p<.00$), 1.28 times more likely to favor the Democratic Party P6 ($r=.275, p<.00$), and 1.19 times more likely to favor legalization of same-sex marriage P8 ($r=.218, p<.00$). Furthermore, those who favor female political candidates are 1.39 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.269, p<.00$), and 1.25 times more likely to favor the

Democratic Party P6 ($r=.215$, $p<.00$). Second hypothesis that there would be a negative correlation in attitudes towards women in power with favorability towards more traditionally conservative attitudes such as a literal 6-day creation and the Republican Party partially supported. Those who favor women's ordination are .75 times more likely to favor a 6 day literal creation R1 ($r=-.171$, $p<.001$). No significant correlation, however for favorability towards Republican Party P10. The correlations with lower significance had the least variability.

Group 1 (93 convenience sample)- The hypothesis that favorability towards women in power (both religious & political) would be strongly positively correlated with favorability towards traditionally liberal attitudes such as the Democratic party, same-sex marriage, the idea that there are many paths to God, and possibly favorability towards contemporary music in church worship services was partially supported. Those who favor women's ordination are 2.17 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.574$, $p<.00$), 1.62 times more likely to favor the Democratic Party P6 ($r=.264$, $p<.01$), and 1.19 times more likely to favor the idea that there are many paths to God R6 ($r=.356$, $p<.00$). Furthermore, those who favor female political candidates are 1.34 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.275$, $p<.01$). The Second hypothesis that there would be a negative correlation in attitudes towards women in power with favorability towards more traditionally conservative attitudes such as a literal 6-day creation and the Republican Party both partially supported and falsified. Those who favor women's ordination are .36 times more likely to favor a 6 day literal creation R1 ($r=-.214$, $p<.04$), though they are also 1.39 times more likely to favor the Republican Party P10 ($r=-.205$, $p<.05$).

Group 2 (96 AU students Spring 10)-The hypothesis that favorability towards women in power (both religious & political) would be strongly positively correlated with favorability towards traditionally liberal attitudes such as the Democratic party, same-sex marriage, the idea that there are many

paths to God, and possibly favorability towards contemporary music in church worship services was partially supported. Those who favor women's ordination are 3.07 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.482$, $p<.00$), 1.42 times more likely to favor legalization of same-sex marriage P8 ($r=.261$, $p<.01$), and 1.18 times more likely to favor the idea that there are many paths to God R6 ($r=.235$, $p<.02$). Furthermore, those who favor female political candidates are 2.47 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.399$, $p<.00$), 1.44 times more likely to favor the Democratic Party P6 ($r=.253$, $p<.01$), 1.17 times more likely to favor the idea that there are many paths to God R6 ($r=.239$, $p<.02$), and 1.11 times more likely to favor legalization of same-sex marriage P8 ($r=.206$, $p<.04$). The Second hypothesis that there would be a negative correlation in attitudes towards women in power with favorability towards more traditionally conservative attitudes such as a literal 6-day creation and the Republican Party was not supported as there were no other significant correlations.

Group 3 (162 AU students Fall 10) - The hypothesis that favorability towards women in power (both religious & political) would be strongly positively correlated with favorability towards traditionally liberal attitudes such as the Democratic party, same-sex marriage, the idea that there are many paths to God, and possibly favorability towards contemporary music in church worship services was partially supported. Those who favor women's ordination are 1.29 times more likely to favor contemporary worship music R3 ($r=.192$, $p<.01$), 1.25 times more likely to favor the Democratic Party P6 ($r=.219$, $p<.01$), 1.17 times more likely to favor the idea that there are many paths to God R6 ($r=.173$, $p<.03$), and 1.11 times more likely to favor legalization of same-sex marriage P8 ($r=.164$, $p<.04$). On the other hand, only one correlation was significant with those who favor female political candidates being 1.34 times more likely to favor the Democratic Party P6 ($r=.226$, $p<.00$). The Second hypothesis that there would be a negative correlation in attitudes towards women in power with favorability towards more traditionally conservative attitudes such as a literal 6-day creation and the

Republican Party was partially supported in that those who favored women's ordination are .81 times likely to favor the Republican Party ($r = -.165, p < .04$).

Discussion

Attitudes towards women in power seem to be related to each other whether in the religious or political fields. There was a moderately strong positive correlation between attitudes on women's ordination and female political candidates. Table 1 shows the raw data from the first sample in this study. The relationship between attitudes towards women in power in religion and politics can partially be seen by looking at certain details within Table 1. First, those who have a higher favorability of women's ordination (either a 4 or 5 [mostly agree or agree] on women's ordination) nearly unanimously also gave higher numbers on women running for political office. The relationship can also be seen on the other end where out of the 29 participants who were neutral or somewhat less favorable towards women in politics, only 3 were favorable towards women's ordination. The other 26 were either neutral or somewhat opposed (less favorable). The findings mostly supported the first hypothesis that there is a moderately positive correlation between those who favor women's ordination and their favorability towards female political candidates.

In the second analysis my findings show that there was no statistically significant difference between favorability of Sarah Palin and favorability of women's ordination. The same can be said for favorability of Hillary Clinton. In the third analysis I did find several statistically significant results both within the aggregate data from the entire group, and even within the groups. Overall, certain ideological issues which fall on the liberal side of the spectrum were related to attitudes towards women in power. Surprisingly the greatest influence appears to be attitudes towards contemporary music in church worship services. Attitude towards the Democratic Party was also a moderately positive predictor of attitudes towards women in power. Favorability towards women's ordination

also was positively related with favorability towards the idea of there being many paths to God, and towards same-sex marriage legalization while it was negatively related with belief in a literal 6-day creation.

There are some limits to my conclusions, unfortunately. First, I didn't record any demographic data (other than citizenship and religion); therefore I do not know if this was truly a representative sample from my population. Additionally, though 351 participants is certainly a high amount, more follow up surveys and studies involving a larger number of individuals would increase the validity of this study even further. Finally, I am aggregating data from 3 samples which while part of the same larger population, produce results that are different, partially evidenced by some of the weaker predictors within the samples. For example, Sample 2 produced a strong positive correlation of .605 on the relationship between favorability of attitudes towards women in power and female political candidates, while Sample 1 had a moderate positive correlation of .345. Nevertheless, this helps me achieve results that include the ideological diversity in the SDA church (Dudley, 1996; Deckman, Crawford, Olson & Green, 2003). Even with these limitations the study has high levels of validity and reliability. It has face validity as it appears to measure what it is supposed to be measuring; content validity through verification of the other questions which were asked in the survey but not analyzed in this paper, since there were a variety of answers for all of them. This leads to the conclusion that my sample is made up of a variety of SDA with different demographic and ideological backgrounds. Since I have a significant correlation between at least one of my independent and dependent variables, I can safely assume that my study has criterion validity. It seems like it may have construct validity, since it is based on ideological constructs. Using my other questions to test the reliability, it appears that this study also has internal consistency reliability. It definitely has equivalent forms reliability since my outcome variable and at least one of

my predictor variables are related. I base this information off of my previous research (Deckman, Crawford, Olson & Green, 2003) and this study's findings. I have performed several follow up surveys and therefore I can conclude that my study has some level of test-retest reliability. Furthermore, it did agree with the conclusions of my previous research, strengthening the argument that it has test-retest reliability. It has been reviewed by an expert, Karl G.D. Bailey, PhD., as well as been answered by 351 individuals all of whom help confirm that this study has interrater reliability. Overall this study is also reliable, for example in its use of the survey method which was by far the most popular method in the literature relating to this research (Dudley, 1996; Froese & Bader, 2007; Saroglou & Munoz-Garcia, 2008; Herek, 1987). Nothing from my results leads me to conclude that there are any great weaknesses with the methodology or findings.

There are several theoretical implications from this study. In Study 1 my Sample 1 participant's views on women's ordination appear to be related to their views on female political candidates. While everyone generally had a favorable opinion towards female political candidates, there was only one participant who had a favorable opinion of women's ordination and an unfavorable opinion towards female political candidates (Table 1). While it is true that correlation does not equal causation, these findings still hint that this theory is reliable. The findings also seem to suggest that the issue of women's ordination may be based on ideological or gender attitudes rather than religious beliefs, which I analyzed in my later study and will discuss further on. These findings confirm the conclusion of the press article by Baker (2008) who discusses this idea in a report on the religious and political views of Southern Baptists. Another interesting finding is taken from the individuals who were not favorable towards female political candidates. Just about all of them had negative views on women's ordination. This suggests that those who have social beliefs highlighting conventional roles for women are the same individuals who are against women's

ordination. Again, this would support the theory that attitudes towards female political candidates may be based on attitudes towards women/feminism in general. This would give credibility to the research of Kenworthy & Malami (1999) who argued that attitudes towards women in power were based on social and cultural role beliefs.

Further, the second analysis from samples 1 & 2 suggests some interesting conclusions and or speculations. The fact that there is no relationship between the general attitudes and attitudes towards specific candidates leads me to ponder if there are other extraneous variables affecting my data, or other theoretical explanations. With Sarah Palin, it is possible that those who favor her, respect her because she is a more accomplished woman, rather than respect her for her political views. These individuals maybe more likely to have a greater favorability towards women's ordination since they may tend to look at women in politics in much the same light as they view women's ordination. It is also possible for those who do not favor women's ordination to also not be favorable towards Sarah Palin since they may view the issue in terms of gender and feminism rather than political ideology. This line of thinking is what Banks (2008) found in the news article examining the issue among Conservative Christians where it indicates "a fear of women not only having a greater role in politics but a greater place in the nation's pulpits. (p. 1)" Finally, Sarah Palin is a polarizing figure who had enjoyed both very high positive and negatives in approval ratings. When conducting surveys involving individuals who are polarizing, it is very probable that the results are skewed in comparison to what would be expected for a similar situation.

Regarding Hillary Clinton, there are several factors that could explain why favorability towards her was not correlated with favorability of women's ordination. The first is that during the time this survey (the first 2 samples) was conducted Hillary Clinton still had very high negatives in her approval rating. Therefore, it is likely that there were many individuals in my survey who were

for women's ordination, but also not highly favorable towards Hillary Clinton. Also, since she is a polarizing figure there may be many individuals who are both politically liberal and favorable towards women's ordination, yet at the same time having unfavorable or neutral views of Hillary Clinton. Finally, Study 2 which used Samples 1 & 2 was conducted during the time of President Barack Obama's election victory. I would hypothesize that President Obama's supporters were also highly favorable towards women's ordination, a claim which was validated in Study 3 where a moderately significant positive relationship was found between favorability of both women's ordination and the Democratic Party (Full sample, $r=.275$, $p<.00$). The assumption is being made here that supporters of Barack Obama and the Democratic Party are rather synonymous. Since there was a strong perception that Hillary Clinton was less than pleased about President Obama's successes this could contribute to having less favorable views of her.

The third analysis produces perhaps some of the strongest and most intriguing ideas, especially with the variable of contemporary worship music. For example, my study affirms the conclusions that Conservative Protestants view gender issues in terms of their ideology (Woodberry & Smith, 1998). The participants views on women's ordination appeared be strongly related to views on other religious issues (contemporary music, many paths to God) and moderately to political issues (Democratic Party, same-sex marriage legality). This shows that both a crossover is occurring in terms of the relationship between religious and political attitudes, however religious attitudes and political attitudes are still holding together as different dimensions that overlap rather than copy each other which confirm other study's findings (Brint & Abrutyn, 2010).

Many may also ask why contemporary worship music was the strongest correlate on both dimensions. One answer is that it may most strongly reflect elements of change in contemporary culture. One prominent authority argues that specifically within a Conservative Christian context,

contemporary worship music and style may represent especially younger Christians' "world-affirming" trend to become more like their fellow Americans in their comfort with popular culture (Shibley, 1998). In many ways these new changes in attitudes both towards women in power and towards worship styles reflect a necessary recognition, especially by younger generations that the churches which survive and grow need to adapt. Shibley additionally notes how contemporary Christian music can even make church worship services feel "like a rock concert". This might additionally help explain why contemporary music was a greater influence than attitudes towards same-sex marriage, because Conservative Evangelicals are still keeping some of their core beliefs, but also adjusting them to fit within the modern context. Worship style seems to be a better method of engaging in this compromise than sexual attitudes, which are more deep seated (Herek, 1987; Olson, Cadge, & Harrison, 2006).

Feminist attitudes are also starting to enter the conservative evangelical world as this research paper has indicated. The results especially from the last two sample groups show that overwhelmingly younger conservative Christians are accepting ideas of gender equality which is consistent with the literature on women's ordination (Dudley, 1996). This is in harmony with studies showing younger evangelicals as less satisfied with traditional gender roles in family life (Shibley, 1998). As Shibley notes, it is not that evangelicals have all the sudden become feminists. No, instead they have simply adopted an "ethic of gender equality" which has become an ordinary feature of modern society. While still being "pro-family" as evidenced by the lower level of significance on same-sex marriage, the evangelical view on gender, relationships and religion is changing as they are absorbing core American values (Shibley, 1998). My second most important variable (Democratic Party) also reflects the trend of conservative Protestants of becoming more racially diverse, open to social justice issues, and care for the environment (Lewis & De Bernardo, 2010;

Shibley, 1998). While conservative Christian morality is beginning to change as can be noticed by same-sex marriage and the idea of there being many paths to God as being significant correlates towards favorability of women in power, the process is occurring gradually.

As a result attitudes towards women in power and contemporary styles are more influential. This also can help explain the negative relationship between favorability towards women's ordination and favorability towards a literal 6 day creation. Traditional "creationist" views are very much under attack within Christian (even Evangelical) circles. Those who resist women's ordination and some of these more "modernizing" trends also appear to be those who are resisting a change in the way the church has viewed science. Nevertheless, creation attitudes were weaker predictors that produced a bimodal distribution. There are still many religiously Conservative leaning individuals who favor women's ordination as well as women in power, which may explain why the best variables were contemporary worship music and also somewhat the Democratic Party.

Overall it appears that the relationship is strong and well affirmed by the literature of a connection between the religious and political realms when it comes to women in power. While attitudes towards individual candidates may not demonstrate the ideological polarity, measuring sources of new female power (such as women's ordination) can help expound on and explain these trends. Nevertheless it seems that the "spectrum" within Conservative Protestant communities is somewhat narrower than the public at large. While these communities do have a divide on religious and political issues, it is better reflected in certain cultural trends that are less tied to belief. For example, negativity towards same-sex marriage or even the behavior is widespread in the Christian world, and always has been. While negativity towards rock and other forms of contemporary music did exist, it was less grounded. My research shows that these Evangelical communities are on the path towards aligning with the culture, but there are still distinctions. The fact that contemporary

worship music was the strongest predictor, for example demonstrates that liberalizing attitudes towards women in power may represent more of a progressive change rather than an abrupt departure from the past.

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Appendix 1

Political and Religious Opinion Survey

(Please Circle your preference)

1. I have a favorable opinion towards the belief that God created the earth in 6 literal days and rested on the 7th.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

2. I have a favorable opinion of Joe Biden.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

3. I believe Seventh-day Adventists need to reach out more to other Christian denominations.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

4. I support/have a favorable opinion of women running for political office.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

5. I have a favorable opinion of contemporary music in church worship services.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

6. I have a favorable opinion towards the separation of church and state.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

7. I am favorable towards the current SDA tradition of racially separated conferences.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

8. I have a favorable opinion of Sarah Palin.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

9. I believe that the Seventh-day is the Sabbath of the Lord God.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

10. I have a favorable opinion of George Bush.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

11. I am favorable towards the idea that there are many paths to God.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

12. I have a favorable opinion of the Democratic Party.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

13. I have a favorable opinion of Ellen White.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

14. I have a favorable opinion of Hillary Clinton.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

15. I have a favorable opinion towards the SDA general conference.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

16. I have a favorable opinion towards the right of same-sex couples to legally marry.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

17. I believe Adventists should become more involved in politics.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

18. I have a favorable opinion of the US congress.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

19. I have a favorable opinion of women's ordination.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree

20. I have a favorable opinion of the Republican Party.

Disagree 1 2 3 4 5 Agree