RELIGIOSITY AND STATE WELFARE*

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Abstract: The Catholic sex abuse scandals reduced both membership and religiosity in the Catholic Church. Because government spending on welfare may substitute for the religious provision of social services, we consider whether this plausibly exogenous decline in religiosity affected several measures of the public taste towards government spending on welfare between 1990 and 2008. In places where there were more scandals, individuals state a preference for less government provision of social services. In contrast, a higher level of abuse is also associated with an increase in voting for Democratic presidential candidates and an increase in per capita government welfare spending, although an increase insufficient to replace the decrease in Catholic-provided charity.

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I. Introduction

Many religious institutions provide services to the members of their congregations with in-kind transfers, such as providing poor families with Christmas toys or Thanksgiving dinner. In fact, one of the benefits of religious participation is the insurance it provides against income shocks through these transfers and similar practices (Dehejia, DeLeire, and Luttmer, 2007). Religious institutions also provide services for the general public such as soup kitchens, inexpensive resale clothing, and shelters for the homeless. Government provides similar services through programs such as food stamps and unemployment insurance that offer protection against income loss.

The literature strongly supports that government welfare spending crowds out religious, charitable giving: as government provides more social services, individuals donate less to the charities that provide these services. Gruber and Hungerman (2007) estimate that the New Deal reduced church charitable spending by 30 percent. Hungerman (2005) demonstrates that the reduction in public welfare spending resulting from the 1996 Welfare Reform was partially offset by the Presbyterian Church (USA) increasing their charitable endeavors for the affected populations. His estimates of crowd-out effects ranged between twenty and thirty-eight cents on the dollar. Comparing across countries, Gill and Lundsgaarde (2004) find that increased government-provided welfare weakens support for religions.

This paper explores the converse. We know that as government programs expand, private charity decreases. But if religious charity diminishes, does government provision of social services grow? We examine whether a negative information shock about one religion increases the demand for the government provision of social services. Previous research documents similar behavior by government. Becker and Lindsay (1994) show that private philanthropic contributions to public institutions of higher education crowd-out government support of these institutions dollar-for-dollar.

In the wake of the Catholic sex abuse scandals, religiosity in the U.S. declined, particularly among Catholics (Hungerman, forthcoming and Peres-Truglia and Bottan, 2011). We re-establish this fact in the analysis below. Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011) find that the abuse scandals reduced private charitable giving as well as the number of charitable organizations, particularly among Catholics. As church and

state appear to be substitutes in providing social insurance, one would expect the decline in religiosity to strengthen support for government-provided welfare.

The evidence in support of this expectation is mixed. Responses in the General Social Survey suggest that individuals living where the reports of abuse were more prevalent increase their stated opposition to government provision of social services. We then examine whether voting patterns reflect this stated preference. We find the contrasting result that the scandals increased support for Democratic party presidential candidates. In addition, actual welfare spending increased despite the stated preferences. Using state-level data on transfers per capita for family aid, Medicaid, Social Security Insurance, and food stamps, we find that the Catholic sex abuse scandals are associated with an increase in per capita government welfare spending of 7.9 percent for every one standard deviation increase in abuse. The estimate, however, becomes much smaller when we exclude Medicaid spending.

The outline of the paper is as follows. First, we review the history of the Catholic sex abuse scandals and discuss the construction of our data on these scandals. In Section III we outline the relationship between private charity and state welfare and discuss the implied relationship between religion and government. In Section IV, we describe the data on religiosity, welfare spending, and presidential voting. The results are presented in Section V. We discuss the results and their policy implications in the conclusion.

II. Catholic sex abuse scandals in the United States[1]

In 2002, Cardinal Bernard Law resigned over his mishandling of the sex abuse scandals wracking the Catholic Church in the Boston archdiocese (see the *Boston Globe's* coverage of the scandals for more detailed information). Much of this abuse occurred in the 1970s, although many victims did not report it until much later; indeed, much of the reporting occurred in the wake of the extensive 2001 coverage of the scandals in Boston. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops commissioned a report summarizing information provided by the Catholic Church from its archives on perpetrators and victims of abuse. The

[1] Most of this section draws from Dills and Hernández-Julián (2011).

John Jay Report, published in 2004, found that 4,392 priests (about 4 percent) participated in abuse. Settlements related to sex abuse cases have cost the Church over one billion dollars.

Although the data made available to the researchers of the John Jay report (2004) by the Catholic Bishops of the United States have not been made public, alternate measures of the publicity related to these scandals are available. Like previous work, including Dills and Hernández-Julián (2011), Hungerman (forthcoming), and Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011), this paper focuses on negative publicity about the abuse. Scandals can be damaging regardless of their veracity. A marriage may fall apart based on allegations of infidelity and the suspicion of plagiarism can lead to the end of an academic career. A false positive on a drug test can lead an employer to fire a worker.[2] Allegations of a sexual nature may be particularly damaging and difficult to repudiate.

Expanding on the work in Dills and Hernández-Julián (2011), we generate four variables that measure negative publicity. The first tabulates the number of priests and nuns in each diocese involved in sexual abuse cases. The website www.bishopaccountability.org compiles and publishes the names of priests and nuns involved in sexual abuse cases as well as their current diocese, former dioceses, and current status within the Church (still with the Church, convicted, retired, or deceased). Its goal is to collect documents that allege abuse within the Catholic Church, using broad requirements for including documents. The website cites and includes allegations and the documents reporting the allegations. Notes about each offender include the dates the Church was informed about an incident, whether cases were filed or settled, and information on arrests, indictments, confessions, and convictions of clergy.

We use the dates that a priest or nun was arrested, was convicted, confessed, or settled his or her case. These dates mark events likely to capture public attention through newspaper articles, press releases, or court documents; we refer to these as public notice dates.[3] As a result, we have measures of when notice was brought to each offender and at which diocese. Typically, each offender has multiple dates—separate ones for their dates of arrest, indictment, confession, etc—sometimes more than one of these happens in a single year. We consider only the earliest such event as the initial public notice; each

[2] Barnum and Gleason (1994) estimate that one third of those identified as drug users may be falsely accused.
[3] We assume that these public events accurately convey the timing and degree of the public information, though we realize that information on allegations is likely to be known by the parishioners prior to being made public.

offender thus has one initial public notice date.[4] We aggregate these to the diocese level and have an annual total count of initial public notices for each diocese. The impact of these notices is likely to compound over time. A single notice in a community may not be as meaningful as when it follows a long string of bad press in an area with a long history of abuse. We use the initial public notices to generate two measures accounting for the importance of historical information. The first sums all of the initial notices that we have on record for the entire history that bishopaccountability.org covers; this is the cumulative number of initial notices documented in that place up to that year. The second aggregates the initial notices for the previous four-year period, as the effect of the notices may expire after some time.

In the analysis below, this offender-level data is aggregated to either the diocese- or state-level. The Catholic Church is organized into dioceses and archdioceses, each administered by a bishop or archbishop. There are 175 of these in the United States, with each state and the District of Columbia having at least one. Dioceses, for the most part, follow county lines. Texas, at 14, is the state with the most dioceses. The average state has approximately 3.5 dioceses.

Figure 1 presents both the cumulative sum and 4-year sum of initial public notices by year from 1990-2008 for the U.S. In the mid-1990s, a spike in public notices steepens the trend. Public notices sharply increase again in 2002 and continue rising. Some dioceses, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, and Boston, experience many events; nineteen of the 175 dioceses experienced no recorded events.[5, 6]

These data measure the timing of the allegation rather than the timing of abuse. The pattern in Figure 1 accords with the distribution of dates presented in the John Jay report (their Figure 5.2.1). Allegations occur around the time of abuse as well as many decades afterwards, and many cases of abuse likely remain unreported.

Table 1 summarizes the cumulative initial public notices between 1990 and 2008. The median value of cumulative initial public notices is 22. If we split the sample in two at the median, those states

[4] Estimates using all of the public notice dates results in qualitatively and quantitatively similar estimates. Estimates using a three year sum of initial public notices also results in qualitatively and quantitatively similar results.
[5] These include Amarillo, Beaumont, Biloxi, Birmingham, Colorado Springs, Dodge City, Gary, Gaylord, Grand Island, Kalamazoo, Knoxville, Lake Charles, Las Cruces, Lubbock, Rapid City, Saginaw, Shreveport, and Victoria.
[6] Excluding Los Angeles, Chicago, and Boston from the regression does not change the pattern of our results and makes our results more statistically significant.

with high abuse have a mean value of 113.3 notices, while those below the median have a mean value of 16.8.

The third and fourth measures track press coverage of sexual abuse in each diocese. Press coverage serves as a second proxy for the frequency of sexual abuse scandals in each diocese. Following Dills and Hernandez-Julian (2011), this measure counts the number of news articles indexed in Lexis-Nexis that include each diocese's name and the words 'sex' and 'abuse'. Lexis-Nexis indexes newspaper articles in major world publications and listed wire services. News items are more readily available than some types of information coded as public notices. The Lexis-Nexis search may more heavily count scandals in areas with more media saturation; it may also more objectively measure the extent of the scandals. For comparability, we present cumulative measures of press coverage as well as a 4-year sum.

Figure 1 depicts the national annual cumulative counts of Lexis-Nexis mentions between 1990 and 2008. From 1990 to 2001, news counts slowly but steadily rise. News coverage of scandals in the Archdiocese of Boston sparked a spike in news items in 2002. That year the public learned of Cardinal Law's complicity in moving sex-offending priests to new parishes, leading to his resignation. More than 8,000 items were published in 2002 about Catholic sex abuse, almost 20 percent of which refer to Boston. Annual news counts averaged around 2,600 between 2003 and 2008, contributing to the steep increase in cumulative counts. The spike in news items in 2002 precedes the large increase in public notices in 2003 although the overall time series is similar. The correlation coefficient on the cumulative national time series of initial public notices and press coverage is 0.96 (p-value= 0.000).

A potential weakness of all our measures is that they depend, to varying degrees, on the local level of interest. Interested locals may be more likely to participate on the bishopaccountability.org website, more completely reflecting the level of abuse. Areas with a higher level of interest by the readers of news may attract more press coverage. Consequently, our measures conflate public interest with the actual level of abuse in an area. This is not problematic, as long as it is clear that we are measuring scandal more than actual abuse. In fact, since our outcome likely responds to the scandal, a measure that captures some information on the degree of scandalousness may be beneficial.

The sexual abuse data described above is measured at the diocese level. Some regressions are estimated at the diocesan-level. In most regressions, we aggregate these to the state level, depending on the unit of measurement available for our other variables.[7] This is described in more detail in the following section.

III. Estimation and identification strategy

A. Religious and Government provision of social services

Huber and Stanig (2011) model the competition between religious redistribution and governmental redistribution from the rich to the poor. In their model, the 'religious' poor and the secular poor compete for redistribution.[8] The 'religious' poor and the rich elect officials who favor low taxes and limited redistribution contra the preferences of the secular poor. A decline in 'religious' poor weakens support for redistribution through the church and strengthens support for governmental redistribution. They test this model using international variation in religiosity and their results support the model's implied comparative statics. Their model does not rely on religion affecting charitableness; church-based redistribution and governmental redistribution are substitutes.

Similarly, Scheve and Stasavage (2006) model the substitutability between religious and governmental welfare. Using international, individual-level data, they empirically test their model. They find that more religious countries have lower social welfare spending. It could be the case that in places where there is more welfare spending, individuals are less motivated to join a religious organization.

Much of the literature estimating the substitutability of private and state charity relies on exogenous changes in government programs (Hungerman, 2005 and Gruber and Hungerman, 2007). These papers examine how charitable provision responds to increases in government welfare spending. Here, we

[7] Ten counties are split across dioceses. We halve the demographic information for these counties into each of the two dioceses in which they reside.
[8] The 'religious' poor refers to those willing to receive charity from religious organizations, not necessarily those with religious beliefs. Hence, we place religious in quotation marks.

consider how government welfare spending responds to a plausibly exogenous change in religiosity and its attendant decline in charitable provision.

Our data permit us to estimate how religiosity responded to the scandals in the Church. We rely on Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011) as an intermediate step in the logic of our paper. They demonstrate how charitable donations responded to the degree of information about scandals in a particular diocese. We then extend that research by documenting how individuals' stated preference for government responds to the scandals and to what degree, as the charitable contributions diminishes, state welfare spending increases.

B. Scandals and religiosity

First, we verify the decline in religiosity in the wake of the Catholic sex abuse scandals. We estimate the effect of scandals in state *j* in year *t* on the religiosity of person *i*:

$$religiosity_{ijt} = \beta scandal_{jt} + X'\pi + Z'a + S_j + Y_t + \varepsilon_{ijt} \quad (1)$$

Scandals are measured using either initial public notices or news items. The vector X contains a variety of the individual respondent's characteristics: marital status, a quadratic in age, sex, race, ethnicity, education, real household income, number of children, and labor force status. The vector Z contains state-level characteristics including average real income per capita, the unemployment rate, and the fractions of the population that are black, white, female, aged 18 to 24, aged 25 to 34, aged 35 to 64, and aged 65 and over. We estimate equation (1) using ordinary least squares or, in the case of binary dependent variables, linear probability models.[9] State fixed effects account for state-specific levels of religiosity and degree of Catholicism. Year dummies capture national changes in attitudes towards the Church and religion. Standard errors are clustered by state.

Religiosity, the outcome in the regression, is either an indicator for whether the respondent identifies as Catholic or a measure of religious participation. The impact of the abuse scandals on

[9] Estimates using a logit or probit are similar to the linear probability models for the Catholic and raised Catholic regressions.

religiosity has been examined previously in Hungerman (forthcoming) and Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011), where the authors address the identification issues. Hungerman (forthcoming) in particular addresses pre-existing trends and demonstrates that these do not drive the results.

C. Scandals and stated preferences for government

If government and religious provision of social services are substitutes, then as people move away from the Church, they might desire a higher level of government support. The next regressions estimate several measures of the stated preference for the size of government as a function of the measures of abuse scandals.

$$government_{ijt} = \alpha scandal_{jt} + X'\sigma + Z'b + R_j + M_t + w_{ijt} \qquad (2)$$

The vectors X and Z remain the same as in the religiosity regression. The individual-level variables include the respondent's marital status, a quadratic in age, sex, race, ethnicity, education, real household income, number of children, and labor force status. These are necessary as these traits are correlated both with the typical preferences for government and with religious identification and intensity, and thus may also be correlated with the level of abuse. The state-level variables include real per capita income, the unemployment rate, and the fractions of the population that are black, white, female, aged 18 to 24, aged 25 to 34, aged 35 to 64, and aged 65 and over. We continue to include state fixed effects and year dummies. These fixed effects control for, for example, the possibility that states with better social services may also be more likely to have more redistributive government spending and stronger media that will out offenders. Standard errors are clustered by state.

D. Scandals, Voting Patterns, and Welfare Spending

We supplement the results from people's stated preferences with information on how behavior responds to the abuse. If individuals prefer an increase in provision of government services, then we would expect them to change their voting patterns.

We estimate a diocesan-level version of the regression from part C above, replacing the outcome variable with the percentages that vote for the Democratic candidate in presidential elections. Although using data from presidential contests has the drawback of only happening every four years, there are benefits. The boundaries of congressional races do not always match those of dioceses; in addition, each district has a different candidate, while the presidential candidate is the same nationwide. The data include results from every presidential election from 1992 to 2008. If, as predicted by the model, individuals respond to the scandals by preferring an increase in the government provision of social services, they would be more likely to vote for the Democratic candidate (Kiewiet, 1981; Rodríguez, 1999). We estimate the following for diocese *d* in year *t*.

$$percentDemocrat_{dt} = \gamma scandal_{dt} + W'\theta + C_d + R_t + \mu_{dt} \qquad (3)$$

Here we seek an unbiased, causal estimate of γ. This estimate could be biased if scandals were more likely to take place in those areas where the abusers believed the community was weakening in its responsiveness to abuse. Diocesan fixed effects subsume any state fixed effects. The diocesan fixed effects capture information on each diocese's unobserved traits that correlate to its allegiance to a party, but not any diocesan-specific responsiveness in political affiliation to new information. If political attachments are weak and, in the unlikely case that potential abusers care about changing political attachment, then the estimate is biased. In other words, we assume that both the choice of the abuser to engage in crime and the choice of the victim to go public are independent of expected political responses.

The vector W includes diocesan characteristics: the real per capita income; the unemployment rate; and the percentages of the population that are Hispanic, black, white, female, aged 18 to 24, aged 25 to 34, aged 35 to 64, and aged 65 and over.

The sign of γ in this regression may differ from that in the regression where the outcome is stated preferred government size. Respondents' stated optimal government size is not always consistent with which type of government they actually prefer. People might declare that they want less government, while tending to prefer more government. It could be the case that other issues matter more to people, so

even if they want less government provision of social services, they care enough about other issues to vote for the party of more government welfare spending. The difference could also be similar to the Bradley or Wilder effect, where an individual is tempted to answer the survey or poll in the way he believes he should, while voting honestly (Langer, 1989).

To examine if there is a difference, we estimate the effect of the scandals on welfare spending per capita. We expect the decline in religiosity to result in an expansion of government-provided welfare. We estimate the following at the state-level:

$$welfare\ spending\ pc_{jt} = \delta scandal_{jt} + Z\varphi + B_j + \tau_t + \nu_{jt} \quad (4)$$

The vector Z remains the same as above, again including measures of the racial, ethnic, and age composition of the communities. If the predictions from the model hold, there would be an increase in government welfare spending associated with higher levels of abuse scandals; people seek more services from the government as they move away from the church.

Following Hungerman (2005), we define our measure of government spending on welfare as state per capita expenditures on Aid to Families with Dependent Children/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (AFDC/TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), food stamps, and Medicaid. We also estimate the same regressions excluding Medicaid from the sum of state expenditures.

It may be the case that the local ability of government to provide social services is a factor in either the decision to abuse or the decision to make an abuse allegation. If social services in an area are weak, then victims would have fewer places to turn in the case of abuse. State fixed effects capture the average size of government during the period. However, if lower levels of social services grow more slowly, this would tend to bias downward the estimated effect of scandals.

IV. Religiosity, Government Preferences, Voting, and Welfare Spending

To estimate the effect of scandals on religiosity, we require data on religious affiliation and participation. The General Social Survey (GSS) is an excellent source of this data; obtaining the restricted-use state

identifiers allows users to match respondents to a state. The GSS samples most years between 1972 and 1994 (except for 1979, 1981, 1992), and for even numbered years since 1994. In most years, the survey population consists of 1500 respondents, though the sample size nearly doubled when the GSS became biennial in 1994. Throughout the analysis using the GSS data, we analyze data from 1990 to 2008 employing the GSS survey weights.[10]

We use principal components to generate a measure of religiosity. Three questions are used to generate this measure: one asking the strength of adherence to religion, another asking how often the respondent attends religious services, and a final one asking how often they pray. The first question asks the respondent if he or she holds a strong adherence to their stated preferred religion. 37 percent of respondents stated they held a strong adherence, 40 percent said their adherence was not very strong, 11 percent hold a somewhat strong adherence, and 13 percent have no religious preference.[11] The second question asks the respondent how often he or she attends religious services. 17 percent of respondents never attend church, 8 percent attend less than once a year, 14 percent attend yearly, 13 percent several times a year, 7 percent attend once a month, 9 percent several times a month, 5 percent nearly every week, 19 percent weekly, and 8 percent more than once a week. Our final measure of religiosity asks the respondent how often they pray. About a quarter of respondents state they pray several times a day, 30 percent once a day, 13 percent several times a week, 7 percent once a week, 19 percent less than once a week, and 5 percent never pray.

The GSS also asks individuals their preferences on the size of government. Our measure of individual stated preference for government size is based on four questions.

The first question asks, “Some people think that the government in Washington is trying to do too many things that should be left to individuals and private businesses. Others disagree and think that the government should do even more to solve our country's problems. Still others have opinions somewhere in between. Where would you place yourself on this scale?” 41 percent of respondents answered with a 3, placing themselves in the center. 27 percent believe the government should do more (answered 1 or 2), and 32 percent believe the government does too much (answered 4 or 5).

[10] Specifically we use 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008.
[11] Numbers may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

A second question uses the same scale of 1 to 5 but asks about poverty alleviation. Responses range from 1: "the government in Washington should do everything possible to improve the standard of living of all poor Americans" to 5: "that each person should take care of himself." 45 percent of respondents rate themselves as a three, 28 percent answer with a 1 or a 2, and 27 percent with a 4 or a 5.

The third question, again using a scale from 1 to 5, focuses on health care. Answers to this question range from a 1, where the government "should see to it that people have help in paying for doctors and hospital bills" to a 5, "these matters are not the responsibility of the federal government and that people should take care of these things themselves." 31 percent of respondents agree with both statements, while 52 percent believe more in government help, and 17 percent believe more in individual responsibility.

The final question asks whether the government in Washington should "reduce the differences between the rich and the poor." The question uses a scale from 1 to 7, ranging from agreement that government should reduce the differences (1) to government should take no action (7). 46 percent of respondents answer with a 1, 2 or 3 stating that the government should do something; 34 percent believe that it should not concern itself with differences in income. The remaining 20 percent are ambivalent.

We build a principal components measure for each set of questions. Each has a mean of zero and a name that reflects the higher number. The variable 'religious' takes on a higher value for those who report more religious behavior. 'Less government' is higher for those reporting that government does too much and who value more individual responsibility. The index of religiosity and the index of small government preferences are weakly negatively correlated, suggesting that in respondents with more religious attachment have more desire for government redistribution.

Our next outcome measure is presidential voting patterns. We collect county level percentages of the voting population that votes for the Democratic presidential candidate. We include every county in the USA and every election from 1992 until 2008. Although measures of voting for local leadership may be preferred for some reasons, these are not as easily comparable across states as a Democrat in New

England is different from a Democrat in the South; in addition, most voters report voting a straight ticket along party lines.[12]

Finally, state level data on expenditures are for 1991-2008. We followed Hungerman (2005) and collect data from the Consolidated Federal Funds Report on Food Stamps expenditures and Supplemental Security Income and data from REIS on Medicaid and AFDC/TANF expenditures. Figure 2 graphs these expenditures over time. Per capita welfare spending rose slightly in the early 1990s, dipped somewhat in the middle of the decade, likely due to welfare reform, and increased again in the first part of the 2000s. We observe a dip in welfare spending per capita in 2006.

Table 1 presents some summary statistics on these variables. Welfare spending is higher in high-abuse states, as is support for Democratic presidential candidates. This could be driven, in part, by the fact that places that have high levels of abuse have a higher percentage of Catholics, and Catholics have historically supported Democrats (Prendergast, p. 23). However, this historical support began to change in the 1950s as Catholics voted more Republican, at least in presidential elections. "Since the late 1960s, and particularly during the 1980s, the percentage of Catholics self-identified as Democrats has declined sharply. On the other hand, the Republican gain in adherents among Catholics during this period was far from commensurate with the Democrats' loss." (Prendergast, p. 25). Individuals in low-abuse states have stronger religious affiliations, are more likely to attend church, and are overall more likely to be religious. As reflected in the composites of these measures, individuals in low-abuse states tend to support smaller government and less government spending in general.

V. Results

Residents of states with more public notices and more news items about the sex abuse scandals are less likely to identify as Catholic. Table 2 presents these results. A one standard deviation increase in cumulative initial public notices (about 69 incidents), results in a 1.9 percentage point decline in the probability of self-identifying as Catholic, while a one standard deviation increase in cumulative news

[12] See, for example, Dyck (2009). However, note that historically 10-15 states have had split partisan delegations in the U.S. House and the State House with a handful additional states having split partisan delegations between Congress and the State Legislature (Bishop and Hatch, 2012).

items (589) results in a 1.3 percentage point decline. Coefficient estimates on incidents in the past four years are larger, but the impacts of a one standard deviation increase are smaller: 0.7 percentage points for public notices, and 0.4 percentage points for news items.

As a counterfactual, column (2) shows the estimated coefficients on scandals for a regression of whether the respondent was Catholic at age 16.[13] Here, neither public notices nor news items have a statistically significant effect on being raised Catholic. Both public notices and news items are associated with fewer respondents being raised Catholic, although the effect is much smaller than its effect on current Catholicism. This may reflect the media's response to the interest of their readers, reporting more often on scandals in communities less sympathetic to the Catholic Church. Alternatively, this may reflect respondents denying their Catholic upbringing in the face of media coverage. If those raised Catholic are more persistently religious in the face of scandals, estimates using news items may overstate the effect of scandals on religion. Our estimate are that a one standard deviation increase in scandals resulted in about a 1.3 percentage point decline in being Catholic, a fall of 5 to 6 percent. This is larger than the 3 percent decline estimated in Hungerman (forthcoming) and the similar to the 5.6 percent decline in Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011).

Coefficient estimates on self-reported strength of affiliation are also negative, though not always significant. Columns (4), (5), and (6) of Table 2 present results of various measures of religiosity regressed on the cumulative number of scandals. Public notices reduce religiosity, but any effect is small and statistically insignificant. News items have a small and statistically significant effect on religiosity. A one standard deviation increase in news items reduces religiosity by 0.06 standard deviations. Estimates using a 4 year lag are smaller and only significant for news items. If the media reports more on the scandals in areas with more residents renouncing their Catholic upbringing, this would bias our estimates towards finding a decline in religiosity. Overall, a higher level of abuse scandals is associated with a weaker affiliation with religion, less church attendance, less prayer, and a lower level of Catholic identification. Bottan and Peres-Truglia (2011) find that, in addition, all charitable contributions decrease, as does the private provision of social services.

[13] Although using Catholic at age 16 addresses some of the issues regarding the endogeneity of self-identification, it does not solve it entirely. Individuals who distance themselves from Catholicism may also have recall bias or may choose to deny having ever been associated with that church.

The GSS asks individuals to describe their preferences for government. Table 3 shows estimates from regressions of individual's stated preferences on the cumulative number of scandals. The results, though varying in magnitude and significance, are surprising: across the board, in places where the level of scandals was higher, people are more likely to state that the government does too much and that individuals should do more for themselves. This unexpected finding holds for overall size of government, health care, and the composite of the less government variables. The effect of abuse scandals on support for the poor and for income redistribution is rarely statistically significant although the signs on the coefficients are always positive. For the composite reported in column (5), a one standard deviation increase in the four year lag of public notices is associated with an increase of 0.05 standard deviations. The coefficients on the news items show that a one standard deviation increase in news items leads to a 0.03 standard deviation increase and the 4 year lag leads to a similar result.[14]

We examine how these stated preferences are expressed in actual voting patterns in Table 4. If voting behavior is consistent with individual's stated preferences in government, we would expect that more voters would move towards the Republican candidate. However, we find the opposite result. An increase in initial public notices is associated with an increase in votes for the Democratic candidate. When cumulative initial public notices increase by one standard deviation, votes for the Democrat increase by 0.032 percentage points.

Along with an increase in voting for Democrats, we see an increase in the government provision of social services. Table 4 also presents results from regressions of per capita welfare spending on the four measures of scandals. A one standard deviation increase in public notices increases per capita welfare spending by 7.8 cents, or about 7.9%. Estimates using the other measures range from 2 to 4 cents.

A large part of the welfare spending in states is spent providing health care via Medicaid. We exclude Medicaid spending from the welfare spending measure, and find that Medicaid spending seems to drive the results. This could be interpreted two ways. First, there may be no relationship between welfare spending and our measures of abuse, and the estimate that we identify is spurious. Second, scandals

[14] In addition, we estimate the impact on GSS self-reported voting, and find an increase in voting for Democrat when abuse increases, though these estimates are not significant at conventional levels. Surveys typically over report turnout (Cervantes and Gluckman, 2004).

impact a relatively religious population and the added stress may affect the health of some individuals (Fuchs, 2004). Scandals may worsen the health of low-income families, revealing itself in more Medicaid spending. In fact, although overall Medicaid spending rises, spending in other areas may fall as suggested by the news items results. The Catholic Church spends more than half of its revenues on health care (*The Economist, 2012)*. The Catholic Church likely responded to scandal-induced revenue declines by cutting back the direct provision of charitable health care through Catholic hospitals and clinics.

Either way, our findings reveal a pattern that seems inconsistent: although individuals respond to abuse by stating a preference for less government, their voting show the opposite, as, arguably, does the actual behavior of government.[15]

One reason for the inconsistency may be the different timing of the GSS interviews and elections. GSS interviews typically occur in the first half of the year.[16] Elections later in the year and lags in changing government spending reflect changing public opinion. Further, individuals may update their preferences in response to elections and changing government spending. To test for this we include lagged real per capita welfare spending in the regressions where the stated preference for government is the outcome. Lagged real per capita welfare spending never enters significantly and including it, if anything, makes the estimate on abuse stronger. That is, more abuse has a stronger impact on feeling that government does too much. This persistent result, even when controlling for lagged government spending suggests that respondents' antipathy to government is not a function of changes in government spending since the election.

Another possibility is that one set of regressions measures an effect on the mean, while another considers changes in the median. Stated preferences in the GSS are measured in a range from 1 to 5. If most individuals move from 4 to 5, but a few move from 4 to 3, then the mean may increase while the median declines. We estimate all the governmental size preference regressions presented before by quartiles. The common conclusion from the 25th percentile estimates is that the effect of the scandals is larger among these more liberal respondents—they then express less desire for government. For the more

[15] One unexplored, but related question, is the relationship between transparency and crowding in and out. Do these relative elasticities change if the government is seen as the more honest, transparent, and trustworthy, or vice versa?
[16] This is true between 1990 and 2002. In 2004, interviews occurred towards the end of the year. In 2006 and 2008, interviews occurred in the middle of the year.

conservative respondents, the 75th percentile estimates, scandals only slightly move political views, also pushing respondents towards saying we spend too much.[17]

Additionally, the surveyed population differs from the voting population. People who say they want less government may not feel as strongly about the issue and may be less likely to vote. We estimate the governmental size preference regressions using the sample of self-reported voters in the GSS.[18] Estimates are typically somewhat smaller and less significant. Voters respond to the abuse scandals by only weakly increasing their stated preference for individual responsibility.[19]

We consider a fourth possible explanation in more detail below. Views on the role of government likely vary by religious identification. Further, churchgoers are more likely to vote (Pew Research Center, 2006). We consider whether those who identify with the Catholic Church are more responsive to the scandals.

A. Results among those raised Catholics

We examine how those raised Catholic respond to the abuse scandals. Those raised Catholic reflect a sample population more likely to be currently Catholic and more affected by the scandals. This excludes converts to Catholicism as well as those who were never Catholic. We look at those raised Catholic, rather than current Catholics, to avoid omitting those who changed their religious identification as a response to the scandals.[20] Given the pooled nature of the GSS, we are unable to focus on those who switch their religious affiliation.

Table 5 summarizes the effect of the abuse scandals on religiosity. Among those reporting being Catholic at age 16, living in an area with more abuse scandals reduces reported religiosity although the effects are only statistically significant for news items. With the theoretical implications from Huber-Stanig in mind, we also split the sample by household income. The effects on religiosity are concentrated among higher-income individuals; the abuse scandals have a statistically insignificant effect among below median

[17] Results available upon request.
[18] Although the GSS asks respondents whether they voted in presidential elections, response rates are too high. For example, in 1992, 66 percent of respondents report voting in the presidential election although the Federal Election Commission reports that 55 percent of the voting age population turned out that year. http://www.fec.gov/pages/htmlto5.htm
[19] Results available upon request
[20] Although note the scandals may reduce one's tendency to claim a Catholic upbringing.

income raised Catholics. Estimates on the stated belief over whether we would be better off with less government are similarly sized among those raised Catholic. In this sample, below median income respondents respond more to the public notices and above median income respondents respond more to the news items although these differences are not significant. These estimates provide mixed support of the Huber-Stanig model.

In Table 6 we investigate how the scandals affected presidential voting behavior among those dioceses that were more or less Catholic in 1990. In areas where the Catholic population is low, individuals may be less responsive to information on the scandal; it may seem foreign and distant, not something that is relevant to their own community. We divide dioceses in half based on the fraction of the population that is Catholic (using data from ARDA) in 1990. In the median Catholic diocese, 18.2 percent of the 1990 population was Catholic. The scandals likely increased voting for the Democratic presidential candidate, but mostly among those dioceses with below median Catholic populations. This is a bit surprising if one expects the abuse to have a larger impact in highly Catholic areas. Finally, we estimate the effect of scandals on per capita welfare spending separately for states that are highly Catholic and those that are less Catholic. We find a strong and significant impact in the heavily Catholic states, but none in those states that are less Catholic. The majority of the impact that the abuse scandals have on charity appears to be through Catholics, among whom we see more of an increase in per capita welfare spending.

B. Crowding in: a back-of-the-envelope calculation

The estimates from the regressions in Table 4 imply that, in standard deviation terms, a one standard deviation increase in abuse is associated with a 7.9% increase in welfare spending per capita, or about 7.8 cents per capita. This increase in government spending could be a response to a decrease in the provision of charitable services by the Catholic Church. Since over half of the spending of the Catholic Church in the United States is in the provision of health care (*The Economist*, 2012), it is not surprising that the number estimate is no longer significant when Medicaid spending is excluded. If the Catholic ministries in the high abuse dioceses are particularly concentrated in the provision of health, such as in Catholic hospitals, then low-income individuals in these communities may have diminished access to charitable health

services when the church's funding diminishes. As a result, these individuals access health services a higher cost to the state.

We then use the estimates from our regressions, along with estimates from Peres-Truglia and Bottan (2011), to generate a back-of-the-envelope calculation of the degree to which government 'crowds in' when the church diminishes its charity. Peres Truglia and Bottan (2011) estimate that one standard deviation increase in abuse leads to a decrease in total charitable contributions of about 2.4%.[21] At the mean charitable contribution in their study of $850, this is a fall of $20.40. We estimate that a one standard deviation increase in abuse increases spending by 7.8 cents per capita, giving us a low end calculation of crowding-in of 0.38 cents on the dollar.

Another possible assumption is that the entire decline occurs among Catholics. Once the Catholic Church has collected the money, surveys suggest that about 12% of the revenues go to charity (Shakely, 2012).[22] So the decline is charitable spending implied by a fall of $20.40 is $2.44 (0.12*20.4). The increase in welfare spending is a much smaller 7.8 cents, implying a crowding-in of 3 cents on the dollar.

On net, the government makes up for a small, although statistically significant fraction of the provision of charitable services by crowding in.[23] The typical crowding out estimate is that when government provision increases by a dollar, charity falls 20 to38 cents (Hungerman 2005). Our estimate of crowding in is much smaller than most estimates of crowding out.

VI. Conclusions

Although others have examined how Catholic sex abuse scandals impacted religious behavior in the United States, this paper is the first to use the tragedy to estimate crowding in. There were unexpected consequences to the abuse, which have been examined in several works we cite throughout this study. We

[21] Their regression estimates a coefficient of 4%, and the standard deviation of their measure of abuse is 0.61. The 2.4% above is the product of these two numbers.
[22] Similarly, the Faith Communities Survey of Churches (2010) finds that, on average, 10 percent of church spending is directed towards benevolence. If the decrease to contributions diminishes all categories of spending equally, then charitable spending by churches would fall by $2.40, again implying crowding-in of about 3 cents on the dollar.
[23] Other measures of scandals, in Table 4, result in smaller estimates of increased welfare spending on the order of 2 to 4 cents, implying that government makes up 0.1-1.6% of the decline in charity.

can now add the growth of spending by government on the provision of welfare to the list. For every one standard deviation increase in abuse, we expect charitable giving for social services to decrease by about $2.4 and government spending to increase by about 7.8 cents. So although crowding in is present, its magnitude is much smaller than that of the diminished religious provision of social services.

It remains the case that increased religiosity and adherence provide more charitable contributions than would exist otherwise. If one were to extrapolate our estimates, they imply that when the support to the needy that is given by churches disappears then the government would not fund the social services back to their previous level. However, the decline in religiosity and religious giving expands the welfare state.

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Figure 1: Measures of Catholic Abuse Scandals, 1990-2008

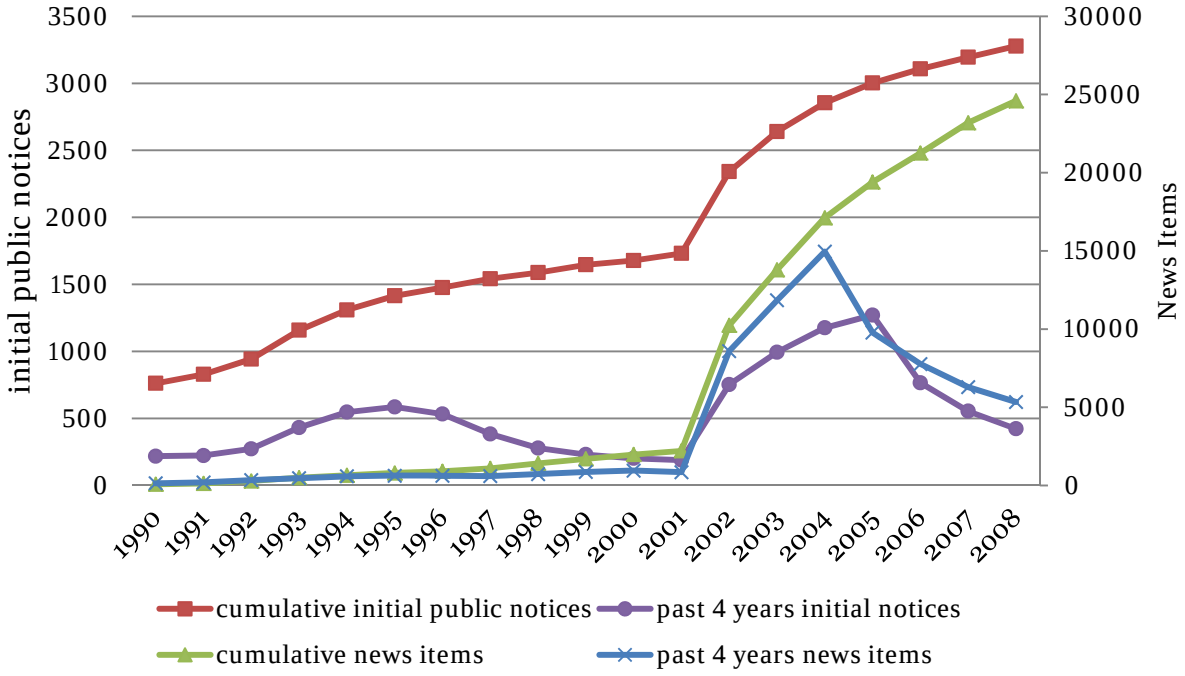


Figure 2: National Real per Capita Welfare Spending, 1991-2008

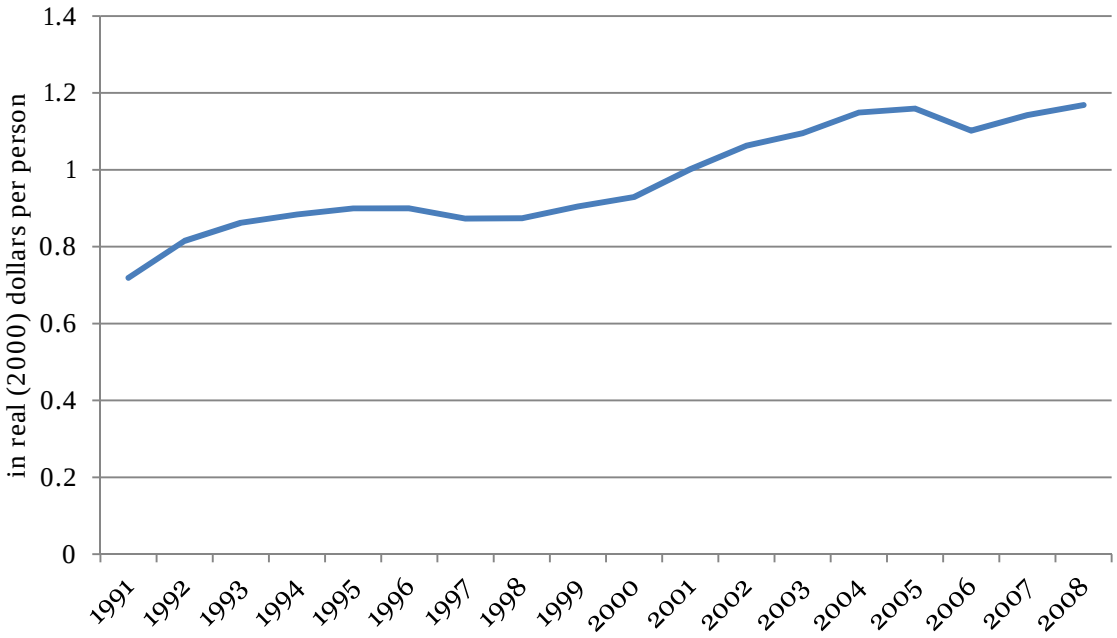


Table 1: Summary statistics of General Social Survey data and welfare spending

	Full sample			High abuse states			Low abuse states			Difference	
Variable	Obs.	Mean	s.d.	Obs.	Mean	s.d.	Obs.	Mean	s.d	high-low	
Independent variables of interest											
Cumulative initial public notices	23,251	64.8	68.7	11,516	113.3	68.2	11,735	16.8	12.5	96.5	***
Cumulative news items	23,251	274.3	589.2	11,516	526.5	754.7	11,735	24.6	41.1	501.9	***
Past 4 years initial public notices	23,251	19.7	25.6	11,516	34.5	29.3	11,735	5.0	5.0	29.4	***
Past 4 years news items	23,251	148.2	320.3	11,516	281.8	412.3	11,735	15.9	26.3	265.9	***
State-level variable											
Per capita welfare spending	900	0.98	0.37	436	1.05	0.39	464	0.81	0.24	0.23	***
per capita welfare spending less Medicaid	900	0.26	0.09	436	0.27	0.10	464	0.23	0.07	0.05	***
Diocesan-level variable											
% voting for Democratic presidential candidate	850	0.48	0.10	491	0.51	0.09	359	0.41	0.07	0.10	***
Individual-level variables											
Currently Catholic	23,251	0.25	0.44	11,516	0.32	0.47	11,735	0.19	0.39	0.14	***
Catholic at age 16	23,251	0.31	0.46	11,516	0.40	0.49	11,735	0.23	0.42	0.17	***
strength of affiliation [1 = no religion to 4 = no strong]	12,915	2.99	1.00	6,997	2.93	1.02	5,918	3.06	0.97	-0.13	***
how often attends religious services [higher = more often]	12,915	3.69	2.72	6,997	3.55	2.72	5,918	3.86	2.72	-0.31	***
how often do you pray [higher is more often]	12,915	4.20	1.61	6,997	4.11	1.65	5,918	4.30	1.56	-0.19	***
Religious	12,915	0.00	1.42	6,997	0.10	1.44	5,918	-0.11	1.39	0.21	***
Help poor?	13,550	2.94	1.15	6,472	2.91	1.16	7,078	2.97	1.13	-0.06	***
Should gov't do more or less?	13,333	3.06	1.20	6,388	3.01	1.21	6,945	3.11	1.19	-0.10	***
Should gov't help pay for medical care?	13,609	2.43	1.20	6,502	2.38	1.21	7,107	2.47	1.19	-0.10	***
Should gov't reduce income diffs?	13,687	3.76	1.94	6,530	3.75	1.95	7,157	3.77	1.93	-0.02	
composite of previous four variables	12,896	0.00	1.48	6,194	-0.06	1.50	6,702	0.06	1.46	-0.12	***

Weighted summary statistics using GSS weights, if applicable. Asterisks reflect the statistical significance of the difference in means for the two groups. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Table 2: Scandals' effect on Catholicism and religiosity

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Currently Catholic	Catholic at age 16	strength of affiliation	how often attends religious services	how often do you pray	religious principal component
				higher reflects more religious behavior		
Cumulative initial public notices	-0.000278*	-7.60e-05	-0.00129***	-0.00217**	-0.00168**	-0.00180***
	(0.000146)	(0.000233)	(0.000298)	(0.000974)	(0.000762)	(0.000539)
R-squared	0.124	0.150	0.084	0.121	0.164	0.159
Cumulative news items	-2.15e-05**	-1.08e-05	-7.25e-05***	-0.000163***	-0.000169***	-0.000136***
	(8.12e-06)	(1.15e-05)	(1.89e-05)	(5.73e-05)	(3.76e-05)	(2.80e-05)
R-squared	0.124	0.150	0.084	0.121	0.165	0.16
Past 4 years initial public notices	-0.000355**	-0.000254	-0.000670	0.00138	0.000664	0.000155
	(0.000169)	(0.000347)	(0.000620)	(0.00182)	(0.00116)	(0.000741)
R-squared	0.124	0.150	0.083	0.12	0.163	0.159
Past 4 years news items	-2.86e-05*	-2.24e-06	-0.000101***	-5.01e-05	-0.000218***	-0.000145**
	(1.46e-05)	(1.87e-05)	(2.83e-05)	(0.000167)	(5.93e-05)	(5.92e-05)
R-squared	0.124	0.150	0.084	0.12	0.164	0.159
	23,251	23,251	12,915	12,915	12,915	12,915

All regressions include individual-level controls for marital status, age, age squared, education, sex, race, Hispanic, real household income, number of children, and labor force status. State fixed effects and year dummies included. Regressions weighted using GSS population weights. Standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. The sample includes 23,251 observations in 48 states. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 3: Survey support for government and scandals

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Help poor?	should govt do more or less?	should govt help pay for medical care?	Should govt reduce income differences?	composite of previous four variables
	Larger dependent variables reflect responses of government does/spends too much or individuals should help themselves				
Cumulative initial public notices	0.000610	0.000992*	0.000692*	2.87e-05	0.00103
	(0.000431)	(0.000520)	(0.000409)	(0.000884)	(0.000725)
R-squared	0.094	0.102	0.071	0.104	0.158
Cumulative news items	3.60e-05	7.97e-05**	4.66e-05**	2.63e-05	7.25e-05*
	(2.50e-05)	(3.17e-05)	(2.26e-05)	(6.70e-05)	(4.02e-05)
R-squared	0.094	0.102	0.071	0.104	0.158
Past 4 years initial public notices	0.00183*	0.00262***	0.00170**	0.000998	0.00301**
	(0.000938)	(0.000891)	(0.000818)	(0.00130)	(0.00122)
R-squared	0.095	0.102	0.071	0.104	0.158
Past 4 years news items	0.000134***	0.000240***	0.000133***	0.000151	0.000248***
	(4.57e-05)	(6.83e-05)	(4.57e-05)	(9.48e-05)	(7.49e-05)
R-squared	0.095	0.103	0.071	0.104	0.158
Observations	13,550	13,333	13,609	13,687	12,896

All regressions include individual-level controls for marital status, age, age squared, education dummies, sex, race, Hispanic, real household income, number of children, and labor force status. State fixed effects and year dummies included. Regressions weighted using GSS population weights. Standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. The sample includes 48 states. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4: Scandals, percent voting for the Democratic presidential candidate, and per capita welfare spending

	(1) Percent voting for Democratic presidential candidate	(2) per capita welfare spending	(3) per capita welfare spending less Medicaid
Cumulative initial public notices	0.000470*	0.00114**	-9.53e-05
	(0.000272)	(0.000517)	(6.81e-05)
R-squared	0.936	0.965	0.978
Cumulative news items	2.46e-06	6.75e-05*	-4.29e-06
	(7.13e-06)	(3.36e-05)	(4.46e-06)
R-squared	0.933	0.964	0.978
Past 4 years initial public notices	0.000670***	0.00104	-0.000117**
	(0.000204)	(0.000804)	(5.09e-05)
R-squared	0.935	0.962	0.978
Past 4 years news items	1.58e-05**	6.81e-05	-1.33e-05**
	(6.15e-06)	(4.11e-05)	(6.17e-06)
R-squared	0.934	0.961	0.978
Observations	850	900	900

All regressions include state-level controls for real income per capita, the unemployment rate, the percent Hispanic, black, and white, the percent female, and the percents aged 18-24, 25-34, 35-64, and 65 and over. Year dummies and diocesan fixed effects (column 1) or state fixed effects (columns 2 and 3) included. Regressions weighted by number of votes. Standard errors clustered by diocese in parentheses. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$

Table 5: Effects of scandals on religious and attitudes toward government among those raised Catholic

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Index of Religiosity	Composite of "Less Government"	Index of Religiosity	Composite of "Less Government"	Index of Religiosity	Composite of "Less Government"
	All raised Catholic		*above median income*		*below median income*	
Cumulative initial public notices	-0.00193	0.000813	-0.00244	0.00104	-0.00159	0.00307
	(0.00120)	(0.000919)	(0.00165)	(0.00124)	(0.00169)	(0.00223)
R-squared	0.146	0.143	0.153	0.142	0.207	0.126
Cumulative news items	-0.000122**	5.18e-05	-0.000174**	0.000112*	-5.03e-06	5.19e-05
	(4.74e-05)	(4.13e-05)	(7.96e-05)	(6.55e-05)	(8.47e-05)	(0.000137)
R-squared	0.146	0.143	0.154	0.143	0.206	0.124
Past 4 years initial public notices	-0.000153	0.000554	0.000125	0.00114	-0.00124	0.00252
	(0.00223)	(0.00187)	(0.00240)	(0.00226)	(0.00298)	(0.00312)
R-squared	0.145	0.143	0.152	0.142	0.206	0.125
Past 4 years news items	-0.000187*	0.000187*	-0.000264*	0.000303**	6.74e-05	0.000190
	(9.51e-05)	(0.000110)	(0.000132)	(0.000148)	(0.000152)	(0.000268)
R-squared	0.146	0.144	0.153	0.143	0.206	0.125
Observations	4,031	3,870	2,127	2,115	1,691	1,581

All regressions include individual-level controls for marital status, age, age squared, education, sex, race, Hispanic, real household income, number of children, and labor force status. State fixed effects and year dummies included. Regressions weighted using GSS population weights. Standard errors clustered by state in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6: Effects of scandals on per capita welfare spending and Presidential vote, by Catholic density of state

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Panel A: Fraction voting for the Democratic presidential candidate								
	above median Catholic pop in 1990				below median Catholic pop in 1990			
Cumulative initial public notices	7.25e-05				0.00141**			
	(0.000141)				(0.000584)			
Cumulative news items		-4.55e-06				6.27e-05		
		(2.82e-06)				(4.06e-05)		
Past 4 years initial public notices			0.000286				0.000688	
			(0.000182)				(0.000626)	
Past 4 years news items				3.71e-06				0.000102*
				(3.40e-06)				(6.13e-05)
Observations	430	430	429	429	420	420	418	418
R-squared	0.957	0.957	0.957	0.957	0.878	0.874	0.871	0.874
Panel B: Real per capita welfare spending								
	above median Catholic pop in 1990				below median Catholic pop in 1990			
Cumulative initial public notices	0.00144**				-0.000370			
	(0.000523)				(0.000600)			
Cumulative news items		7.73e-05**				-3.15e-05		
		(3.29e-05)				(2.78e-05)		
Past 4 years initial public notices			0.00133				-0.000106	
			(0.000825)				(0.000654)	
Past 4 years news items				8.12e-05*				-2.87e-05
				(4.38e-05)				(3.63e-05)
Observations	450	450	450	450	450	450	450	450
R-squared	0.971	0.969	0.967	0.967	0.948	0.948	0.948	0.948

All regressions include state-level controls for real income per capita, the unemployment rate, the percent Hispanic, black, and white, the percent female, and the percents aged 18-24, 25-34, 35-64, and 65 and over. Year dummies included. In Panel A, state fixed effects are included, regressions are weighted by population, and standard errors are clustered by state. In Panel B, diocesan fixed effects are included, regressions are weighted by vote, and standard errors are clustered by diocese in parentheses. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1