

# Heritage Lectures

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## 'Tis the Season...Who's Giving?

Arthur Brooks, Ph.D.

**PATRICK F. FAGAN, Ph.D.:** Dr. Arthur Brooks is the author of the book, *Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism*, which is the subject of today's lecture. Harvard's own Harvey Mansfield said, "This is a remarkable work of practical philosophy in the plain guise of economics." James Q. Wilson's praise of the book was quite straightforward: "The best study of charity I have read."

Dr. Brooks is professor of public administration and director of the nonprofit studies program at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. His areas of study include culture, politics, and economic life. Actually, he's a modern Renaissance man: He is a family man, a musician, a writer and researcher, and a teacher. He is a regular contributor to *The Wall Street Journal's* editorial page, where he is becoming increasingly subversive and provocative in his use of economics. He has written over 50 scholarly articles and book chapters in the last 10 years and six books in the last five—three of them on charitable giving and volunteering and three on the arts.

He is on the editorial board of six different academic journals and is coeditor of the *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, a journal that brings different parts of his life together in one place, for the arts are another of his passions: the muse and music, in which he is unusually accomplished among his colleagues in the academy. Prior to taking on his doctoral studies, he was for 12 years a professional musician, playing the French horn in a number of ensembles, including the Barcelona Symphony. He received his Ph.D. in public

### Talking Points

- More than nine in 10 religious people give money every year versus 66 percent of people who are secular; 67 percent of religious people give their time by volunteering each year versus 44 percent of the secular community; and religious people give about four times as much money away.
- Religious people gave much more to the completely non-religious 9/11 causes than did secular people: 67 percent to 56 percent. Once again, giving patterns had nothing to do with income or race or region of the country; this is a question largely of faith.
- Conservative families in America give about 30 percent more money to charity each year than liberal families while earning about 6 percent less income, give more across every income bracket, and tend to give more on most measures of charitable giving.

This paper, in its entirety, can be found at:  
[www.heritage.org/research/religion/h11010.cfm](http://www.heritage.org/research/religion/h11010.cfm)

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policy from Rand Graduate School. Professor Brooks is a native of Seattle, Washington, and currently lives in Syracuse with his wife Esther and three children, who are ages 3, 6, and 8.

—Patrick E. Fagan, Ph.D., is William H. G. FitzGerald Senior Research Fellow in Family and Cultural Issues in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation.

**ARTHUR BROOKS, Ph.D.:** It is especially meaningful for me to be here today, because I started this book project right here at Heritage. In February 2005, I gave a speech about what I thought were some very provocative empirical trends that I was seeing, and I said, “I think I am going to write a book about this. I think this deserves book treatment because I think I have found some things about charity in America that are not according to the way we thought the trends were in the past.”

The result was the book that you see here today, which is why it satisfies me so much to be able to come here and talk to you about what I actually found and one element, in particular, of what I found.

I am going to talk with you about faith and charity today. I am going to talk about faith, not just as some social science concept or some instrumental idea, but rather as an area of core American values—values that many people around the globe share as well. And I am going to talk about charity in the same way, as an area of values, not just as an area of economic incentives.

For the first six years or so of my academic career as an economist, I looked at charitable giving. It was what I was interested in, and I treated it very instrumentally, as economists usually do. I looked at tax breaks and deductions and exemptions and what would happen to charitable giving if we got rid of the estate tax and we had a flat tax, all of which are interesting ideas to economists.

But there was an elephant in the room with my research. For example, every time I talked to a donor who had given a big gift to my university, he would never say, “You know that million dollar gift I gave to your university? You know what I love about it? It is that sweet tax deduction.” Nobody

ever said that, because that is not what moved them to give.

The reason people give has to do with their values. It took me a long time to actually be able to say that charitable giving is about values, not about economics. When I was able to say that, I realized it was time to write a book about it. It was time to take the data on charitable giving and look at it through the lens of values. That’s what I want to talk about here today. I want to tell you what I think it means, and particularly in the area of religious life: why it is so important to our core American value of charity.

When I was doing research initially, the first thing I did was to go out and talk to a lot of people about what they felt was motivating American charity, and I looked at a lot of data. One of the greatest sources of data on service to Americans by Americans is called the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. It is a survey of 30,000 Americans across 41 communities in the year 2000. It is an amazing data source for all questions about service and civic life, including charity.

Two of the communities in these data are South Dakota and San Francisco. As I was looking through alphabetically at the different communities and how much they give, I said, “Wow, two communities that sit next to each other in the alphabet actually have the two closest levels of average charitable giving per family. Isn’t that a coincidence?” Both cities give approximately \$1,300 per year to charity per family.

Why is it that two communities that are so different give so similarly? On reflection, you say to yourself, “Well, they don’t.” The fact is, they don’t give in a very similar way, and the reason is because their income levels are dramatically different. It turns out that when you look at San Francisco and South Dakota and you compare the sacrifice that these two communities make, any similarity dissolves. South Dakota, in terms of the sacrifice in real income, gives 75 percent more per family per year to charity than average families in San Francisco. Even if you look at disposable income, which gets rid of taxes and rents and costs of living, it is still 50 percent more. These communities couldn’t be more different.

Pondering that, the first thing I did was a little data analysis. I said, “I have got to talk to some peo-

ple.” The first place I called was the South Dakota Community Foundation, and I talked to the Executive Vice President for Programs. I said, “I’ve got these data, and you’re spectacular out there! What’s going on? This is a big percentage of your household income; why do you give so much?” I didn’t do any prompting; that’s all I said.

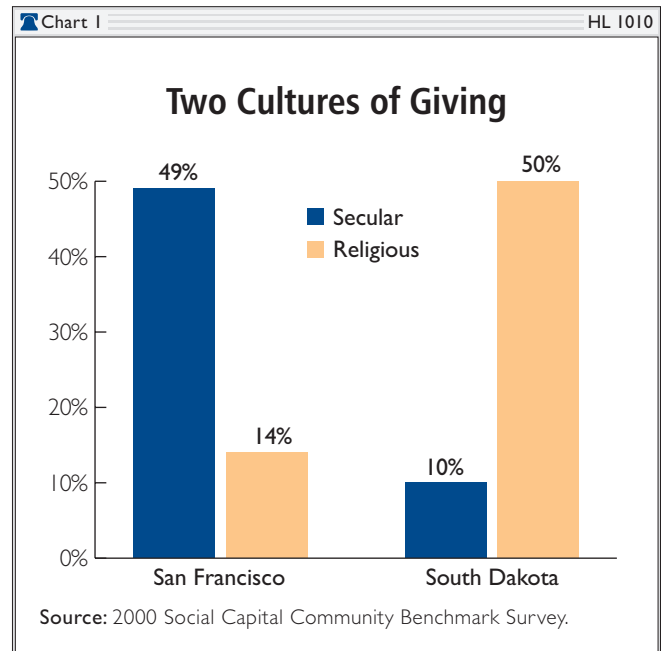
He said, “We’re all taught to tithe here.” This is the Biblical injunction to give 10 percent of your income. “We’re all taught to tithe here because we’re a very religious community.” I said, “Yes, but not everybody goes to church out there. Only about 50 percent”—which is pretty high—“of people from South Dakota go to church every week. There’s this other 50 percent that doesn’t. What about them?” And he said, “Their parents went, and they were taught as children to tithe.”

Then I called a big foundation in San Francisco, which necessarily remains nameless, and I asked the same question. I had this natural simpatico with the person from San Francisco because I am a West Coast guy myself, and it turns out the person I was talking to was from my neighborhood. We were laughing, and I said, “You guys are a disaster out there. What’s going on? You don’t give very much. Why is that?” She laughed, and she said, “This is just such a godless place.”

It was the same answer. Extraordinary. In other words, everything you might speculate on or that might show up in your data, these people, who are the experts in their communities in philanthropy, told me in fact was the case.

So what does religion really look like in these two communities, and how does it matter? (See Chart 1.) San Francisco is on the left, where 49 percent are completely secular, which is to say they never attend a house of worship or say explicitly they have no religion, and 14 percent attend almost every week. In South Dakota, 10 percent say they are secular, and 50 percent are religious.

These are as mirror opposite as you can possibly get, which makes the placement in the alphabet even more interesting. They look a lot alike, but they’re not, and they are the opposite of each other when it comes to religion.



Here are the questions I want to ask about this issue. How does religion affect private charity? It appears to—everybody thinks it does—but how much does it, and what can we learn from it? Why does religion affect charity so much? Why does it matter, and why should we care? And what can we do about it in the context of public policy, running charities, private values, and the ideas that we try to teach? What does it all mean to us? That’s a lot of what I talk about in this book.

Once again, at this point I said, “I have got some questions.” I asked a lot of people that I respect and like, “How do you think charity affects private giving?” I wanted to hear the contours of public opinion on this, at least at an anecdotal level.

Most people who are outside of universities, outside the academy, said, “People who are religious give more.” I said, “How come?” They said, “They’re taught to give more. They learn in their families; they learn in their churches; they learn in their culture that it is important to give. So it is obvious that they would give more. They give more in all areas.”

In the academy, there is a different opinion. I asked my colleagues, and the overwhelming view was, “They give less. It doesn’t matter what they say; they really give less. And the reason is because religion breeds intolerance. It breeds a hostility to peo-

ple that are outside of groups, and that is antithetical to the true spirit of charity. No matter what people say, if you really look at the evidence, you're going to find that religious people in America, particularly extremely religious people—evangelicals, even fundamentalists—give less.”

Obviously, you can't square these two ideas, and obviously, the data are going to tell the story on this difference in opinions. But there's a little more to it than that, because some folks will say, “Well you might find that religious people give more, but that's just religious people giving to their churches. So you don't have any reasonable comparison; if you just look at the non-religious types of giving and informal giving, you'll find that people all give the same.”

Those are the questions I really want to answer: Do religious people give more or less? What do they give to? And why does it matter?

First of all, what does it mean to be religious? For decades, social scientists have measured religion badly. The reason they did that is because social scientists don't understand religion, typically. A lot do—it's not to say that there are no social scientists who understand it—but a lot of social scientists are not personally in a religious culture. So they'll say, “Ah, yeah, religion. Okay, let's just go ask people whether they have a religion. We'll say, ‘Do you have a religion? Which one? You're Catholic? Protestant? One of those churches? Something else?’” The result was that they would do analysis, and they would find that, in terms of public opinion and social behavior and attitudes, religious people and non-religious people—in certain religions particularly—don't behave very differently.

Let me give you an example of this. If you just go out and ask somebody in America today if he is a Catholic, and then you ask him for his views on abortion, you will find that Catholics and non-Catholics have roughly the same views. This is typically, in the press, treated as evidence that Catholics are not more pro-life than the rest of Americans, and that's a really big finding, of course.

It turns out it matters how often the Catholic practices; that's where the real action is. The reason is because, among Catholics in America and other

countries, a Catholic who has not been to Mass since his first communion still calls himself Catholic, irrespective of age. What does this mean? This means that if you don't correct for whether people are practicing or not, you're going to get the wrong view. Among Catholics who practice, we have the most pro-life group in America, and that's an entirely different story.

Those kinds of patterns are robust across all kinds of behaviors. We have to measure these things right. It is all about how you behave—not who you affiliate with—so let's look at that.

I am going to look at Americans—I don't really care what religion they belong to—and I am going to say, “Do you attend a house of worship, or do you never attend a house of worship?” Everybody else is in the middle. It turns out that people who are between every week and never in their attendance behave in the middle in terms of charity. No surprises there. About a third of Americans attend their house of worship every week or more, and about 25 percent either never attend or say they have no religion.

How do these two different groups behave when it comes to charity? There is no comparison.

Now we are starting to get to an answer to the question. (See Table 1.) You find that, of religious people, more than nine in 10 give money every year versus 66 percent of people who are secular; 67 percent of religious people give their time by volunteering each year versus 44 percent of the secular community; and religious people give about four times as much money away.

It is interesting to note that the 33 percent who are religious and the 25 percent who are secular have exactly the same average actual income: about \$49,000 per household in the year 2000. There is no meaningful difference, so this is not the explanation.

Here's another interesting fact: It doesn't matter which religion you practice. It turns out that 92 percent of practicing Protestants give, as well as 91 percent of practicing Catholics and Jews and 89 percent of people from other religions. The statistical differences are indistinguishable between them. It has to do with practice, not the religion itself.

Table 1 HL 1010

### Formal Giving to All Types of Charity

	Religious	Secular
Gives money	91%	66%
Gives time	67%	44%
Value of money gifts	\$2,210	\$642

Source: 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey.

Table 2 HL 1010

### Formal Giving to Secular Charities

	Religious	Secular
Percentage giving money to secular charity each year	71%	61%
Percentage volunteering for a secular cause each year	60%	39%
Value of annual charitable gifts to secular charities	\$532	\$467

Source: 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey.

After looking at these numbers, this is my first question: Is this all about religious people giving to their churches, or is this a real charitable difference? From my point of view, giving to your church is charity. I am going to tell you that this is my bias, and the reason is because I look a lot at churches, and not just from a religious standpoint, but from a civic standpoint, a voluntary sacrifice of resources, even for a community group, is a pretty powerful thing to do, and it is truly voluntary.

A lot of folks who are secular treat religious giving as more or less like glorified country club dues, but most people who are religious say, “No, it is something entirely different, because I don’t have to pay, but I am paying.” Maybe it is because of guilt, maybe because of altruism; it doesn’t really matter, because charity is a behavior, not a motive. But it is different somehow.

Still, let’s take the secular argument seriously. I am going to get rid of all religious giving and then compare the data, and it turns out we still have a huge difference between religious and secular people.

The data that I am going to look at in Table 2 are for explicitly non-religious causes. You find that religious people are 10 percentage points more likely than secular people to give to explicitly secular charities like the United Way. They are 21 percentage points more likely to volunteer for explicitly secular charities like the PTA. The bottom line is that if it were not for religious people in your community, your PTA would shut down. That’s what that amounts to.

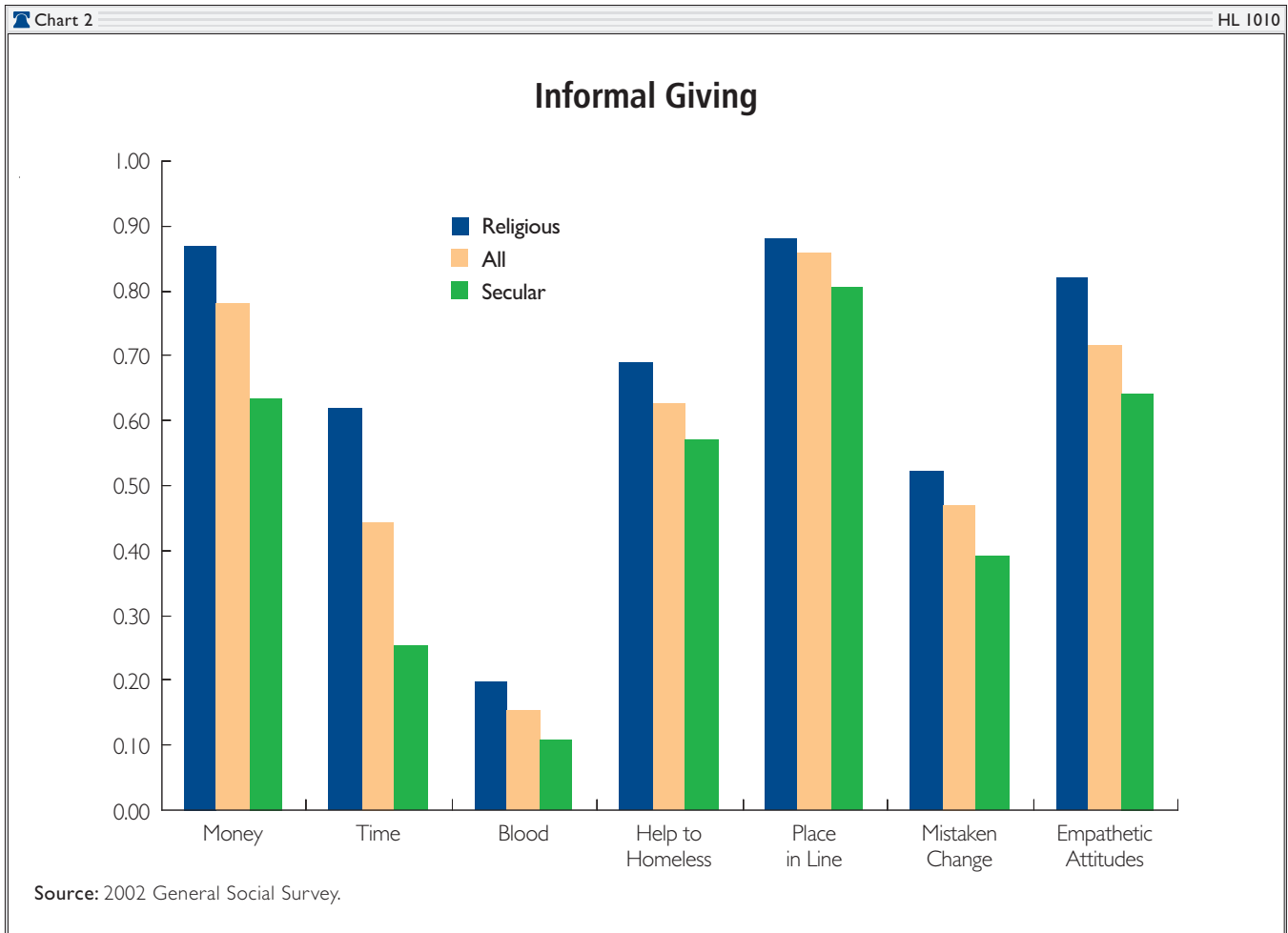
Now let’s go outside the giving and volunteering, because compassion and charity go beyond money gifts and volunteering, don’t they? We have all kinds of informal acts in our lives that express our charity.

When I started this research, I thought, “I am worried that people who give formally and people who give informally—in terms of helping friends and family, giving to a homeless person on the street, or giving of their time to someone they know—are two different groups. If such is the case, then people simply give in different ways, and I don’t have a comparison.” Yet it turns out that people who give money and people who volunteer formally are the same people who do the informal things. Either you do it all, or you do nothing, and about 25 percent of Americans do nothing that we’re able to measure.

In Chart 2, the middle bars represent the total percentage of American people who give informally. The bars on the left of each grouping are the percentage of religious people who give. The bars on the right are the percentage of secular people who give. You find that in every category, religious people give more than secular people. I have never found a measurable way, in all of my research, in which secular people give more than religious people.

Religious people are twice as likely to donate blood as secular people. People who are religious are more likely to give a sandwich or a quarter to a homeless person; they are more likely to give up their place in line; they are more likely to give back mistaken change given to them by a cashier. That’s amazing, isn’t it? You’re buying something at Wal-Mart, and you get back a couple of extra quarters. If you’re religious, you are overwhelmingly likely to give them back.

Now, when I showed these data to a colleague, he said, “You know, maybe cashiers at Wal-Mart make



more mistakes with religious people.” Only a social scientist could come up with that explanation.

No matter what one controls for, the relationship between religious practice and giving is resistant to all other explanations. Let’s take as an example the case of giving blood. You have two people. One is religious, and the other is secular. However, they are exactly the same demographically. They have the same income and politics. They are from the same region of the country. They are the same race and age, and they have the same educational background. Even when the two individuals are identical to each other in every area of relevance, the religious person is still far more likely to give blood than the secular person. Religion really is the key to the relationship we are discussing.

In 2001, the Indiana Center on Philanthropy was undertaking a survey called “America Gives.” It

started in August of 2001, asking people about their charitable giving patterns with regard to time, money, blood, etc.

Once they had collected half of their data, September 11 happened. The team said, “This is going to change everything, because national emergencies always change charitable giving patterns. We’ve got to put things on hold and then restart the survey in a year, after this thing calms down.” And some bright researcher there said, “Are you kidding? This is a natural experiment. This is perfect. You’ve got this environment in which something big happens, and now we can compare the people who gave before and after with what happened because of the event.”

Many Americans gave to 9/11-related causes, which was quite impressive. It was an extraordinary response to a national emergency; it was the silver lining around the cloud. September 11 stim-

Table 3 HL 1010

### Charitable Giving to 9/11-Related Causes

	Religious	Secular
Percentage that gave money to a 9/11-related cause	67%	56%
Percentage that gave other items (e.g., blood) to a 9/11-related cause	28%	24%

Source: 2001 America Gives Survey, conducted by Indiana Center on Philanthropy.

ulated a lot of non-givers to give for the first time, and the data say that many of those people will not stop giving.

Despite this surge in charitable giving, one still finds that religious people gave much more to the completely non-religious 9/11 causes than did secular people: 67 percent to 56 percent. Once again, giving patterns had nothing to do with income or race or region of the country; this is a question largely of faith. (See Table 3.)

Up till this point, I have been measuring religion by people's weekly attendance at religious services. In order to ensure that I was not measuring it the wrong way, I found surveys that ask people very interesting questions about their religious views. They ask them, for example, "Do you spend a lot of time worrying about your spiritual life? Do you spend a lot of effort on your spiritual life?"

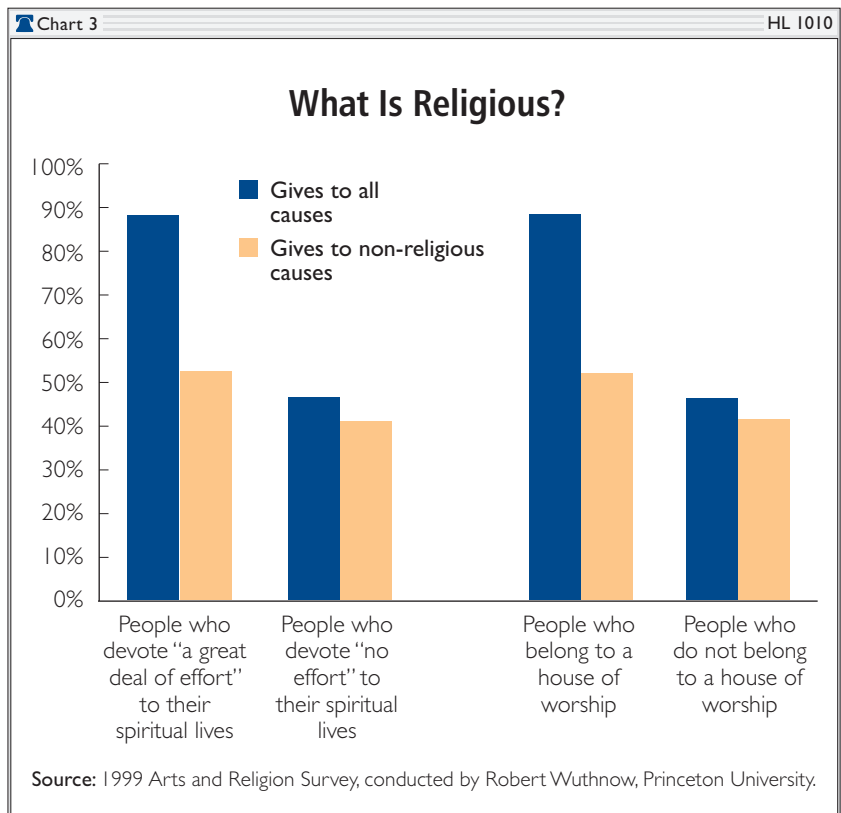
The answers to these questions serve as an even greater explanatory factor in charitable giving than does their attendance. Many people do not attend their house of worship regularly, but they are deeply concerned with their spiritual lives. These people, just like the traditionally religious people who spend time on their spiritual lives, are big givers as well. There is a 42 percentage point difference in the likelihood of giving to charity each year—secular and reli-

gious charity—between people who say they spend time on their spiritual lives versus those who say they do not spend time on their spiritual lives. This is also true for people who belong to a house of worship. (See Chart 3.)

Bottom line: It doesn't matter how you measure religion, and it doesn't matter how you measure charity. You get the same results.

Why? What's going on here? The explanation for why religious people are so different really gives one's mind an exercise. As it turns out, there are two major kinds of explanations out there. Some people say nature, and others say nurture.

I speak to a lot of academic groups, and I speak to a lot of religious groups. Many people from the religious groups will say, "You know the difference between religious and non-religious people and charity? It's a higher authority." In other words, God makes you religious, and God makes you charitable. That's a very strong statement, because people who are secular or semi-secular will say to themselves, "Yeah, but I bet there's a learning element to it. I bet people learn to give."



I have been looking at evidence on charity for years now, and it is true that once people get a taste, they keep giving. Once people learn from somebody else they admire, they keep giving, which is support for the notion that people learn to give. I want to see what the evidence tells us about that.

Let me give you a provocative idea in each regard, nature versus nurture. The first is a body of evidence that looks at identical twins. Some of you have heard of a series of social science studies on identical twins that were born between 1935 and 1965 and were adopted into separate families at birth. Although they are carbon copies of each other genetically, they were raised in different environments. These studies give you a perfect opportunity to see how their behavior, attitudes, and interests differ and are similar, and you can see if these differences are a result of their upbringing and which similarities are because of their genes.

The studies from the psychological researchers at the University of Minnesota and elsewhere are finding that a shocking amount of behavior and attitudes is due to genetics. One of the things that the findings tell us, for example, is that between 50 and 80 percent of your baseline life happiness is due to genetics. Think about it: Up to 80 percent of your outlook on life and how cheerful you are is because of your parents. The studies also show that between 25 and 50 percent of religiosity—the tendency to be religious and go to church—is based on genetic patterns as well.

It is very provocative and interesting research. Given these findings, one might ask whether a certain amount of charitability could also be inherited. I ask that as a research question that I have not been able to answer yet, because it turns out that they did not ask the identical twins how much they gave. Maybe I'll get in touch with the identical twins myself for the next book.

There is also evidence not just that charitability is genetically acquired, but also that it is learned. Let me give you an example of interesting evidence on this. I want to take a group of adults that is completely secular, which is to say they never attend religious services or have no religion at all. I am going to split them in half: Half of them went to

Frequency of church attendance as a child	Percentage of secularist adults who donate to charity	Secular charities only
Every week	47%	40%
Almost every week	41%	37%
A few times a year	35%	32%
Never	26%	29%

Source: 1999 Arts and Religion Survey, conducted by Robert Wuthnow, Princeton University.

church when they were kids, and half of them did not go to church when they were kids.

How much does that explain their giving? The answer is: a lot. The percentage of secularist adults who donate to charity was 47 percent if they went to church every week as kids, and it was 26 percent if they didn't go as kids. What you find is, the more you go to church as a child, the more you give as an adult, notwithstanding your actual religious behaviors as an adult—which is evidence that people learn, that they get wired for charity when they practice religion as a child. (See Table 4.)

Interesting finding, when you think about it. It is also very encouraging if you're a parent. Many parents I talk to worry whether their children are going to practice their religion or fall away as an adult. It turns out that if you plant the seed, it will blossom in their behaviors, largely. This is what the data tell us.

So there is evidence that charity is learned. Maybe it is genetic; maybe it is learned; maybe it is both.

Let me tell you why I think it matters. Charity follows the political lines in this country, which are largely drawn according to the religious gap. Conservative families in America give about 30 percent more money to charity each year than liberal families while earning about 6 percent less income. They give more across every income bracket, even with lower education, which is a big determinant of charitable giving. In other words, conservatives tend to give more on most measures of charitable giving.

You can look at it geographically, too. The map on top in Chart 4 is the electoral map from 2004.



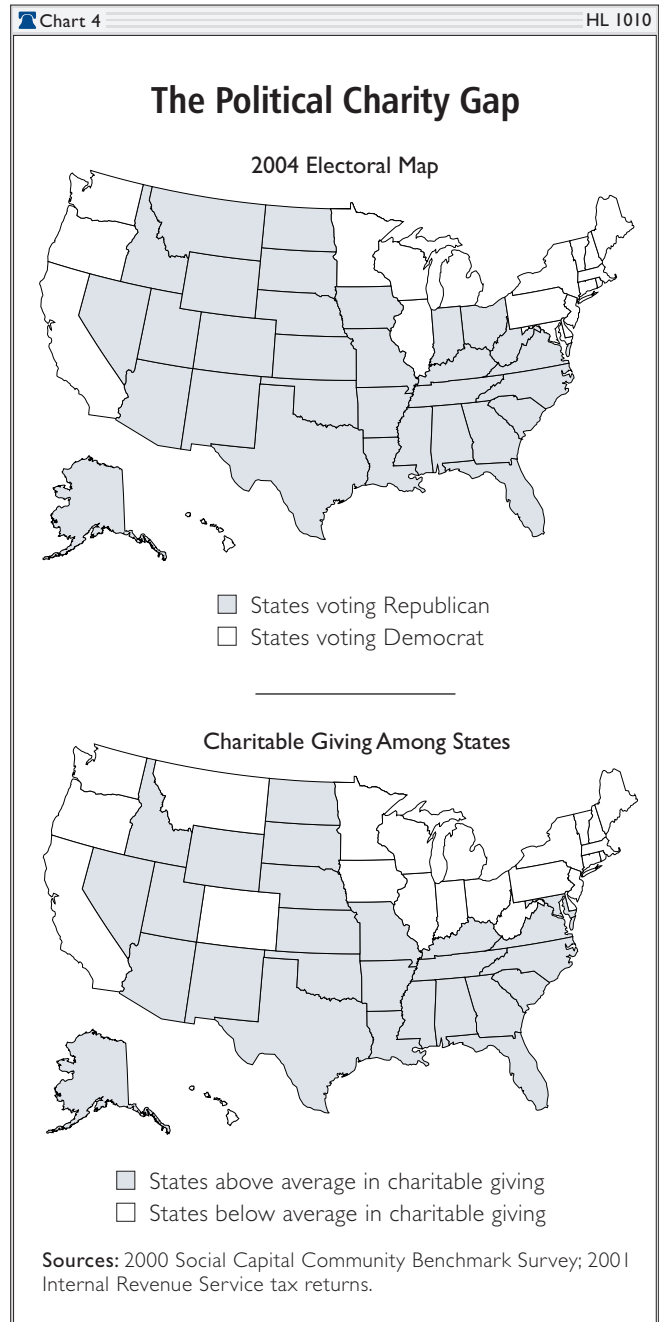
The bottom map is a map of the above-average and below-average charity states as determined by the percentage of income. This map is uncorrected for cost of living. What you find is that the above-average-giving states largely are the conservative states in America today. As a matter of fact, of the 25 states that are above average in charitable giving, 24 supported Bush in 2004. There was one that supported Kerry which was also above average in charitable giving, and that's Maryland.

Is that because of politics? The answer is no. I have found no evidence that conservatives are inherently more generous than liberals. Religious conservatives and religious liberals give at largely the same rates and the same amounts. However, there are more than three times as many religious conservatives than religious liberals in America today.

Furthermore, religious conservatives are proliferating; they are having more babies, and more people are joining their party. Religious liberals are shrinking as a group. That is to say, while there is no virtue gap between religious liberals and religious conservatives, there is a numbers gap between them. The lowest-giving groups are secular liberals and secular conservatives—as a matter of fact, secular conservatives are at the very bottom. (See Table 5.) Secular liberals are already the largest group of liberals out there, and there is evidence that liberals are secularizing even more. Conservatives are also becoming more religious. This increase in dynamics is driving the political differences in charity today.

The population of religious liberals in America today is shrinking for two reasons: One has to do with demographics, and the other has to do with attrition.

The average religious liberal is three and a half times more likely to change parties over any two-year period than the average secular conservative. These days, fewer than 30 percent of Americans believe that the Democratic Party is friendly toward religion, and there is evidence that the party is not substantially represented by religious people. In 1996, the Democratic National Convention had 60 percent of its delegates who were completely secular, compared with about 25 percent of the American population. When you think about it, this



discrepancy reveals an extraordinarily high number of people who are not represented.

It is also the case that the religious liberal population is decreasing because religious conservatives have many more children. Conservatives have, on average, 41 percent more children than liberals in America today. Over a generation, that not only flips elections, but also changes the contours of what religion means in America. For the purposes of this

Table 5

HL 1010

### Charitable Giving Across Political Lines

	Religious Conservatives	Secular Liberals	Religious Liberals	Secular Conservatives
Population percentage	19.1%	10.5%	6.4%	7.3%
Percentage giving money to charity each year	91%	72%	91%	63%
Average value of annual charitable gifts	\$2,367	\$741	\$2,123	\$661
Percentage giving money to religious causes each year	88%	22%	86%	34%
Percentage giving money to non-religious causes each year	71%	69%	72%	55%
Percentage volunteering each year	67%	52%	67%	37%
Average number of occasions volunteered	11.9	7.2	12.6	4.7

Source: 2000 Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey.

study, it also changes the contours of what charity means in this country. Charity is becoming a political issue because of faith.

What does this mean for policy? Because Congress has just flipped, we can expect to see more regulation on philanthropic organizations, and we can expect to see less support for tax credits for poor filers.

Only 30 percent of Americans get a tax deduction, so there has been a lot of conversation about figuring out a way that people could take a tax deduction for charitable giving even though they don't go through this tax rigmarole; and disproportionately, the support for that kind of policy initiative has come from the right. Why? Because they are the bigger givers, not because of politics, but because of faith. We can expect to see less support for something that equalizes treatment of charitable giving in the new regime unless some things change.

Finally, the idea of faith-based initiatives and public-private partnerships between government and charities will be seen with a more cynical eye, because there is less of a sense of the role of nonprofits, particularly philanthropically involved nonprofits, in society. These are predictions that might not be right, but they would follow according to the evidence that we've seen so far.

What does it mean if you are running a charity? What does it mean if you are running Heritage or running my university? Let me show you what it means for one major nonprofit out there.

Let us use as an example a very large international humanitarian aid organization that has an extremely politically progressive staff. They said, "We are dealing with poverty overseas, but we have to deal with root causes of poverty, not just poverty itself. I am tired of passing out rice. I want to deal with gender equity. So let's explicitly change our message: root causes, equality. We are going to talk with Amnesty International about injustices where they occur. We are going to try to establish greater equality between men and women."

So their direct marketing firm did a little experiment and wrote two versions of a fundraising letter: the old kind, just asking for money to feed people, and the new kind, addressing root causes from a progressive basis. They sent these letters to two different mailing lists: a list that has no political affiliation and one that was disproportionately composed of people on the political left. What they found was that the progressive message to the progressive list performed by far the worst: 0.12 percent of the people who were approached from the progressive list sent back any money, versus 0.83 percent of the people with the neutral message on the neutral list of potential donors.

That's a big difference. That means many, many millions of dollars. Why did that happen? It happened because they were not hitting the people who have become the biggest donors in America today; they were fishing in a pretty weak pool. It does not mean that their message was wrong, but it does

mean that the message was unsuccessful in its efforts to encourage charity.

The politically left message is not working very well. That means that if you are from a human resource agency, you have to take this seriously. Those trying to politicize messages from one particular point of view are in trouble.

From my vantage, that's a pity, because organizations should be able to talk about what they think is truly important, and their discussions should not

be dictated by the likelihood of the audiences' charitable giving levels. That to me is a big problem. The organization should be able to say what it wants, what it truly thinks is important, without paying a price.

Yet that is what we're facing, and that is what the stakes are. The politicization of charity is a terrible shame, in my view, that all boils down to some of the fundamental values in America today; and the root, largely, is faith.