

TROY DUSTER: Welcome to the second plenary on this topic. Some of you will have noted a recurring theme here, that we're concerned about the rightward shift in the American political train, and I obviously regard this as the most significant development of the last 5 years, perhaps the last 20. And my purpose in shaping these sessions is to try to get more sociologists to study the phenomena of the right wing, its insurgency, and its political impact.

For today's sessions I have invited one of the most provocative political analysts in the nation, Kevin Phillips. For those of you who were here on Saturday, you recall that Ann Carter's discussion emphasized the southern strategy. I think it can be said without too much debate that Kevin Phillips, who wrote The Coming Republican Majority, if not one of the chroniclers, or architects, he certainly was one of the people who saw what was happening and provided a kind of a road map for the Republican insurgency in the South. In that book he predicted and chartered how the Republicans would win the South from the Democrats. Now, it's fair to say that Galileo recanted. I don't think Kevin Phillips is going to recant. But, in recent years he has written some of the most astute critical analysis of the current Republican administration. The current Republican majority, which he wrote about 30 years ago, as coming. His book, for example, Welcome Democracy, is a critical look at the growing gap between rich and poor and what that means for American political life. His most recent book on the Bush Dynasty is a critical look at another aspect of wealth and power, how the accumulation has now been solidified, codified.

I have asked him to speak today about what he sees as the most important aspect of this shifting politics and also to give us his best shot...his best advice what he would recommend that sociologists do as researchers and analysts in development of this trend. I should also add that in the last 5 years, I found his voice on NPR to be one of the more refreshing and provocative voices. And so it is with my privilege and my pleasure to introduce to you Kevin Phillips.

KEVIN PHILLIPS: You know, the great irony of this is that actually from some of your standpoints, probably most of your standpoints, I should wind up being one of the more optimistic speakers you hear. I really think that the Republicans and the conservatives at this point are a lot further up the well known creek without knowing how to paddle than a lot of other people do, especially liberals, who didn't figure out what hit them until sometime in the 1980s, as somebody who was there while they were being hit in the 1960s. I think what you've got is a Republican coalition and a conservative thought process that is really much, much further down the path to intellectual and cultural sclerosis and in some respects is living on the incapacity of the opposition. This is a very important element of American politics, though.

When I was involved in the Republican party in the 1960s, half of these people couldn't find the men's room without a map, basically. I mean, politically

they were just sort of leftovers of what had converged in the previous 25 years without knowing very much about it.

There's one story which I'm not certain that's entirely correct, but it's so descriptive that I use it anyway because it goes back 40 years. The Republicans, during the immediate aftermath of the Goldwater era, in huge trouble, were trying to put together some notions of what they might stand for that were more constructive, so they came up, of course, with a very simple title for this research project; *Constructive Republican Alternative Proposals*. You know, this was okay until you had the acronym on the book cover. So, the fact that the Democrats could do all that they did during the '60s to screw things up - in my opinion, really royally screw things up - was a tribute to the fact they were up against this, you know, class C team from South Omaha. And, as a result, the Democrats got a chance to sort of go into the fullness of their mistakes, so to speak, and I think that the Republicans, really under George W., are having the same opportunity.

I'm not going to give you in one or two words my personal opinion of George W., which I could give you in one or two words. However, as a kind of circumstance for changing the dynamic the same way that he appeared to be enormously successful for awhile because he was putting down chips on some very big gambles, although I'm not sure he knew how much of a gamble they were. He's lost most of those gambles at this point, and we haven't even seen the probable fullness of some of the outcomes, and I think this is just going to create a huge, huge problem for him.

But, let me go through a sequence here. And, I'll try to talk about really three aspects of this. The first is what were the underpinnings and how would they matter to sociologists, especially retrospectively, about how all this conservative tide came together in the '60s and '70s. Then, the second aspect is to look at the 2000 and the 2004 — not elections so much as changes of power, changes of direction and so forth — which I'll do from a perspective of how the difficulties and the weaknesses are building and where you can look for them. And then thirdly, because I think sociology, to put it bluntly, fell on its ideological face in the '60s and '70s. I think that the victories that were won during those encounters by what you can think of as market economics and religion, victories that probably made sense to the average American in very unsophisticated terms simply because they felt things had gotten out of whack in one way and you've got to put them back with a little more whack from the other ways. But, you now have a situation where it just strikes me there are endless potential analyses of what's going wrong here. And what's going wrong is essentially the excesses of the movements and interpretations that in some respects toppled sociology, 25, 30, 35, 40 years ago. Certainly 25 or 30. So, those will be my three segments.

Let me start with the question of the failure of the 1960s. I got out of law school in 1964 and I got a job as administrative assistant to my Congressman,

who was a New York Republican in Washington, and went down there. And I'd always had a great interest in voting statistics, so that was how I sort of viewed everything, from the standpoint of the national electorate. But as one who was by that point a lawyer and had some interest in policy, I found myself sort of bemused in 1965 and '66 by the incredible stuff the Democrats were trying to do with a huge majority that they had won in '64 and the cockiness that had crept into the program of the Johnson administration on three different dimensions.

Now, the three different dimensions, when I look back, were really very symptomatic. There was obviously Vietnam. But what was Vietnam? Was it just a stupid military blunder? I don't think so. The military, probably left unhindered, could have done a better job, not that they wouldn't have screwed in their own ways, but they might have done a better job without some of the direction from the geniuses in Washington. McNamara and his whole idea of mathematical skills and engineering and management. Management was going to solve questions of wars that had never been solved by management before, but, you know, they could do it.

The economy was in what they called its go-go years, when the stock market Dow hit a thousand in January of 1966. Couldn't hold there, but it hit it and there was this sense that they were transcending the business cycle, that the new skills of Keynesian economics could manage things without having to have a downturn. That you could spend on guns and butter in Vietnam, but skillful management would solve the problem.

And then, of course, was the social planning. Now, to me, as somebody whose interests were always in history, as well as economics and politics, great social plans usually don't work out. Some less than others, but it was pretty clear when you saw what was going on with all kinds of people in Washington - and some of whom I'm sure were sociologists who had their ticket punched to sit down - how you could change the world by moving demographic block A from this portion of this city to this portion of that suburb, while demographic block B would be, in some mathematical and social justice motivated way, moved in another direction.

Now, as someone who grew up in New York City, where I had a basic feeling from subway rides that there were a lot of people who didn't want to play in this game; I had a feeling this wasn't going to be a very successful game. And sure enough, you had the Democratic victory in 1964 because the Republicans were so dumb they thought they could run against the legal aspect of civil rights. But then the Democrats got their ticket punched, and they raced in to go after and to promote a kind of prescriptive social justice remedy, which essentially went up against the values - if you want to call them values - of large portions of the New Deal Democratic Coalition. Essentially the ethnic North and the South. Now, I think Johnson understood some of the politics here, but he had such a

desire to consummate his role as the second and greater Franklin D. Roosevelt, because so much of his history in Texas Democratic politics was in this direction.

So, you not only had Vietnam was going to be TVA on the Mekong, and you're going to have a new economy with razzle-dazzle, the latest update of Keynesian thinking, you're going to have all this new sociology. Well, there were all kinds of people that actually had some sense of what you were likely to run into in New York City, like Pat Monihan, who said, 'I don't think so.' Well, it didn't work out. But my feeling was you really had a panacea approach to the war and a technocratic approach to the war. You had a panacea end to the business cycle, assumed you had the same thing in sociology, and it was just enormously ineffective, and it set the scene for a major transition of American politics. Notwithstanding the fact that the Republicans half the time didn't understand very much of what was really going on at all. So that you see even the Democrats can manage it this time, conceivably. It is a real parallel.

I know enough Democrats and have spoken to a number of meetings of Democratic elected officials in Washington. These are people who don't have a sense of the jungle or have a sense of the capillaries. How not to go for the weakness. Well, the Republicans weren't any better 40 years ago, so it can happen. I'm not assuring you that it will happen.

But, let me go from this to the questions of what was involved in 2000 and 2004 that make all of this so marginal.

Well, the first is that you've got George W. and the neo-conservatives and a whole bunch of other people who were the sort of philosophic, as opposed to the political, geniuses of all of this, who have a sense – they really have a strong sense of the '60s as the great failure. Now, I agree in a lot of ways. I just don't think it was the great failure in the way that they do. I think they've mushroomed certain things that failed, and they've come up with hysteria type of all sorts of crazy professors running loose and left wing nuts and so forth, and that this ruined the country.

And, of course, one of the things that's quite right to point out is there was a very, very mistaken assumption on the part of social scientists on the likely unraveling and then lessening importance of religion. And if there's any judgment that failed coming out of the 1960s it was the even mainstream protestantism would fade into the woodwork. I mean, it has, but it has because the baton has passed to all kinds of denominations whose names I can't remember terribly accurately because they repeat things like Baptist revival, whatever. I mean, just more flavors of this, for those of you who aren't specialists in it. That you have any idea. And a lot of them are just sort of up against whether you're talking about the cashews or the almonds or the walnuts or the Brazil nuts, because there's a lot of weird stuff out there. And guess who they all voted for in 2000 and 2004?

Well, I did a tabulation of the 15 fastest growing religious denominations between 1990 and 2000. The 2000 numbers are about the most recent that are worth anything. And, you know, they were all from this evangelical, pentecostal, fundamentalist orbit led by the Salvation Army. I couldn't believe it. They had the highest growth numbers. But the 13 or 14 following were basically a lot of the same crowd. And the roll of the congregationalism of the Episcopalians and Presbyterians and even the Methodists, it's just going down and down and down as the rolls of these groups go up and up and up in the Southern Baptist Convention, which in some respects, because of its present control by a very fundamentalist group, could be thought of as the official church of the former Confederacy. Something that doesn't get much attention, but historically that's very much the case if you go back and look at the Reconstruction church politics.

In any event, you have George W. in there. Now, George W., in addition to his enormous cranial capacity, is a very unusual guy in terms of the origin of his political career. Because just about the time his father was getting ready to run for the presidency in 1988, George W. had found God, more or less, as the price of oil bottomed in Texas. Because his business bottomed with it. Not for the first time, because he is such a terrific manager, but it did overlap. So, George W. found God and he was fresh from the Billy Graham and fundamentalist political circuit, and his father said, not always knowing exactly what you did with him, that he could be the liaison person for the religious right. So that's what he did. And he would arrange things for his parents like dinner with Jim and Tammy Fay Baker. I'm sure that was an experience Barbara cherished. But they did make it work, and George Senior wrote a book about his own born-again experiences. Unusual for an Episcopalian, but he had them. And by the time the 1988 election rolled around he was a very born-again guy, and George W. was really in his element.

And he developed connections and understandings and relationships with these people, which he then took to Texas where the Republican party has a long tradition of melding religion and business support anyway. And he'd become the brother who lucked out. And Jeb lost in Florida in 1994 and George W. won in Texas, and George W. then got another enormous asset in the form of a president - just to show that I'm totally a mutual contempt commentator, I will refer to as the Ozark Casanova. Because the Republicans, looking for a way to make religion more meaningful to the ordinary American, as far as religious people, found it with, you know, the dignity he brought to the White House by his various performances. And the effort to impeach him failed because clearly the Republicans in the religious right were overreaching. But, the moral indictment, especially for religious churchgoing people was enormously successful, and that's the underpinnings of where a lot of the turnout and the hostility in the sense of bringing God back to Washington and moral people and all of this, and the willingness to believe in the Bushes as the moral side. That's where it gelled. And when he got a chance to run in 2000 against the legacy of Clinton is a very

interesting yardstick. Some of the inquiry has been pursued more by sociologists than anybody else, though, I think is a very worthwhile project, to measure the extent to which frequent churchgoers were more or less Republican than the rest of the country by large margins.

The first example of that was in 1972 because of the McGovern vote. And then it receded. And then in 1992 it came back and was a little higher than it was in 1972, but that was because even though Clinton and Al Gore were both Southern Baptist, they couldn't carry the white Southern Baptist vote in the South. They got trounced. It's amazing. Two on the ticket and they couldn't carry it down there. They won four southern states, but not because they got white Southern Baptist votes. They clearly didn't.

So the whole religious right thing was coming together and then boom, Clinton is in trouble. Monica hadn't surfaced yet, but Jennifer Flowers had, and others sort of waiting in the trailer parks. So, you get the 1994 election. And who wins? Who has their ticket punched by this? You've got the Republican leader become Speaker of the House is a scalawag from Pennsylvania by the name of Newt Gingrich, who became a Southern Baptist. You have the winners in the Senate under the Republican flag. Trent Lott in Mississippi and the Senate President Pro Tem was Strom Thurmond to South Carolina, the 1948 Dixie Credit presidential nominee. Not a particularly big issue, because for the South, they thought that Clinton was the ultimate disgrace. And polls that have been taken show that the Clinton legacy was still at work in the 2002 mid-term voting, believe it or not. I don't try to go into any of the reasons here, but just the connection had been made for a lot of swing southerners and it stuck.

So, you get George W. winning in a way. He takes office with a sense of a moral mission. Here's a man who got his political wings, so to speak, as his father's representative to the religious right. Whoever became president with that as a credential before? It's a handleable liaison with these people. He was telling everybody in the religious sector that, you know, he was listening to God and God wanted him to run. All of this stuff. You've all seen the quotes. What gets interesting is when you've got 40 or 50 of them as opposed to two that you might have read in one article, you begin to say, "Hey, I think he has a little problem here." He has a big problem. And, he has the sense that he is there to play some role.

Now, if you're somebody who was hiding out in the bottom of a Jim Beam bottle and not making it with your business when you ran up the new flag, you would take that flag pretty damn seriously. And he does. But it's not just – this is the amazing thing. It's not just George W. It's the Republican electorate. And this is the payoff that the Democrats have gotten, although they don't understand it, from the fact that the Republicans, after getting the significant victories in the South, where you had the South in motion, they've now got it in all its full flavor, and this is the real problem because the Southern Baptist convention and other

elements of the religious right, they have an enormous influence in the Republican party.

If you look at the statistics, and they're broken out for religion by the national poll takers who do this now, of what kind of people want the church to dominate policy making, want politicians to listen to religious leaders, it's Republicans and conservatives. That's where this whole impetus comes from. A Congressman who represents a district just to the south of me in Connecticut, Chris Shays, referred to the Republican Party as a theocracy. Jack Danforth, former Republican Senator from Missouri, attacked them on the editorial pages of the New York Times as an instrument of the religious right. This is the huge problem.

Now, what is converging here, just to put it in a framework of why sociologists have a lot they can say: You have got the Republican equivalent of what the Democrats managed in the '60s. You've got a dumb war being mismanaged. I mean, it's in a desert as opposed to a tropical area, but they're managing the same skills package. You've got a guy who makes statements just about as stupid as any Lyndon Johnson ever made. Even sounds a lot the same. I mean, as somebody who got started politically liking the South, I find a little less of that with every passing day. Every time my wife and I hear that – I'm going to forget the description – accent on television as he informs us of what's going wrong that he can't possibly deal with because it really isn't going wrong - I say, "I think I've heard somebody like this before."

And, in addition to that, of course, he's totally screwing up the economy. He's running it like one of his businesses. You know, whenever he had a business problem, he just got one of his uncles to hit up the crowd on Wall Street; preferably people who were, you know, big in the Yale fund raising community, and there George W. got another bunch of things to play with for a while. Ultimately, he shifted to Arabs because they have more money, but he was still getting them through his connections.

So, unfortunately, I don't think he understands what's going wrong with the economy. He's got incredible levels of debt. I don't think he understands the religious thing is a very difficult thing to harness.

Some of you may have seen back in 1999, Newsweek ran a poll in anticipation of the millennium, and they asked people, with particular emphasis on measuring Christian viewpoints, how many thought the book of Revelations was bringing Armageddon, that Armageddon was coming? Forty-five percent of Christians. Now, the numbers, fascinating breakout. Seventy-one percent of Evangelicals, then you drop to something like 29% of other Protestants and 27 or 28% of Catholics. Evangelicals, which includes Fundamentalists, includes some moderate people, but basically includes a lot of exactly what's causing the problem.

You have in the Republican party what could be thought of as a quasi *left behind* electorate. Not everybody here reads it. You should. If you want to get a sense of where the whole idea of dumping on the United Nations talking about Saddam Hussein and Babylon in the same terms, building a whole framework of finding the evil ones, just go buy the first volumes of the *Left Behind* series, and if at some point one of your grandchildren 30 years from now says, "How did all this happen?" you can say, "Well, I started getting concerned when I read those damn books." Because I think they got some of their ideas out of this, believe it or not, or at least their sense of bases to touch politically.

And I say this in all seriousness. I mean, I prepared to document a lot of dimensions of it. But people don't take these people seriously because opinion molding Americans in the '60s and '70s and '80s heard from many, many people, probably including some in this audience, religion doesn't matter anymore. We can dump all over these people. We can take away their pledge of allegiance. We can do this, that, and the other, and all they're going to do is go back to Kudzu, Arkansas and, you know, nothing happens. Hah. Famous last words.

They have elected nitwits you never would have believed. Tom Delay. Tom Delay openly states he has a biblical world view of foreign affairs. He doesn't get in trouble in the Republican caucus. No, it doesn't matter. I mean, the same way, frankly, you can say some screwball liberal stuff and not get in trouble in the Democratic caucus. There is two sides to this. But Tom Delay's statements. He went to a really screaming fundamentalist church in San Antonio, Texas and heard one of these Armageddon predictors saying how imminent it was, and he said after the service, "You heard it right. You heard it right." I don't understand why some of this doesn't become an issue, except that the Democrats are still hung up on, how am I somehow going to persuade Kansas. I don't know if you were to rank order states in the union in terms of solidarity for the Republican party, I think you'd put Texas like 10, 11, 12, 13. Anybody who's spending time worrying about carrying Kansas needs to get a new map. There are lots of other places you can really genuinely worry about carrying, like Ohio, Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania. Lots. But not Kansas.

So, the framework here that we have now, we have a cockamamie war that's being lost. We have an economy that's been juiced by more debt than anybody's ever seen before. Paul Volcker, the former Fed chairman, is predicting a financial crisis of massive dimensions within the next five years unless things change. I could go through debt numbers, but it's staggering. I mean, this recovery has been bought with a printing press. It doesn't have real pillars, the sort that it needs.

And then you get this whole culture of religion that's dominating all kinds of things in Washington. Things that you don't fully appreciate – I should say most of you would appreciate it – but all kinds of issues having to do with

women's rights, having to do with drugs, having to do with abortion, having to do with life and death, having to do with sex. I mean, their basic remedy at this point is abstinence. Now, this reminds me – I shouldn't say this – of the remedies proposed by the liberal sociologists in the late 1960s. Because abstinence as a solution in the third world in Manhattan and Chicago and three-quarters of the United States is right up there with some of the stuff that came out of the Office of Education and the Department of HUD, and everything that you could do to rearrange metropolitan this, that, or the other. It's the panacea mongers and the conservatives. These people have no sense of anything realistic, and were losing credibility all over the world, as diplomats come back and they've had meetings at these forums on – whether it's on AIDS or women or on global development, and the Republican delegates are no longer from the American Medical Association or this, that, or the other – the American delegates. They're from Concerned Women For America, which was founded by Tim LaHaye's wife. He's the guy who wrote the *Left Behind* series. They're from the Family Research Council. They're from Traditional Values Coalition. Frankly, what they're from is the evangelical wing of the Republican Party that wanted polled answers like what you'd get out of John Calvin's Geneva, frankly, or the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Nathaniel Hawthorne should come back to visit the Family Research Council.

But, of course, all of this is grist for the mill of liberal strategists. I'm sometimes not sure there are any, but it is grist for the mill. Now, it's grist for the mill of you all, and let me go through this and just close with the aspects that I see here.

If I were looking at ways that all of this can be debunked from a standpoint that has considerable overlap with sociologists, I'd start with the market. The economic marketplace as the panacea of conservative Republicans. Because there is like no grassroots smarts to this stuff. We're looking at Adam Smith's invisible hand. Adam Smith's invisible hand is what makes the marketplace work. You like it's sort of the all knowing marketplace that figures out how things should happen so when they do happen that way, it was really logical because the marketplace knows. Now, you may say this is nutso. Warren Buffett thinks it's nutso. He says that it's not the invisible hand, it's the invisible foot, and it keeps kicking society in the shins. And this makes a lot of sense because over many, many years I've had a lot to do with Wall Street investment firms and this is not exactly a group of people who make a major social contribution during the typical working day. I mean, whether you're looking at so-called financial derivatives or leverage buy-outs or all the debt games, this is where George W. and George H.W.'s whole family came from, the financial services industry. This is what they've done for four generations. This is how they think. And it's just totally out of hand, and our debt is going over the moon.

Some of you probably are well aware that the central banks of Asia, the Japanese, Chinese, Taiwanese, and Korean central banks basically are

financing the West's current account deficit. They just keep buying bonds with the money they make from selling manufactures that can't be made here. And it's staggering in the decline of the manufacturing sector is a share of GDP. At the same time as the finance, insurance, and real estate sector of GDP has become the leading one. And, you know, I don't see the Democrats having any handle on this because their main objective in life is to get the second biggest contributions from the financial services industry, which they work at.

So, this is something, sociology of America's debt binge. The political sociology of the rise of financial services and decline of manufacturing. Isn't there something there that's becoming part of the American thought process? Maybe not of the thought process of the unemployed, but nobody cares about that. Top one percent of Americans have the same purchasing power as the bottom 35 to 40%. The same purchasing power. The same share of disposable income. So they can keep the GNP afloat to a certain extent by themselves even if people further down aren't doing all that well.

So, the indictment of the marketplace, which is, is it's all by the mathematical charts and you don't put in any of these distractions like politics and local culture. I think the potential for an indictment, and Lord only knows it was the economists who said the market could do a better job than the sociologists that got a lot of this ball rolling. Time to pay a few people back, I would think, if I were you.

Question of debt and a wealth polarization. Wealth polarization historically in the world is a crisis because when it happens in a country it results in corruption and results in arrogance, it results in inattention to social programs in a sense sort of well, you know, if they were worth anything they would have made it. I mean, a lot of the people with a lot of money aren't worth anything either, so, you know, what can you say. You can look at some bum and say maybe he's not worth anything, but then look at the bum in pinstripes and say, you know, are we looking at a great contributor here, too? No. Worse because he's got the power to do something negative. So, I would think again, just massive opportunities for analysis.

The question of religion – and I'll pass over the sociology of the war in Iraq because – well, I won't pass it up. I'll take a minute on it. Everybody who's gotten involved in Iraq for the last 100 years got involved because of oil. That was what made Mesopotamia, which was the part of the Turkish empire that's now Iraq, the subject of an enormous amount of gamesmanship during World War I between the various great powers that wanted to carve it up. And they had maps that they ran, for example, in the *London Petroleum Review*, where they had the map of Iraq was basically where the major oil deposits were and how close they were to the different German and British railroad lines. So, nobody goes there for democracy. Nobody goes there for, you know, the date palms or anything like that. They go there for O-I-L. And the whole sense that Bush - and

he had Tony Blair, another not terribly useful participant in global affairs recently – because he should've known all about this because Britain had been the occupying power in a fair part of the first half of the 20th Century in Iraq. And were they there for some sort of high tone democratic reason? Of course not. Anybody who thought this had no sense of the history whatsoever. But the media let him get away with saying it's not oil. Like they let him get away with all the rest of it. The strategy that they had was basically if they could get Iraq under control quickly, they could take over the oil industry, which could conceivably pump three or four million barrels a day, and they could flood the market with Iraqi oil and drive down the price and bust OPEC. Well, funny thing happened on the way to that particular bank. It all what happened was, of course, being Bush, they screwed it up and the pipelines were bombed, everything has been terrorized. The oil production is at a million and a half barrels and OPEC is going great guns and now we're worried about when the oil price is going to hit 70 dollars and OPEC is selling his dollars and they're beginning to use a basket of currencies, not the U.S. dollar as the standard anymore, so the whole ball of wax that they had as their real strategy, in addition to making people who read the Left Behind series happy, was oil. They blew it.

So, you know, there's another thing. The whole how did we get suckered and who was suckered so much. And it was, if I can single out a group, it was women who thought that it was important to support Bush on terrorism who are frequent churchgoers. A very important group, and he really got them. But sociology again beckons here.

Now, the last thing is the whole question of religion. What does all this represent in the United States? The United States is a country now going through stages of religious sort of radicalism. The Protestants in Europe and Catholics in Europe got out of their system in the 16th and 17th and 18th centuries. You know, the Anna Baptist of Munster and so forth. Civil War in England. All kinds of red hots. There was an MP in the House of Commons during the Cromwell period named Praise God Bare Bones. They had all these people with biblical names, that's where they came from, and Tom Delay is no worse than Praise God Bare Bones, but using that standard doesn't exactly work for 21st Century United States. So, I would suggest again that there are just all kinds of material that's sitting out there.

When I was 28 I was somebody who was a lawyer red hot into politics, but if I was 28 and I was a sociologist, I just told you what I'd try to talk about.

TROY DUSTER: Well, to round out this two-part series, you've heard from historians, legal scholars, political activists. Now we turn to two sociologists.

Our next speaker is Patricia Hill Collins, professor in transition from the University of Cincinnati, University of Maryland, College Park. She's the author

of the now classic works on black feminist thought, premiere contributor to the intellectual frontiers of the discipline of sociology.

I should also add that she was the vital contributor to this year's program committee that developed the agenda for these centennial meetings. A warm welcome to Patricia Hill Collins.

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS: Well, having listened to that, are you all convinced that we need to go to church? Because that's where the action is. And for a group of sociologists, what a shocking thing to say. And yet if we do not develop respect for dialog with, or some kind of engagement with, the kind of people who, in fact, are driving the political process in the United States, we will continue to lose. Not only that, our scholarship will be flawed, and we will be reduced to talking to one another and admiring how good we look from one year to the next at the annual meetings of the American Sociological Association.

Since I'm going to assume that many of us do not want that to happen, I think we need to develop respect for the people who are out there. The ordinary citizens. Elitism is bad, whether it's coming from the right or the left. And we have to figure out a way. There is no us or them. There is a *we*. And a certain portion of the *we* is in crisis. The basic disrespect for ordinary people is a problem and leaves them vulnerable to snake oil salesmen like those named previously. So, you can be a bit more – may I call you Kevin, is that OK – Mr. Phillips can be a bit more aggressive about this, but I feel I have to be a tad more careful because they might come after me. I don't have the same friends in high places.

So, I brought a text today just to begin to think about another way of cutting into the shift to the right. It's called *Doing the Right Thing, Family, and the Shifting Political Terrain*. And I'm going to read – I don't do this very often – but I'm going to attempt to read with energy. How's that. So I don't put you to sleep. And I have a very lovely friend in the second row who has promised that if I get incredibly boring, she's going to wave her hand and let me know. So, is our deal still good? All right. Thank you.

I have long been curious about how the Bushes and other wealthy families manage to convince the American people that public interest is best served by saddling senior citizens with sky high prescription drug costs, providing corporate welfare for oil companies and defense contractors, and sending poor and working-class kids off to war.

As I've finished 24 years of living in Ohio, a state whose motto is "Ohio, the Heart of it All," I see how my adopted state's myriad contradictions constitute a microcosm of American society. Despite the pressing bread-and-butter issues that face the majority of Ohio citizens, they faithfully continue to vote for Republican politicians who fail to deliver jobs, housing, good schools, and roads.

Now, for those of you who are located on either coast, this repeated behavior on the part of Ohioans who vote against their own material interests seems to undercut social scientists' faith in rationale choice.

Are people in Ohio so mesmerized by the smoke and mirrors of right-wing Republican morality that the combination of fundamentalist preachers and Fox TV constitute the new opiate of the people? Do Ohioans really believe that team prayer on the public school gridiron will convince God to root for their football team over those who are different team colors? How will criminalizing abortion deter women who have been raped by family members or who simply do not have the money to raise a child from getting them? Will demonizing homosexuality abolish domestic abuse or get more deadbeat dads to pay child support, or reduce the large number of Black and Latino children who languish in foster care? Yet, these are the solutions that voters support for social problems. Is Ohio a heartland without a heart?

Now, many of you may think that people in Ohio are incredibly naïve or stupid, or in some cases both, and you are welcome to argue this case if you like. But, I think that something else is also at play. All of us, including my fellow Ohio citizens, must come to term with the challenges of living in the post-era of post everything. The end of the world, as it were, as we knew it. Post colonialism, post nationalism, post modernism, post Jim Crow segregation, post religion, post family, post reality. Many of us would gladly trade in the ambiguities of the contemporary post period for the imagined certainties of the past. Then, everybody seemingly understood, accepted, and went willingly to his or her assigned place.

In our current times of instability, the imagined past offers comfort. Negroes knew to lower their eyes when talking to white people. Women love to stay home and have babies. No one knew any gay people because such people simply did not exist. And every Christian could trump it with great certainty, my religion is number one. The past offers an elusory comfort. The future offers no such guarantees.

I think that Ohioans seek something that will give their lives direction, purpose, and meaning in times of extraordinary change. Politicians, business elites, scholars, and grassroots organizers alike who recognize this need and who know how to speak to it can exploit it.

Now, it is ground-breaking work on sexuality and power, Michel Foucault argues that heterosexualism, for example, as a system of power operates by penetrating into each individual and annexing the power of the erotic. Through this process of annexation and being disciplined by social institutions that are organized to accomplish it, we learn to regulate ourselves and watch one another to ensure that no one is breaking the rules. This is the new model of power. Not one solely of domination of brute force where one group oppresses the rest

simply by keeping it locked up and under control. Rather, the disciplinary power that relies on self-surveillance, that can make us think timid and often other oriented surveillance that breeds intolerance means that any one of us can be friend or foe unless we figure ways to tell who belongs to our social circle and who constitutes our real enemy.

Now, Foucault's scholarship focused on sexuality, an important entity that affects each and every one of us. Yet, I wonder whether other core ideas might operate in a similar fashion. What other ideas have the ability to transverse the biological borders of our individual bodies and the social borders of our social institutions in order to link individual psyches with the agendas of, for example, right-wing politicians. Unchallenged through their ubiquity, the most powerful ideas would be the ones that seem hidden in plain sight until someone thinks to exploit them for personal gain.

I suggest that the concept of family operates in this fashion. Family taps our deepest emotions and travels to the highest levels of the economy. Family constitutes a seemingly known anchor in a time of immense social change. Now, as sociologists, we have spent much time and energy studying work, a very important sphere of social organization, but the sphere of men. We have relegated family as the sphere of women. Something that's derivative of more important social organization.

Perhaps our overemphasis is misplaced. The power of the concept of family lies in its dual function as both an ideological construction and as a fundamental principle of social organization. As ideology, family rhetoric provides a flexible interpretive framework that accommodates a range of meanings. Just as reworking the rhetoric of family for their own political agendas is a common strategy for conservative movements of all types, including the one under discussion today.

Oppressed groups have also appropriated the annexation of deeply held feelings that ideas about family stir up. The religious right's censure of abortion and of gay marriage, and the willingness of low-wage Latino workers to send money home to family members in Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador, both invoke ideas about family to advance very different political agendas. The right knows this.

When former Vice President Dan Quayle used the term "family values" near the end of a speech at a political fund raiser in 1992, he touched the national nerve. Following Quayle's speech, close to 300 articles using the term "family values" in their titles appeared in the popular press. Despite the range of political perspectives expressed on family values, one thing remains clear. The American public increasingly connected these elusive family values, however defined, to American national well-being, and by implication, public policy.

Now, one reason the right has been so successful in convincing Ohioans, and the American public overall to ignore their own material interests, stems from their masterful manipulation of both the rhetoric of family as well as social policies that draw upon this very same family rhetoric to give them meaning. Politicians routinely invoke ideas about family to motivate all kinds of behavior.

In the United States we are expected to sacrifice for our biological families by feeling so personally responsible for our own financial well-being that we work so many jobs that we have little time to spend with those very same families. We are told that moving into racially homogenous neighborhoods is not about upholding racism, but rather constitutes a personal choice to protect the interests of our children. Frowning upon interracial marriage upholds the integrity of racial families. Even if one's best friend on the job is black. Many citizens now believe that the decline of the United States is directly tied to the erosion of those very same family values invoked by Dan Quayle. Black welfare mothers and broken families, citizens decry, they're the problem. Parasites on the State. Military service and defense of one's nation is cast as duty to family. Some must sacrifice their lives so that the American national family can endure. Such is the power of family as it moves from the micro to the macro levels of social analysis.

Because time is short, I can only scratch the surface of examining how these ideas are implicated in the rightward turn within American society, and how such ideas in turn rely upon and shape policies of race and gender – something I would very much like to talk about in greater detail.

But, today, here I briefly examine two broad themes. They are: First, the power of the idea of family as an ideological scaffold for structures of class, race, sexuality, age, and nation that upholds a tremendous amount of inequality in this country. And second, a few general observations about how this family rhetoric frames both conservative conceptions of American national identity, the turn to the right under question, as well as emancipatory possibilities of reclaiming that very same language.

So let me talk briefly about the first one: Family as ideological scaffold. Is everyone still awake? Are you still awake out there? Okay. Just checking. Because, you know, sociologists are extremely good at pretending to be awake. All those years of school and, you know, we sleep with our eyes open and just really look like we're completely engaged and we're just really thinking about something else, so I just thought I would check. Because it's hard for me to see you.

What I love about Kevin Phillips' book, *American Dynasty* – this is actually what got me going, thinking I was going to talk about family today – is this is a really wonderful piece of work on a family dynasty that goes back several generations. And in the context of American society, where we are convinced nothing is really about family of origin, nothing is about all those kinds of

backward ethnic things from the tribe, that it's all about the individual spirit and individual initiative, it is important to be reminded that family really matter in a variety of ways in our social system.

So, for example, common sense knowledge that upward social mobility is widespread masks the reality that American children routinely enjoy or suffer the economic status of their parents. Families constitute important sites of inheritance. Not solely of the cultural capital and values that the black poor, for example, are so consistently demonized as lacking, but of actual capital and political influence it can buy within American, within the American economy.

What I every much enjoyed about *American Dynasty* was how you can just be a total screw up, but if you're born into the right family you can become President. This is an amazing thing. All right, this to me is one of the most compelling examples of the power of family that I've read in a long time, because very often the examples come from the other end of the political and economic spectrum and often to demonize if you were from a better family, Suzy Q, Jamal, whoever it may be, even Hector or Jose, all right, you too could rise up higher if you had better social capital from your particular family.

We fail to realize that families are the conduit of inherited wealth from one generation to the next. And we also fail to realize that family is the conduit for inherited debt. So, your comments about we need to look at wealth and debt are critical. Not just in terms of individual ownership of wealth and debt, but family ownership of wealth and debt and what that means from one generation to the next.

Now, we are used to talking as sociologists about social class as a phenomena of income. That the individual earns income. We're used to looking at things like wage equality and policies and unionization, and all that's really very, very important work, but that's really talking about social class at the site of production, right? At the site of work.

I think it would be very interesting for us to begin to look at social class and the distribution of what's going on here now at the site of family, inherited wealth, and inherited debt. And when we begin to do that, we begin to move into other terrains in terms of how this particular metaphor reaches out in so many other directions.

Inherited wealth and debt is not simply about – it's not racially neutral. Right. The notion of inherited property is not just tangible property that one can go to the bank and take out. The notion also taps inherited opportunity and disadvantage. And quite, and I would argue a good deal of the frustration on the part of white working class folks in this country right now is because they feel they're getting cheated out of their inheritance, you see. Well, that seat was for

my kid. That seat was for my daughter. The middle class are also arguing very similar things in terms of their opposition to sharing the wealth in elite institutions.

So, even though – oh, stepped on some toes there, eh? Even though sociologists have studied working class families primarily through the lens of income and wages, the concept of inherited family property also operates among working class and poor families. Let me read how it operates here.

Here, property may not be the tangible property of stocks, bonds, and rents from housing, but rather the intangible property of one's birthright to certain opportunities. Let me give one example.

In analyzing how racism undermined the war on poverty program, Jill Quadagno describes how craft unions resisted changing their historical patterns of racial discrimination. Union members interpreted their ability to select their own members as a "property right of the working class." That's Quadagno's words. Among Philadelphia plumbers – I thought that was particularly appropriate because some of those plumbers probably put in the pipes for the building that we're in now. Among Philadelphia plumbers, 40% of apprentices were sons of members who wanted their sons to be trained as plumbers and eventually continue in the business.

One construction worker explains the concept of property rights and property transmission in white working class families this way: "Some men leave their sons money. Some large investments. Some business connections, and some a profession. I have none of these to bequeath to my sons. I have only one worthwhile thing to give; my trade." For this simple father's wish, it is said that I discriminate against Negroes. Don't all of us discriminate? Which of us, when it comes to choice, will not choose a son over all others?

Now, practices such as these virtually ensure that African-Americans and other groups remain excluded from these and other lucrative positions from generation to generation. Moreover, working class men's sense of entitlement for a family wage and job security that could be passed on to their sons links expectations of family inheritance of the social class system to issues of racial homogeneity and gender situated within that same system.

So, let me speak briefly about how this then morphs into ideas about race and gender. The laws that were for many, many years on the book for bad interracial marriage were in part psychological. All the kinds of things that we're comfortable talking about. But they really were about the distribution of property from one generation to the next. Who could, in fact, inherit wealth and who could not. And if you cannot marry and then somehow authenticate the child as being of a legal union, that child was not entitled to that property and those property rights. So, there's been quite a bit of battling over that. Race is really about blood ties.

Race, I would argue, in this country, is about family writ large. In fact, a good deal of the racial literature, if you go back and look at the 19th century works or the earlier works, talked about race as inheritance from the king. Race as blood. Race as family. That language may have dropped away in current times, but because we're dealing with deeply sedimented concepts when I bring this analysis to you, it is still there. So, who is in your family, your tribe, your ethnic group, however you recognize them, and pass things on to them. And who are the interlopers. In this case, the plumber thing, why do I have to give my son's job to a Negro? This is not really what I had in mind when my father gave this job to me. Inheritance, inheritance, inheritance, through family, language, metaphors, and institutions.

Gender takes us in a very different direction in some ways. Whereas race describes the boundaries of who lies outside the family, gender regulates the rules of how one behaves within one's family. It is the distinction between the external and the internal form of domination, surveillance, and control. So, how should they be treated? Women, elderly, dependents. They are our women, we can treat them the way we want. Now, I may have to be nice to the other women, but that's my woman and she better not get out of place. A good deal of domestic violence really flows from these assumptions about gender hierarchy within families that then move and feed into this whole idea of race shaping families and gender.

Now, before we judge the Philadelphia plumbers in Quadagno's study too harshly, let me point out that the same logic shapes our own profession. If collegiality tribal thinking does, trying to ensure places for our graduate students that we have mentored, compromise our ability to recognize talent, you see. I would argue that affirmative action policies are very similar about places that were assumed to be reserved for certain members of the family, and interlopers came and took those places away. So, if you cannot pass on to your child a sense of a birthright, what do you do?

So, this notion of family – and, hopefully, you're getting a sense. This is an argument that I've extended elsewhere in gfm work much further than I can do here today, but what I wanted to do today was basically pull out this concept and give you a flavor of why I think it's so powerful, and because it's so powerful is an idea and also is a form of social organization. Those who can exploit the fears of change, those who can exploit the fears of who's out there, those who can exploit the fears that we are losing our family, our women aren't behaving the way they used to behave, these black people are living next to me, I don't know how I feel about that. You know, all that social change becomes very, very challenging, very, very troubling within this particular idea. And at the same time restoring family to its former glory, then becomes the solution in some ways and in many minds to the changes that are out there.

So let me move on to part two. Observations. How am I doing on time? Okay. Then, I'll have one observation. Maybe two, if I speak quickly. Observations.

Placing the rightward turn in American public policy within the framework of the logic of family makes the success of seemingly irrational policies more comprehensible.

Some years back, I was fortunate enough to take a tour of the *Focus On The Family* headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It's called *Focus On The Family*. All right. There, I got a glimpse of why the right has been so successful and why ideas about imagines and actual families remain so powerful. As part of the tour, we were ushered into a very small observation room that overlooked an enormous room full of computer terminals. It may have been about twice the size of this room. I remember experiencing it as huge, but I'm not so sure how big it was. But, at each computer terminal sat a worker whose job was to respond to all of the letters that people had written to *Focus On The Family*. And this gave me a glimpse of how things went on.

Some of the problems that people wrote in were heart wrenching. They were the very same social problems that sociologists have been studying diligently for so long and trying to ameliorate. You know, all the things that are out there, no one listens to me, the whole deal. But the letter writers turned neither to scholars nor to government officials for solutions. They did not write as Republicans or Democrats or Independents or as political entities. They wrote as individuals who sought out *Focus On The Family*, an organization that allegedly cared about them. And it apparently did.

Our guide told us that the job of each person at the computer terminals was to write a personal response to each and every letter writer. Personal. Yet, how the responses were constructed was really very, very interesting to me. These personal letters were constructed from predetermined texts written by James Dobson, the head of the organization. They just looked up what Dobson had said on a certain thing. In a similar way that people take out their Bible and say what would Jesus say? As if Jesus wrote the Bible. What would Jesus say about this? All right. Each respondent was instructed to look up Dobson's teaching on this particular problem and compose a letter from prefabricated sections. What appeared to be a personal letter in actuality was a form letter. The letter writers did not contact *Focus On The Family* for just, you know, pabulum solutions or pat solutions. They wanted a connection. *Focus On The Family* provided empathy and attention in a post environment of alienation and uncertainty.

Now, the right now claims ownership over the moral capital of family. Using examples and ways of organizing people, whether it's through churches or *Focus On The Family* to do so, leaving those who oppose its policies tainted with the stigma of being against family. Now, how is that going to happen? We hate

family. How do you get up there and argue that. All right. And if you're for family, you're stupid. This is really not going to work, everyone. The right claims the high ground of morality yet its actual policies toward children and families belie its own beliefs. This is yet another area of weakness I think I would add to your list. The *right* now has the moral high ground because they seem to care, but what does this really mean?

Television viewers in Ohio are treated to a steady diet of nightly news that recounts the poignant story of the latest Ohio casualty in the war in Iraq. The heart wrenching coverage of each casualty makes it more difficult to claim that the death of one child was in vain. Better to find meaning in that death through maintaining the fiction that war is heroic and that the person died protecting his or her homeland, family, and the American way of life.

Sadly, white children are sacrificed to keep the sanctity of this particular manipulation of family rhetoric, family policies, in place. The right may claim that it is protecting the children of America and that we must fight wars to provide a future for them, yet they do so by putting other people's children in harm's way. Definitely a weakness.

Now, I think there are many, many examples, which I'm going to actually skip over in the interest of time, that talk about how this whole domestic policy and foreign policy are made comprehensible to American citizens through the rhetoric of family. One must go and die for one's homeland. This is similar to sort of taking the bullet for your mama. All right. Just as somebody came down the street and raised a gun and was going to shoot your mother, you'd say, no, no, no, I must – you know. So, the whole notion of thinking about American national identity through the same lens. That layering effect that I've been talking about that goes from the inside all the way out really, I think I could make a pretty compelling case that that is reflected in public discourse.

So, to get to some final thoughts. I don't see the turn to the right as anything new. Rather, it constitutes a current manifestation of a longstanding tension within American politics. This, to me, would be the false binary that many of us have talked about as civic and ethnic nationalism. We think this is a nation founded on civic nationalism. On individual rights, individual protections, this, that, and the other. And we boo-hoo and look back on – down on people who we think are engaged in ethnic nationalism. Like Iraq. If they could just give up being Kurdish and become Iraqis somehow all those problems would go away. When in actuality – oh, the respect for the individual is pent ultimate and legal systems strive to dissolve the group that the so-called – so that the so-called masses can vote in their candidates. Mass rule seemingly constitutes the will of the people.

But, the Bush family recognizes that family ties always trump individual initiatives. Generations of protecting unworthy sons and daughters and passing

on the benefits of what money can buy should tell us that group behavior remains the foundation of American society.

Intersections of class, race, gender, sexuality that converge through the institutional politics of family are all around us. Yet, we persist in upholding the myth that each individual is equal to all others. This vision of liberalism is dead.

So, what do I want to say. I want to finish up, but I'm just thinking how I want to finish up. I really think that – I think we need to just refuse to see the power of this concept and think that it is a warm fuzzy concept of women, or it is somehow a warm fuzzy concept of deluded religious masses, and that we really aggressively and cognitively and seriously engage how these debates are being played out, both on the individual level and on the national level. What are the emancipatory possibilities within the rhetoric of family that might serve as a platform for challenging social injustice and for really crafting a democracy that does the things that we would all like to see it to do.

Now, this may sound idealistic to you, but I leave you with this question because it is important to me. It saddens me every time I see the face of someone's child who died seemingly defending our current system of family, whether it's a racial family or his or her own family or the American national family. I encourage you to reclaim the sociological imagination and hopefully turn this back into the powerful tool that it might be. Thank you.

TROY DUSTER: Our last speaker is Arlie Hochschild. For more than three decades one of my closest friends, colleagues, confidants, coworkers, therapist. But I've asked her to join this conversation for another reason. That's because in the last short period, the last few months, she has written some of the most astute analyses, which complement what you've heard, and in some ways an extension of Tom Frank's talk about the analytic appeal of certain kinds of frameworks in which parts of the American population seem to be drawn into this kind of thinking of quagmire. In any case, her's is a sociological eye, one with penetrating clarity and a perspective that brings a kind of new insight to this topic. She's, of course, the author, among other works, of The Second Shift and The Time Bind, and it gives me great pleasure to introduce my long-time friend, Arlie Hochschild.

ARLIE HOCHSCHILD: Kevin and Patricia talked about the relationship between the working and middle class and right-wing notions of religion and morality. I want to take that topic on and perhaps suggest a different formulation from Kevin's. But, you could say it's also complimentary.

In the January 2003 Roper poll, an extraordinary thing appears. Among high school graduates with household incomes of \$30,000 or less, 44% were for Bush. In this group, many favored tax cuts. And I'm not usually a quantitative sociologist, but I did an analysis of this poll, and when the Roper interviews

asked these high school graduates that earn \$30,000 or less, “Does the tax plan that’s before you benefit mainly the rich, or does it benefit everybody?” the majority said, “benefits the rich.” Of those high school graduates who earned an annual income of \$30,000 or less who said, “Yes, it benefits the rich,” 53% were still for it. Let’s pause there. That’s our kind of question. Let’s unpack that.

We know now, of course, in 2005 that the 2001 tax cut had already given \$93,000 to every millionaire, and we know that by, estimates are, 2010, 52% of the benefits of Bush’s tax cuts will enrich the richest 1%. So, taxes have that effect, and budget cuts, of course, have the opposite effect. I know I’m talking here — I’m not going to spend long on this point — but you know that there are cuts in HeadStart and subsidies for rental housing. Every policy that would help the poor is scheduled for cuts. So, we need to ask, what’s going on? Why are the very people who might benefit from social programs offered, if we could get our act together, by the Democrats, are going the other way? A number of explanations have been put forward.

There’s, first of all, the 9/11 effect, that even if they, you know, disagree with these policies, that we’ve got to stand behind our leader. But, of course, as Kevin has pointed out, there was a right wing drift way before 9/11. There’s been talk about media exposure. Well, there’s a differentiation of audience, that Republicans watch Fox news and the rest of us listen to NPR or we are on the internet, so it’s differentiated source of information. Maybe that’s it. Well, but another study has found that actually, you know, as a main source of news, 30 to 40% of Republicans rely on Fox news, and we have to explain why they’re going there anyway. It’s not an explanation, I think.

You could say that well, they’re just dumb, they’ve fallen for the double think kind of that we’re exposed to as part of Bush’s rhetoric. The talk about No Child Left Behind that’s associated with cuts in education. Talk about ownership society when he’s putting us into a debtor society. Talk of small government when he’s setting up a surveillance system and expanding the military. We could say that, but that’s not an explanation either. I mean, why do some people fall for it and other people not?

Finally, you could say that it’s Bush’s harvesting a 30-year campaign to talk people out of believing in government as a good re-distributive mechanism. These are all explanations that may have a little purchase, but Kevin has referred to another more primal explanation, which is the rise of religion. But he hasn’t explained why religion has begun to rise.

And I think for a deeper answer we need to look at kind of the electorate itself and unpack one moment. There was one moment. The day after the ’04 election in which an undecided voter, a woman was asked, “Well, why did you vote – you could have gone one way or another – why did you vote for Bush and not Kerry?” And this woman said, “Because Bush is the pro-morality candidate.”

Well, um, what's going on? I would propose this: That there's a long-term kind of downward mobility. A kind of an economic press that has hit kind of the middle, lower middle working class.

There has been – Kevin mentioned it – a kind of an offshoring of the whole manufacturing sector and so good jobs that are union protected, secure, are going out. Bad jobs that are part time and low – have no benefits, low paid, are coming in, and no programs to deal with that squeeze. There's been an economic squeeze on the family.

And picking up from what Patricia was saying, the family has been hurt by that squeeze. There's more a kind of social strains that are expressed in the family. And as a result, I would argue, there's been a kind of an empathy squeeze on this middle and working class, and people are saying, an average guy would say, well, look, I've got my own problems to solve. I just divorced my wife. My kid's doing badly in school. I've just got a pink slip from my company. Don't tell me about the homeless mother in the inner city. I can't take on her problems. I've got enough problems myself. A kind of an empathy squeeze.

And I would suggest that Bush comes along and says right. This is his point of cultural and emotional entrance. And in two ways. It's kind of a double punch on the first punch is to say, you don't have to feel badly about feeling like giving less to the poor. The whole country is doing it. We're not a caring society. We're an ownership society. So, there's kind of a legitimation from the top guy for this.

And the second kind of punch is that – is a result of the fact that people actually still do have moral qualms. They want to be good. They want to extend their circle of empathy. And so what he does is acknowledging that, he gives them a kind of a privatized version of morality. He says, you can feel moral. You can be pro-morality, but morality is now shorn away from giving and sharing and belief in government as a re-distributive mechanism and it's now tilted toward judgment, so you feel moral by judging the gay neighbor and not moral by embracing the notion of sharing.

So, he promotes the idea that you can be moral in your empathy squeeze. I would argue that he's actually hijacked morality and that there are structural reasons for the appeal and the permission for that hijacking. Ultimately, I think Bush's deregulating American capitalism with one hand and regulating the feelings of distress, anxiety, loss with the other hand and putting kind of a moral capstone on it.

I want to add one more thing about religion. Kevin Phillips has talked about the rise of religion, and it's really interesting that the economic decline, the fact that wages stopped their decadal advance around 1970 and the kind of out-

sourcing of good manufacturing jobs around the umpteen 70 coincided with this rise of religion. And it's really interesting.

I've actually been on the internet looking at images of the rapture. There are really two moments in kind of evangelical belief in the end of the world and the rapture. The one is that the world is coming to an end and – so there's nothing you can do about it. We must be fatalistic victims of the fact that the world is just coming to an end. That's the first thing. But after it comes to an end, there's a really interesting kind of bifurcation of those who are saved and the rest of us who will, you know, suffer with boils in the...in hell. And I would propose here that – and the images on the internet are of actually thin white people on their way in dresses, almost on their way to a cocktail party, you know, in Heaven. And I would suggest that it's in a way an expression of distress that, in a way, for the working class and lower middle class folks that are flocking to these churches, the world really is coming to an end. Their world is coming to an end. It has come to an end. A world that their fathers and grandfathers knew. And that this bifurcation of the rapture in a way recapitulates the bifurcation of social classes, so in a way, you know, like the rich, you finally do get to join the elite and look down on and be separate from the class you're afraid of falling into, which – which are the poor. So, in a sense there's kind of a moral expression of a social class crisis.

So, in a way, what I'm suggesting here is that religious ideas aren't just religious ideas – and I hope I'm not offending people — by suggesting that in fact these religious ideas can be, if you unveil them, an expression of a socioeconomic crisis, and in a certain way it makes sense that people believe, the 44% believe, that the world is coming to an end and there's going to be a rapture afterwards.

So, I guess I want to join the chorus here in closing to say that I think this is an extraordinary challenge for sociologists to take up the question of 44% of people who benefit not at all from George Bush, who put him in office. So let's get busy and work on it.

TROY DUSTER: We have time for questions. There should be a microphone here. Will you use the microphone, please. Yeah, I think we got it there.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just wanted to ask particularly Kevin Phillips to what extent he thinks that the rise of religious conservatism within politics in the United States has been influenced by political entrepreneurs from the economic plutocracy and the Republican party, and implicitly, to what extent it's independent of that?

KEVIN PHILLIPS: Well, I think one of the interesting things about Washington and the way it works right now is that the Republican economic right

keeps in very close touch with the Republican religious right. There are meetings of Washington lobbyists in which they exchange ideas, and there's some suspicion there, but there's also much more of an overlap between the evangelical and fundamentalist and Pentecostal Christians and an economic conservatism than people generally believe, and this comes on three or four different dimensions. And I'll just touch them very, very quickly.

The first is the most simple. It's that people like Falwell and Pat Robertson and virtually every major preacher you've ever heard of are making megabucks. I mean, Pat Robertson had his Christian broadcasting network that he sold. He's even got himself a diamond mine somewhere that is part of his empire. He's got a lot of money. Jerry Falwell has done fairly well. The whole crowd. They've got books and videotapes of different stages of the end times that sell buckets.

But even if they didn't have them, I think they'd be enormously sympathetic to this sort of 'God wants the rich to be rich' side of Protestantism, which was there very strongly in the gilded age as well. And several of the evangelical types have got new shticks, so to speak. Oral Roberts – I think he called it, "Name it and claim it." This is the idea that God wants you to succeed and, therefore, you should sort of let God know what it is you want because God is sympathetic.

And then there are a number of other nuances to this. The Southern Baptist convention, for example. They are extremely evangelical in the sense that for a long time they didn't want to get involved in politics because the notion was that you should be concerned about your salvation. And what you should be working for is that. And those yardsticks, and not economic ones that are extraneous and, of course, a lot of the preachers in question, if they were doing fairly well, were on very good terms with the economic power structure, and they would sort of make it clear that the forces of morality were being reinforced by these people who are a part of the enterprise of America, you know, and then you've got an economic version of the Star Spangled Banner, and you can sort of imagine what it is. It's not difficult to see operating. You can't make some great model out of it, but essentially, this evangelical and fundamentalist religion is very strongly allied with the economics of enterprise, and the last thing in the world they want, they're so down on government being involved in anything socioeconomic. They don't support any notion of government-led economic redistribution.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I've been motivated to speak because I'm – my wife is from Ohio and I get to Ohio twice a year, and all of her relatives are conservatives, vote Republican, religious people. I just have the feeling that sociologists really never talk to the people they write about, that we rely on surveys or rely on what we've read in the papers. If you look at those people, they just don't seem to fit the stereotypes that we're getting. They're smarter,

first of all, that we seem to think they are. They're a lot more humble than we are. They know that they don't understand economics and they don't know what's going to happen. They know the left has been predicting economic disaster since 1848 and that it may or may not come. They thought welfare reform was going to work and that the people would get off welfare and go to work, whereas the sociologists were unanimous in believing it was going to cause a million people to go into poverty and cause a disaster. So, they don't tend to view us as having great wisdom that they don't have. And I just urge us to get out there and talk to some of these people and do focus groups or ethnography or whatever you want to call it, rather than just relying on the surveys and what you read in the media.

TROY DUSTER: Thank you. Nancy.

NANCY IN AUDIENCE: Some very interesting ideas from the panel, and I love Kevin Phillips' last book, but it still seems to me that we haven't gotten to the heart of this. And Kevin Phillips is central in the analysis, and I was surprised he didn't address this more explicitly.

Going back to those early days, the issue is that the Democratic coalition in the early 1960s looked like it was on the verge of becoming a permanent political majority, and certain members of the Republican party on the very far right set out to break apart the Democratic coalition. I remember the Democratic coalition was the Democratic South aligned with the industrial North, particularly the white working class and some wealthy industrialists. And it was able to maintain that coalition only as long as it suppressed any attention to the issues of slavery and race. And the Democratic... the current situation, where the Republican party now seems to be almost the majority party, has occurred only because the Democratic South became the Republican South, and that occurred, much more complex than I can talk about, primarily over the issue of school desegregation, initially. And while it became a social movement that is much more than that right now, it really was about the issue that the Democratic party could no longer ignore race, so the Republican party essentially capitalized on that by capturing the old racist South. Then they went after the white working class over the issue of the welfare state and about the fact that they couldn't pass along jobs to their sons. And, however - and this is the key point - the civil rights movement was successful in, in fact, convincing the vast majority of the population that these issues of suppressing blacks was correct. So, part of the agenda was they couldn't any longer be explicitly racist, so racist politics became religious politics. And the moral language and rhetoric is really about justifying this re-configuration of politics in a way that is ideologically acceptable because we can no longer talk about issues of race.

WELCOME SPEAKER: Okay, let me get a comment from the three panelists.

KEVIN PHILLIPS: Oh, let me come back and look at something I think people are ignoring. First of all, the evolution of the movement of the South out of the Democratic party was really quite visible in a number of dimensions, even by the late 1940s. The second thing is, if you assume that the Republicans could sit and strategize all this stuff very successfully, you don't know very many Republicans. They couldn't have done it if it hadn't evolved and if there hadn't been a lot of things there. If it required their brains, believe me, they're not that subtle.

The other very important thing here is that people underestimate the extent to which the South is almost a country within a country and has a tendency to overdo things. They overdo it religiously, militarily, combatively, everything. It's a belligerent part of the country. And they like it. They understand that they are, and they're sort of proud of it.

When they got the Democratic party under Andrew Jackson, in that period, Jackson was a southerner, but the southerners who were separatists really ran away with the party and built up to the point where the South wanted too much for the rest of the country, and I think we're starting to get to that stage now because of the impact on many other issues beyond race where I don't think it's central. It's very subliminal and important, obviously. But the notion that all this is planned by a bunch of people very carefully, they coordinate a lot of things, so they can coordinate, but strategically, it's not that easy.

TROY DUSTER: Let me get some commentary from either Arlie or Pat on this question.

ARLIE HOCHSCHILD: I'm very interested in that formulation that actually, as I hear it, it's in a way a development of the empathy squeeze in a certain way that actually the speaker said that we made real gains with the civil rights movement. People do believe in racial equality, but they feel ashamed at setting those beliefs aside and so they turn to religion, is the formulation I heard. So, in a way I think there's a lot to it, and we need to, as a previous speaker said, go to Ohio and talk to people and work that out, see what – how true it is.

TROY DUSTER: Pat.

PATRICIA HILL COLLINS: You know, this is one of the rare times when I honestly don't know what I want to say about this. I don't necessarily feel that – first of all, it's like who is this "we" we're talking about? If I had to sit here and think, it certainly has been a resurgence of African-Americans who are going to religion as well, and are they, in fact, turning to religion to somehow mask their bad feelings about not liking black people? That strikes me as a bit – that's not going to work there. So, if we really start cutting into the sort of the ground swell of the shift to religiosity, I just think it's something bigger than race.

Now, the question is how race is implicated in that or how people manipulate racial categories for their own personal gain or how religious communities are, in fact, racially segregated. That's another way of coming at it. I mean, we do want to be around people who we are comfortable with, who seem to care about us, who have our best interests at heart. And some of these congregations, the Pentecostals and the evangelical, and the mega-churches - are something I would encourage us to look at - are in many ways separate societies from American civil society, and you're absolutely right. The South to me is - and sociologists tend to think that California is the future. I mean, looking at the globe and looking at the Pacific rim, and it's sort of that's the sort of the model of the new multicultural America, but we have been told repeatedly it is Texas and Florida. And we really do need to look at the south around race and religion and what this all means.

So, I don't necessarily feel that people are trying to avoid talking about race. There are many ways to - I don't know what I think about this. Maybe I'm just still thinking about it, and we'll just leave it at that.

TROY DUSTER: We only have time for one last question. I'm sorry to the others who are waiting in line.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Okay, mine is relatively short, directed to Kevin Phillips. Much appreciate the remarks. I was very heightened at the beginning when you told me that you were more optimistic than most of us. I personally represent the gloom, doom, and despair tradition in sociology. As you were telling us about the impending fiscal collapse in which there's an awful lot of financial writers - you know, we don't have to go through all the names - that have been saying very much the same things. You've told us about the declining incomes that most of us have been studying, the concentration of wealth at the top, the crisis of personal debt at an all-time high, national debt at an all-time high, and government debt completely out of control. Where was the optimism, because I'd like to feel it?

KEVIN PHILLIPS: Well, that's a point I can answer pretty easily. I was referring to optimism from the standpoint of people on the liberal side who don't think that the conservatives are going to come unraveled. I think that they are coming unraveled. Optimism from the sociological community in the sense of all kinds of things to talk about that are likely to become increasingly relevant. I think there are all kinds of things to talk about and they will be increasingly relevant. Now, as for the points you've made, I generally do feel, unfortunately, that one of the reasons why conservatives are going to come unglued is that the United States is in enormous trouble. And I don't think the liberals have the solutions, but to the extent you can derive some satisfaction from the conservatives coming unglued, you know, I'd give you that as a take away.

TROY DUSTER: Thank them. And to thank Kevin Phillips and Arlie Hochschild, and Patricia Hill Collins.