

The Country is Going to Hell:  
Conservative Christian Groups Use of Chaos Rhetoric as the Root of American Aversion to  
Same-Sex Marriage

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**Introduction**

Throughout my studies as a Religion major at Colgate, I have become increasingly fascinated with the role that religious communities play in constructing individual morality. Additionally, as a member of the LGBTQ+ community, I have long had an interest in how politically conservative Americans' positions on same-sex marriage and homosexuality are shaped by religion. To more closely explore the influence that

The conclusion that biblical literalism and authority was the root of evangelical aversion towards same-sex marriage was further elevated in my previous project by my use of Saba O'Connell's (2011) research. It claims that individuals do not construct their own moral code contingently but rather "inherit" it from their religious community (O'Connell, 2011, p. 104). However, individuals do not construct their own moral code contingently but rather "inherit" it from their religious community (O'Connell, 2011, p. 104). However, individuals do not construct their own moral code contingently but rather "inherit" it from their religious community (O'Connell, 2011, p. 104).

reveals a small, homogeneous, and fairly regionally isolated percentage of individuals who identify as evangelical Protestants. With such small and limited representation, it is misleading to believe that evangelical tenets of biblical authority and biblical literalism have the influence and power to dissuade nearly half of the U.S.

primary source of aversion to same-sex marriage in a largely disap





It is relational, meaning its authority impacts individuals in different ways. Some individuals attach less authority and others attach more, depending upon their perspective on the truth values of the text. For example, a secular professor of religion may use the Bible as a historical text, merely reflecting its truth so far as it pertained to the authors at the time the Bible was written. On the contrary, biblical literalists utilize the Bible as a proof text which constructs their own religious and moral truths in the present day. Second, biblical authority implies legitimacy and justification. As a form of legitimacy and justification, biblical authority provides biblical texts as direct evidence

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that they are actually quite ambiguous. The Bible does not include instances of homosexuality  
 w{pf gtuvqf "cu"õvj g"r u{ej qm{ kcnf kur qukqp"vj cv"penkpgu"r gqr rg"vq"dg"go qvqpcmf "cpf "gtqvkecmf "  
 cwtcevgf "vq"r gqr rg"qh"vj gk"qy p"ugz 0<sup>23</sup> This definition and understanding of same-sex relations  
 did not exist at the time the Bible was written and compiled. Rather, homosexuality in the  
 context of present day biblical interpretation is commonly misunderstood to be the same as  
 j qo qgtqvkeuo "cpf "õj qo qi gpkcrk{ 0<sup>24</sup> Homoeroticism and homogeneity are not  
 r u{ej qm{ kcnf penkpcvqu"dw"ctg"wpf gtuvqf "cu"õgtqvke"gpqwpvtu"dgvy ggp"r gqr rg"qh"vj g"uco g"  
 ugz "y kj qwqg? "" "e"qq"d e



o gp'y j q'eco g'vq' {qw'vqpkj j vADtkpi 'vj go 'qw'vq'wu.'uq'vj cv'y g'o c { 'npqy 'vj go 0<sup>33</sup> Lot pleads  
y kj 'vj go . 'dgi i kpi . 'ōf q'pqv'cev'uq'y kmgf n' (0Nqqm'Kj cxg'vy q'f cwi j vgtu'y j q'j cxg'pqv'npqy p'c"  
man; let me bring them out to you, and do to them as you please; only do nothing to these men,  
hqt'vj g { 'j cxg'eqo g'vpf gt'vj g'uj gmg'q'q' { 'tqqh<sup>34</sup> The men are not satisfied with this response,  
j qy gxgt. 'et { kpi 'qw. 'ōy ku'gmqy 'eco g'j gtg'cu'cp'c'kcp. 'cpf 'j g'y qwf 'r r { 'vj g'lw i g<sup>00</sup>py 'y g"  
y kmf gcn'y qtug'y kj " {qw'vj cp'y kj 'vj go 0<sup>35</sup> The two angels pull Lot back inside of his house,  
ōuj w'vj g'f qqt.ō'cpf 'v'kng'cm'vj g'o gp'ōy kj 'dnkf pguō'uq'vj g { 'eqwf 'pqv'eqo g'k'v'vj g'j qwug<sup>6</sup>  
Chgt'vj ku'gxgpv.'k'ku'f guetkdgf 'vj cv'ōy g'Nqtf 'tckpgf "qp'Uqf qo 'cpf 'I qo qttcj 'uw'wt'cpf 'h'g"  
from the Lord of out heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the Plain, and all the  
inhabkcpw'qh'vj g'ekkgu.'cpf 'y j cv'i tgy "qp'vj g'i tqw'pf ō'r w'pkj kpi 'Uqf qo 'hqt'ku'ukp<sup>7</sup>

Vj g'v'qt { 'qh'Uqf qo 'ku'q'v'p'k'p'v'g'v'g'f 'cu'ōcp'gz.co r ng'qh'I qf ō'v'p'gs w'k'q'ecn'  
condemnation of same

mpqy "y g"y q"cp i gm. "Nq"qhgtu"wr "j ku"fcwi j vgtu. "y j q"j cxg"pgxgt "õmpqy p"co cp.õ"qt"y j q"ctg" virgins. The offering of his virgin daughters suggests that the usage prior was referencing sexual relations.<sup>41</sup> In addition, it is not clear whether the etymology of the word "virgin" is derived from the Latin "virgineus" or from the Greek "parthenos".<sup>42</sup> The men of Sodom, by threatening the strangers, are breaking this cardinal rule and Lot, in attempts to uphold it, offer the strangers his daughters.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, it is clear that the men of Sodom were not only breaking the cardinal rule but also the rule of hospitality.<sup>44</sup>

degrading passions. Their women exchanged natural intercourse for unnatural, and in the same way also the men, giving up natural intercourse with women, were consumed with passion for one another. Men committed shameless acts with men and received their own persons the due penalty for their error.<sup>47</sup>

Similar to Leviticus 18:22, Romans 1:24-26 appears to be a clear condemnation of homoeroticism. Although few argue that this verse could be interpreted differently, there are certckp'kuuwgu'y j lej 'tgo ckp'wpergct0Hqt "gzco r rg.'yj gug'xgtugu'ctg'f kt gev't gur qpugu'vq'c'õrxti gt" r qrgo le'ci ckpu'kf qrcvt {õ<sup>48</sup> They are not in direct reference to homoeroticism. Homoeroticism, in this case, is an impurity and a degradation of passions.<sup>49</sup> It is a response to the initial offense, which was idolatry. Several scholars argue that Paul, when choosing homoeroticism as r wpluj o gpv'ht'kf qrcvt {.'y cu'pqv'tghgtgpekpi 'k'cu'c'ukp'dw'tcvj gt'y cu'iqqm'pi 'cv'yj g'õl gpv'kg" world and saw homoerotic activity and idolevt {õ'cpf'õrkp'ngf 'yj g'vy q'ht o n' 'vqi gj gtõ<sup>50</sup> Cf f k'kqpcmf. 'k'uj qwf 'dg'pqvgf 'yj cv'Rcwif kf 'pqv'õcr r n' 'yj g'xqecdw'rt { 'qh'ukp'vq'j qo qgtq'vle" ce'v'k'v'õ'dw'f qgu'lp'tghgtgpeg'vq'kf qrcvt { 'yj tqwi j qw'vj g'tguv'qh'Tqo cpu'cpf 'cv'yj g'gpf 'õcu'c" heading for a whole liuv'qh'y tqpi uõ'y j lej 'f qgu'pqv'kpenwf g'qt'o cng'o gpv'k'p'qh'ugz wcn' behavior.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, homoeroticism in Romans 1:24-26, in alignment with Leviticus 18:22, is understood as an impurity, not as a sin. It becomes clear upon an analysis and closer reading of all three of these verses, that an argument against same-sex marriage based upon biblical literalism and interpretation is far more complicated and blurred than is typically presented.

<sup>47</sup> Mgppgj 'C0Nqeng.'õVj g'Dkdg'qp'J qo qugzwrk'v' <Gzr ntk'pi 'Ku'O gcpl'pi 'cpf 'Cwj qtk'v'.õ" *Journal of Homosexuality* 48 no. 2, (2005): 138.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 139.

To further problematize the impact of biblical authority and literalism in these debates, I raise the question of why some biblical issues are more salient than others in the present social and political climates. If biblical literalism serves as the sole reason for aversion towards same-sex marriage, it should also serve as the sole reason for aversion towards many other social, political, and religious issues among the U.S. populace. However, when looking at the contemporary political and social climates, some issues which are condemned in the Bible just as often, or even more frequently, as acts of homoeroticism have not risen to the public consciousness as major social, political, or religious issues in the present day. For example, adultery is not commonly recognized as a social issue which is deserving of broader political and religious intervention in the United States. As I discussed previously, however, there are over fifty clear references to adultery in the Bible. For example, Exodus: 20, or the Ten

Eqo o cpf o gvw."ur gekhecmf "ucvgu."ō[ qw'uj cm'pqv'eqo o k'cf wngt { 6<sup>52</sup> Similarly, in Leviticus 24:17-18 "k'ku'ucvuf . "ōk'c'o cp'eqo o ku'cf wngt { 'y kj 'y g'y kg'qh'j ku'pgki j dqt. "dqj 'y g'cf wngt gt" cpf "cf wngt gu'uj cm'dg'r w'vq'f gcj 6<sup>53</sup> Unlike the passage referencing homoeroticism in Leviticus, it is clear that this verse speaks directly to the understanding of adultery as infidelity with little to no interpretive wiggle room. It is also important to note that the punishment is death, an equal punishment to the condemnation of homoeroticism in Leviticus. If the Bible is being interpreted literally, based upon the two verses in Leviticus, adultery and homoeroticism should be held in the same social and political regard. <sup>54</sup>

see them protesting court rulings on same-sex marriage. Such actions combined with the 24% of Americans who do not identify as biblical literalists yet who disapprove of same-sex marriage, suggests that there is something much larger than biblical literalism driving the aversion towards same-sex marriage in the United States.

### **If not the Bible, what?**

J kvqtkcm{ 'ur gcnkpi . "öugz. "i gpf gt. "cpf "vj g'hco kn{ "ctg'tgcm u'vj cv'j cxg'dggp"cv'vj g'etwz "qh' defining American concepts of fear and dapi gt.ö"cpf "vj gtghqtg."j cxg'dggp"cv'vj g'egpvt"qh'uqo g" qh'Co gtleca'o qu'r gtukvpi 'ewwtg'y ctu<sup>55</sup> As Smith discusses in her book, *Religious Rhetoric*, vj gug'kuwgu"ctg'r gtegxgf "cu'grxcvfg "vj tgcw'vq"öuqeknr qy gt'utwewtgu.ö"vj cv'j cxg'dggp'hpcev' since the birth of a Christian America.<sup>56</sup>



The constant struggle to maintain the status quo by Christian Americans can be witnessed throughout American history. Rather than fading with the passage of time, these concerns took on new life during the twentieth century. During the World War II era, for

hqw j v'htegn{ 'v'uvqng"dhgct"cdqw'vj g'hwwt g'qh'Co gtlec'lp"cdkf "v'uvgo "vj g'kf gö'y j gp'hceg " y kj "eqpucpv'xlevqt'kgu'ltqo "vj g'öNI DV'tki j u'o qxgo gpvö<sup>65</sup> As one can see, the Christian Right has made numerous attempts in the past and present to antagonize homosexuals and LGBTQ+ activists. In doing so, they often place these individuals at the center of evil, immorality, and causes of major tragedies.

Vj g'wpls w'pcwt g'qh'vj gug'i tqwr u'f lueqwtugu'ku'y j cv'elevates the issues of sex, gender, and the family from individualized religious qualms to broader morally founded social and political culture wars. The rhetoric used by these groups, which Leslie Smith coins as *chaos rhetoric*, labels issues such as homosexuality and same-gz "o cttki g"cu"öwpls wgn{ "ko o qterö" within the public sphere.<sup>66</sup> Uj g'f ghpgu'kv'cu"öc"v{r g'qh'f gengpukq'ur ggej "vj cv'cwgo r u'vq" r gtuwcf g'cp"cw'kgpeg'd{ "utguulpi "cp"ko o kpgpv'vj tgcv"vq"cdgmxgf "gpv{ö<sup>67</sup> Ku"o clqt" characteristics of moral authority, secular appearance, emotional appeal, and timelessness ö all of which will be discussed in further detail ö is the primary reason that some biblical issues such as homosexuality, are more salient in the social and political climates of the U.S. than others. I argue chaos rhetoric is the unknown factor which influenced the outlying 24% of individuals in 2014 who did not identify as biblical literalists yet disapproved of same-sex marriage.

### *Chaos Rhetoric: Defining Features*

Chaos rhetoric is a type of speech which addresses moral decline in a way that resonates with a broad swath of Americans, including the religiously unaffiliated and the religious

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<sup>65</sup> Marie Griffith, *Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians and Fractured American Politics*,





of homosexuality, these arguments suggest that such groups do not deny the existence of gay and lesbian individuals. However, the argument that the legalization of same-sex marriage is portrayed as a victory for the gay and lesbian community is not supported by the evidence. Typically, the legalization of same-sex marriage is portrayed as a victory for the gay and lesbian community, but this is not the case. The legalization of same-sex marriage is portrayed as a victory for the gay and lesbian community, but this is not the case. The legalization of same-sex marriage is portrayed as a victory for the gay and lesbian community, but this is not the case.

hclwtg'cpf 'ecmlhqt"o qtcn'tgf go r vkp0"Vj gug'v{r gu'qh'etkls wgu'cpf 'yj gk"ör gtuwculxg"ghkece{ö"  
 are dependent upon thgt"cwf kgpegu'cf qr vpi "öc"egt vcp"wqr kcp"xkukqp"qh'vj g"pcvkp0<sup>80</sup> For



the immorality of homosexuality, however, each still has the same underlying message and effect: homosexuality is in some way irrational and detrimental to the well-being of the country.

The timelessness, persuasiveness, and influence of chaos rhetoric is why it is so impactful within the demographic of Americans that do not identify as biblical





## Smith's Chaos Rhetoric in the Present

### *The Family Research Council*

One popular and more influential Christian Right group in the present day is the Family Research Council (FRC). Established in the 1980s and merging with the more well-known Focus on the Family, the FRC has become a major force in the Christian Right movement. Its founder and first president, Gerald P. Regier, drew upon his federal experience in the Department of Health and Human Services to build the organization. The FRC's mission is to promote traditional family values and oppose what it perceives as the erosion of these values in American society. The organization has been successful in influencing public policy, particularly in the areas of abortion, gay rights, and education. The FRC's influence is evident in the appointment of conservative judges to the Supreme Court and the passage of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA). The FRC's success is a testament to the power of organized religion in the United States.

What immediately jumps out in the history of the Family Research Council and its structure is that it is research driven. Although the FRC does utilize purely religious rhetoric or

ōl qf -vcmō'lp'ugxgtcnd'qh'ku'r kgegu."c'icti g'r qt'kqp'qh'y gk'y qtmu'tghgevu'y g'ej co grgqp-like

ej ctcevgtku'le"qh'Uo kj ō'ej cqu'tj gvtle0C"o clqtkv' "qh'y g'Hco k' "Tgugctej "Eqwpeku'tgr qt'u'qp"

same-sex marriage and homosexuality disguise their religious roots in science and scholarly studies. For example, Peter Sprigg, a Senior Fellow for Policy Studies at FRC, has written a

o clqtkv' "qh'r kgegu'y j lej "ekg'uej qmtn' "uwwf kgu'cu'ōgxkf gpegō"ci ckpuv'y g'ngi crk' cvkqp of same-sex

o cttkci g0'k'j' ku'y qtm'ōGxkf gpeg"Uj qy u"Ugz wcn'Qt'kqpcv'kqp"Ecp'Ej cpi g'F gdwpm'kpi 'y g'O { y "

qh'-'kō o wcdk'k'v' .ō'Ur tki i "eqwvgtu'y g'uek'p'v'le"cpf "uqek'qmi kecn'pcttcv'k'g'y cv'ōugzwcn'

qt'kqpcv'kqp"ku'-'kō o wcdng.ō'qt'wpcdng"v'q"dg'cnvgt'gf 0J g'ekgu'organizations such as The American

Psychological Association and well-renowned colleges, such as, the University of Chicago to

dwk'f 'j ku'ecug0'Vj g'o ckp'r kgeg'qh'gxkf gpeg'j g'w'k'k' gu'cpf "f guet'kdgu'cu'ōqpg'qh'y g'hktu'

comprehensive modern surveys of sexualiv' "lp'y g'Wpk'gf "Uc'v'gu.ō'y g'P cv'kqpcn'J gcnj "cpf "Uqek'n'

Nkg"Uwt'xg' "eqpf wevgf 'd' { 'y g'Wpk'xgtuk'v' "qh'Ej keci q'f go qpwt'cygu'y g'ōh'w'k' k'v'ō'qh'ugzwcn'

orientation and same-sex attraction.<sup>101</sup> He cites quantitative data which portrays the different types of attractions and sexual interactions (male-male, male-female, female-female) that individuals have acted on in contrast to their sexual orientation identification. The numbers suggest that individuals who identify as heterosexual have had both same-sex interactions and attractions, however, it also shows that those who identify solely as homosexual have also acted on heterosexual attractions.<sup>102</sup> Ur tki i "wugu'y gug'pwo dgtu'v'q"eqpen'w'f g'y cv'ōej cpi gō'lp'ugzwcn' orientation is possible. He argues that if an individual expet'k'gegu'c'ō'uki p'k'k'ecp'v'ngxgn'qh'ej cpi g'

<sup>101</sup> Rvg't'Ur tki i .ō'Gxkf gpeg"Uj qy u"Ugz wcn'Qt'kqpcv'kqp"Ecp'Ej cpi g.ō'Vj g'Hco k' "Tgugctej "Eqwpeku'0'p'f 0C'ee'gu'gf " April 19, 2020: 4.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 5.

kpö"cwtevkqpu."dgj cxkqt."qt'kf gpvk\ 'vj gp"õvj g{ 'j cxg'g'zr gtlgpegf "uqo g'b gcpkpi hwi'ej cpi gø'lp"  
 ugzwcn'qtkgpvcvkp'y j lej 'j g'dgrkxgu'vj g'P cvkqpcnJ gcmj 'cpf "UqekcnNkg"Uwtxg{ "gzgo r rnkguö<sup>103</sup>

Overall, the debunking of tj g"õko o wcdk\{ö"qh'j qo qugz wcn\ 'eqwvgtu'vj g'cti wo gp'vj cv'uco g-  
 sex marriage is a 14th Amendment issue. If homosexuals are not born homosexuals, and there is  
 no scientific proof that they are but there is quantitative data suggesting they are not, then  
 marriage equality for same-sex couples should not be considered on the same grounds as  
 heterosexual couples, or, more significantly where law is concerned, interracial couples.

Therefore, there is no reason to disrupt the tradition of institutionalized heterosexual marriage in  
 the U.S. by legalizing same-sex marriage on a scientifically ungrounded claim. As one can see,  
 Sprigg does not have to mention religion anywhere in this piece to convince his readers to  
 rethink the legal argument for same-sex marriage. Rather, all he has to do is cite a study which  
 appears credible to make individuals question the foundations of their own political views.

Ur tki i "cwj qtgf "cpqj gt"ctvkg. "vj g"õJ qo qugz wcn'Rctgpv'Uwf {ö'y j lej "eqo dlpgu'ej cqu"  
 tj gvtkæu'o qtcn"cwj qtkcvke element with its use of secular argumentation. In this piece, Sprigg  
 cites an article written by researcher Mark Regnerus and published in the journal of *Social  
 Science Research* which presents troubling data on the welfare of children raised in homosexual  
 homes. The study compared and contrasted the overall well-being of children in homosexual  
 homes to children in heterosexual homes referencing things, such as, likelihood to suffer from  
 depression and drug abuse, to being arrested, to experiencing sexual assault, etc. Sprigg  
 uwo o ct\ gu'Tgi pgtwu'hp\ kpi u."r tguvp\ kpi "uqo g'tqwdnkpi "ucvkuæuOHq"gzco r rg."Tgi pgtwu"  
 hqwpf "vj cv'ej kf tgp"qh'ngudkp"o qj gtu'lp"eqo r ct\kup"v"ej kf tgp"lp"j gvtqugz wcn'j qo gu'ctg"õcp"  
 cuvqpkj kpi "33"ko gu'o qtg'rkgn\ "v"j cxg'dggp":touched sexually by a parent or other adult

ectgi kxgtølp"ej kf j qqf ."ctg"cm quv'6"ko gu'o qtg'rkgnf "v"dg"ewtgpvaf "qp'r wdrle"cuukurpeg."cpf "

ctg'o qtg'vj cp"5"ko gu'o qtg'rkgnf "v"dg"wpgo r m{gf 0<sup>104</sup> Similarly, children in both lesbian and gay homes in comparison to heterosexual homes are more likely to have been arrested more often, suffer from depression, had more sexual partners, and have lower educational attainment.<sup>105</sup> Sprigg uses all of these statistics to make a 5 point conclusion:

3+"Vj g" -kpcev"dkqmi kcrn'hco kf ø'tgo clpu"vj g"pqto cvxg"ugwki "hqt"ej kf -rearing in American today; 2) Children do better when raised by their own, married mother and father, 3) Children suffer when raised by homosexual parents... in comparison to all other family structures, 4) Homosexual tgrcvkpuj k u'ctg'køtkpuecmf "wpucdr.g.ø'cpf "7+"Rwdrle'r qre{ "uj qwf "eqpvkpwg" to encourage the raising of children by a married mother and father.<sup>106</sup>

Once again, Sprigg does not have to mention religion at all in order to persuade his readers to reconsider their opinions and political views of same-sex marriage. He takes advantage of what appears to be a credible scholarly source to present an emotional argument which addresses the well-being of innocent children. Similar to the abortion case I cited in previous discussions, his tgcg'gtu'f q'pqv'j cxg"v"ci tgg"vj cv'I qf "j cvgu"j qo qugz wcm"v"go r cvj k' g'y kj "Ur tki i ø'tgrki kqwu" aversion to same-

cpf "vj tgcvu'vq'uqelgv{0k'vj ku'y qtm"Ur tki i "qr gpu'd{ 'lucv'pi . "ökp'tgegpv'f gecf gu "vj gtg'j" cu'dggp"cp"  
 assault on vj g"ugzguö<sup>107</sup> He frames the emergence of feminism, the homosexual movement, and  
 vj g"tcpuigpf gt"b qxgo gpv'cu'öcwemü"qp"wpf kur wgf "tgcik'ku"\*y j lej "ecp'dg"wpf gtuvqf "cu"

a concern for gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men. Some types of HPV can cause genital and anal warts and some can lead to the development of anal and oral cancers. Gay, bisexual, and other men who have

around the persistence of dominant, status quo institutions of sex, such as, heterosexual marriage, traditional gender roles, and childbearing by the proper individuals. A majority of their articles do not rely on religious rhetoric or cite biblical verses as would be expected. It appears that they deliberately avoid using religious language and biblical evidence to refute American contestations of same-sex marriage and homosexuality. In place of such arguments, the Family Research Council and its fellows relies on journal articles and well-known and respected notions of threat or danger to particular demographics or to the overall well-being of society, instilling negative emotions in its readers, and thereby accomplishing social and political persuasion. Without appearing credible under the umbrella of scientific evidence and eliciting reaching its less religious audience.

Although it is important to note that many of these articles fail to acknowledge other sociological factors that may contribute to many of the statistics cited, I argue that this will most likely go unnoticed among a majority of its readers. Being a form of rhetoric, these arguments have the ability to create their own particular reality. Residing in the discursive structures of This is how it gpi ci gu'y kj "o { vj o cnkpi . "öqt "vgej pls wgu...to naturalize a relationship between things that qvj gty kug"j cxg"pq"lpj gtgpveqppgevkpö<sup>112</sup> For example, it can be seen that the Family Research Council enmeshes certain concepts, like child







Ej tkwcp"i tqwr u'cu"qr r qugf "q'vj gk'r qkkn'lwtxkcn0Vj gtghqtg. "Kcti wg'vj cv'ej cqu'tj gvqtkeø"

emotional appeal and adaptability to different socio-historical climates are bi-products of its largely secular appearance which allows for a religious position to be made relevant in an increasingly secular America. Once it is made relevant, or deemed a credible position, elicitation of negative emotions helps to elevate the status of the claim from a relevant political position to an existential moral threat which demands national attention.

However, in the present day, conservative Christian groups are faced with an American majority that now largely supports same-sex marriage.<sup>115</sup>

of o k p k u t c v k p p a u r c t i g n f ' l p f k h g t g p v ' q t ' p g i c v k x g ' t j g v q t k e ' q h ' u c o g - s e x m a r r i a g e h a s i n f l u e n c e d t h e o v e r a l l d e c r e a s e i n a p p r o v a l a m o n g t h e U . S . p o p u l a t i o n . T h e s e o b s e r v a t i o n s m a y i m p l y i n t e r e s t i n g r e l a t i o n s h i p s b e t w e e n c h a o s r h e t o r i c e m p l o y e d b y c o n s e r v a t i v e C h r i s t i a n g r o u p s a n d p o l i t i c a l r h e t o r i c u s e d b y p o l i t i c a l e l i t e s . A d d i t i o n a l l y , t h e y m a y s i g n i f y u n i q u e a l t e r n a t i n g r o l e s o f c h a o s r h e t o r i c i n p o l i t i c a l e n v i r o n m e n t s w h i c h a r e c o n d u c i v e t o r e l i g i o u s r h e t o r i c a s o p p o s e d t o t h o s e w h i c h a r e d i s c o u r a g i n g o f i t . F o r e x a m p l e , p e r h a p s c h a o s r h e t o r i c s e r v e s a s m e r e l y a s u r v i v a l m e c h a n i s m f o r c o n s e r v a t i v e C h r i s t i a n r i g h t g r o u p s i n l a r g e l y s e c u l a r a n d l i b e r a l i z i n g p o l i t i c a l a d m i n i s t r a t i o n s . O n t h e o t h e r h a n d , i n c o n s e r v a t i v e a n d m o r e e x p r e s s i v e l y r e l i g i o u s p o l i t i c a l a d m i n i s t r a t i o n s , p e r h a p s i t s e r v e s m o r e s o a s a t o o l o f i n f l u e n c e a n d s o l i d i f i c a t i o n o f c e r t a i n r e l i g i o u s l y b a s e d p o l i t i c a l c l a i m s .

If I were to extend this study, I would like to focus further research on comparing the influences of chaos rhetoric both within and outside of political rhetoric in American culture y c t u 0 ' k i ' q d u g t x g f ' o q t g ' e n q u g n f . ' U o k j a u ' e j c q u ' t j g v q t k e . ' f g u r k g ' k u ' v c e k ' t g r i k q w u ' p a t u r e a n d h e n c e s e c u l a r e m o t i o n a l a p p e a l , m a y b e f o u n d l e s s i n f l u e n t i a l t h a n p o l i t i c a l r h e t o r i c w i t h i n a l a r g e l y s e c u l a r i z e d U . S . p o p u l a t i o n o n i s s u e s s u c h a s s a m e - s e x m a r r i a g e . T h i s m i g h t s u g g e s t t h a t c h a o s r h e t o r i c u t i l i z e d b y c o n s e r v a t i v e C h r i s t i a n g r o u p s i s n o t t a k e n a s a u t h o r i t a t i v e l y a s c l a i m s m a d e b y p o l i t i c a l e l i t e s a s m a y b e s e e n i n t h e c a s e o f t h e a p p r o v a l o f s a m e - s e x m a r r i a g e

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