

Survey offers data for worldview of Trump voters

## **Baylor researchers found that 81 percent of Trump voters see Middle Eastern refugees as a threat.**

by [Adelle M. Banks](#) in the [October 10, 2017](#) issue

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NASHVILLE, Tennessee (RNS) — Americans who voted for President Trump are often very religious, believe in an authoritative God, and hold traditional views about gender.

The new Baylor Religion Survey, released in September, also found that Trump supporters are more likely than other voters to see Muslims as threats to America and to view the United States as a Christian nation.

Researchers found that six in ten white evangelical Protestants voted for Trump. This figure is lower than that of other surveys, which have found 81 percent of white evangelicals voted for the president. The Baylor calculations are based on the church attended by a respondent rather than on how respondents identified themselves.

Almost three-quarters of Trump voters said Islam is a threat, compared with 18 percent of those who voted for Hillary Clinton. An even higher percentage—81 percent—of Trump voters strongly agreed that Middle East refugees are a terror threat, compared with 12 percent of Clinton voters.

“Today, divisions in the American public are stark,” said Paul Froese, a Baylor University sociology professor and director of Baylor Religion Surveys. “We can trace many of our deep differences to how people understand traditional morality, theology and the purpose of our nation.”

Survey authors describe “Trumpism” as “a new form of nationalism which merges pro-Christian rhetoric with anti-Islam, anti-feminist, anti-globalist, and anti-government attitudes.”

Most Americans who viewed themselves as “very religious” voted for Trump. But almost the same percentage of those who viewed themselves as “very spiritual” voted for Trump (46 percent) as for Clinton (45 percent).

Evangelicals saw Muslims as the biggest threat, and black Protestants viewed atheists as posing the most danger.

More than a third of respondents (35 percent) said Muslims want to limit Americans’ freedoms, but a similar percentage (36 percent) said conservative Christians have that desire. About half of evangelicals think Muslims and atheists want to restrict freedoms. Two-thirds of people with no religious beliefs worry that conservative Christians want to limit freedoms.

The survey, titled *American Values, Mental Health, and Using Technology in the Age of Trump*, also looked beyond politics to find:

- 77 percent of respondents said they never use the Internet to share their religious views.
- 55 percent never use the Internet to access religious content.
- 47 percent of churchgoers live within 15 minutes of their house of worship.

The newest survey from the Christian university in Waco, Texas, is the fifth in a series that dates to 2005. Its findings are based on a random sample of 1,501 adults. The survey was administered by the Gallup Organization during the first months of the Trump administration. The study has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

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