

A grant from the History Project and the Institute for New Economic Thinking allowed me to spend one week at Tufts University's Digital Collections and Archives in Somerville, Massachusetts. There, I examined the papers of the Institute for First Amendment Studies and of Political Research Associates. I will use this research to complete my book manuscript on the intersection of Christianity and capitalism in the United States, tentatively titled *Garden of the Gods: Patriotism, Piety, and Corporate Power in Colorado Springs*.

*Garden of the Gods* explores how Colorado Springs, an average American city, was transformed into an "Evangelical Vatican" by the confluence of Christianity and capitalism. Beginning in the 1940s, the city's business elite began to court evangelical Christian ministries with promises of cheap property, low taxes, and a large low-wage labor pool. These boosters saw evangelicalism as the right kind of industry: one that would expand the local economy without bringing crime or pollution. Evangelicals, finding these incentives hard to resist, moved to the city in droves. Their arrival earned Colorado Springs a reputation as "Jesus Springs" and made it a symbol for the ambitions of American evangelicals. Yet if businesses in the Springs promoted evangelical Christianity, they also checked its influence in their city. Business elites who once saw evangelicals as allies quickly turned against them when evangelical activism threatened to harm their city's reputation—and its ability to attract capital.

The material I found at Tufts illuminates several facets of the complex relationship between Christianity and capitalism. First, it shows how evangelical ministries were influenced by their financial needs. The document that brought this point home was a letter from James Dobson, president of the evangelical media empire Focus on the Family, explaining his decision to relocate Focus to Colorado Springs from its original home in southern California. Dobson was blunt about the reasons for the move: Colorado Springs was a cheaper place to live and to operate a business. But he gave this apparently pragmatic reason a spiritual cast: "Every dollar we receive is 'blood money,' representing the sacrifices and love of our supporters," he wrote. "How can we continue to operate the ministry in one of the most expensive areas in the United States if it is not necessary to do so?" The reference to blood money suggests that, for many evangelical ministries, financial questions were inseparable from moral ones. And so while Focus and other ministries may have moved to Colorado Springs primarily for economic reasons, they interpreted this move in spiritual terms. As Dobson also wrote in his letter, "We believe...that [God] Has spoken to us through a series of events," culminating in the move to Colorado. Or as the Springs-based minister Ted Haggard put it in another forum, "You can't explain the Colorado Springs phenomenon in natural terms[.]"

Second, material from the Institute for First Amendment Studies and Political Research Associates demonstrates that, for many evangelical leaders in Colorado Springs, fighting for Christian morality was not only a cause—it was also a business. Colorado Springs was, like Silicon Valley or Boston's Route 128, a hub for information industries, only in this case the industries were evangelical Christian ministries rather than software or biotechnology companies. Their product was but stories and statistics that fueled cultural conflict. One especially productive "business" in Colorado Springs was the Family Research Institute (FRI). FRI, founded and led by the statistician and psychologist Paul Cameron, produced anti-gay propaganda used by conservative groups across the United States. At Tufts I found FRI publications with titles like "Homosexuality Can't Be Genetic," "Homosexual Aspects of

Murder and Sadism,” and “Was the Young Hitler A Homosexual Prostitute?” This material, extreme as it may sound today, was not limited to the fringe. As a report I found in the Institute for First Amendment Studies collection noted, Cameron’s pamphlets and videos were publicized by televangelists, distributed on Capitol Hill, and endorsed by military officials. As the circulation of Cameron’s texts indicates, the story of the Christian Right is about more than ideology; it is also about business networks.

Third, the archival collections at Tufts illuminate the carefully cultivated network of Christian ministers, politicians, and businesspeople who helped set the agenda for the Christian Right in the United States. No institution better epitomized this network than the Council for National Policy (CNP). Formed in 1981 as a conservative counterweight to the Council on Foreign Relations, the CNP included many conservative heavyweights among its members. A meeting of the CNP’s Board of Governors held in Colorado Springs in 1982 featured speeches by (among others) beer magnate Joseph Coors, U.S. Senator Bill Armstrong, and televangelist Pat Robertson, as well as an invocation by James Dobson. Elsewhere in the Institute for First Amendment Studies collection I uncovered a report on the DeMoss Foundation, a secretive organization founded by insurance executive Arthur DeMoss to fund evangelical endeavors, especially those with a conservative bent. DeMoss money helped fund the work of Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and other televangelists, as well as the evangelizing activities of Campus Crusade for Christ. Cases like CNP and the DeMoss Foundation demonstrate that any understanding of the Christian Right in the United States must begin by following the money.

When it comes to evangelical Christianity, following the money often leads one back to Colorado Springs. The city was undeniably one of the most important nodes in the web of connections between corporate power and conservative Christianity. Yet even there, in the “Evangelical Vatican,” the alliance was not seamless. Business leaders turned against evangelical allies when the bottom line seemed at stake, while evangelical activists had no qualms about boycotting local businesses they saw as unfriendly. Thanks to the generous support of the History Project and the Institute for New Economic Thinking, I will be able to take another step toward unraveling this complicated relationship.