

United States of America
White House Faith-Based and Community Initiative
Innovations in Effective Compassion Conference

THE FUTURE OF INNOVATION PANELS

PANEL I: THE FUTURE OF INNOVATION & RESEARCH REGARDING AMERICA'S SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURS

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: I am not really Jay's boss. I think you all know that. We are good colleagues and do enjoy working next to each other. As Jay mentioned, I am the President's Domestic Policy Adviser. And I want to thank you on my own behalf and on the President's behalf. He had a wonderful time here yesterday, by the way, really enjoyed himself. And I want to thank you very sincerely for the tremendous work that you all do. Our panel, which is going to join me here in just a second -- in fact, they can start on their way up if they'd like. Our panel actually, it occurred to me, represents sort of three generations of people who have done social policy for U.S. presidents. We are going to have somebody who did domestic policy with Richard Nixon and somebody who did domestic policy with Bill Clinton and somebody who did it with George Bush. I think I can probably speak for the other two when I say we would love to have you all put us out of business. And to the extent that we could get America's social problems solved from outside Washington, all the better.

You know, I was thinking as I drove over here, just strictly as a practical matter, if you were to sit down today and kind of draw up a list of social problems in this country and then in the column next to it you started listing some of the organizations that have proved to be the very most effective at solving those social problems, I really think that any accurate and honest accounting would end up with a very heavy dose of faith-based institutions. Just kind of run through the list in your own mind. I'm sure you have your own list, but I just jotted down Habitat for Humanity, Intercity Catholic Schools, the Salvation Army, Alcoholic Anonymous, True Love Waits, Prison Fellowship, Marriage Encounter. You can go on and on. These are some of the very most successful groups in the United States at fixing ugly social problems. And linking them all you will find one common thread, which is, of course, that they are all faith-filled and God-centered in their approach. So just as kind of an empirical fact, I think it has to interest you if you are charged with lifting up Americans who are hurting today. It has to get your attention that these are the kinds of groups that often end up at the top of our lists.

Those of us who are in government are well-aware that before you put the weight of the state behind an idea, it is really important that you do your research, that you show your work, that you offer the public accountability, accountability for results. The purpose of our next panel is really to ask whether the

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apparent effectiveness of faith-based groups that I have just described really is the case and to what extent we can demonstrate this in a more methodical way. So what we did, we asked Byron Johnson, who is a very gifted sociologist who has done I think more comparative research in this area than anyone I know of in the country. We asked him to review the last couple of decades of social science and sort of summarize what it says about the effectiveness of faith-based social work. And then we invited comments on Byron's findings from Bill Galston, who was an architect of Bill Clinton's domestic policy; and from Dick Nathan, who was an important aide to Richard Nixon. So we are going to start with Byron.

Dr. Byron Johnson is a professor at Baylor University in Texas and co-Director of the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion. Byron? (Applause.)

DR. B. JOHNSON: What Karl didn't tell you was that when he called me about this session, he said, you know, "It would be very helpful if you would consider reviewing the literature again -- you did this back in 2002 -- and sharing that at the conference." I thought, well, if I had a year to prepare for that, that might be something that would be worth doing, but to do it in a hurry, it might be a little bit of a problem. And then he said, "Then we will have Bill Galston and Dick Nathan to basically critique that." I thought, well, that's really great. (Laughter.)

So you are going to have just a short period of time to review all of this literature and then to have these two guys to critique it. What I have done here, I have had this question asked of me for years. We hear so much about these groups. And what can you say about their effectiveness? I think the story that I am going to share with you this morning is one that or this afternoon gives you some insights to the effectiveness of these groups, but I want to do it in a little bit of a round-about way. So if you could? Can I advance these slides here? I guess I can, can't I? Yes. There we go.

Back in 2002, I reviewed a lot of studies that had one variable in common. And that variable was religion. I wanted to see how religion affected various kinds of outcomes. You can see on this slide this was a lot of different areas that a lot of people are concerned about. And so, all total, I reviewed almost 500 studies. There it is. And I did what we call a systematic review. And the review basically summarized these studies over disciplines. This is about 498 studies within the social and behavioral sciences looking at things like crime and delinquency or suicidal ideation, longevity, blood pressure. So a lot of this research I was reviewing was appearing in medical journals. What you find if you look at this is that these studies seem to have an overwhelming pattern that religion is associated with benefit. And so that is what that

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looked like in 2002. And what Karl was interested in is, what does that literature look like in 2008? This is the trend that you will see, now about 894 studies published in just these areas. And there is a whole methodology about how one would track down these studies. You basically use a lot of different search engines. And then once you find a study, you look at the bibliography and the references. And that leads you to more studies. So another 400 studies on top of the ones that we looked at back in 2002. And the patterns are almost identical that religion shows benefit.

Now, I want to make an observation here. I don't want to get too jargony, but a preferred method would be what we call meta analysis, which would be where you look at effect sizes in these different studies to do, actually, a much better job of comparing them to see what you would find. There just wasn't enough time to do a meta, although I am working on a major meta analysis in the area of crime and delinquency and drug and alcohol at this time but not in such a sweeping way as all of these studies. So if we know that religion at least has an effect when you look at these studies, this is what it looks like when you look at another set of outcomes. And these are what we would call pro-social outcomes. And here is the pattern. This is 2002. I hope you can see that. This is 171 different studies, basically the overwhelming majority finding that religion is associated with beneficial outcomes in terms of well-being, hope, purpose, et cetera, educational attainment. And now this is what it looks like updated to just this week, 217 studies of very similar pattern. Okay?

Now, faith-based organizations. A number of you represent faith-based organizations. What do we know about those? And here I am just summarizing that literature that you just saw that basically says religion is now considered a protective factor, on the one hand, from protecting people from harmful outcomes. And it also appears to be a pro-social variable that helps foster good things. Now here is what we look like if we look at faith-based organizations back in 2002. I only found about 25 studies that were empirical. So the bad news is we don't have very much evidence on faith-based organizations. To this date, we don't have one empirical study published on the Salvation Army, not one. So if one were opposed to the role of faith-based organizations, you should argue, "Oh, well. Let's discount the Salvation Army. There is no evidence to prove they have any impact whatsoever," at least on the empirical side. And the reality is that is very hard research to conduct. It is very easy for me to use the ad health data set or the general social survey and sit at my desk and crank out an article while I test a theory, but to go into one of your organizations where you are reaching out to homeless and to track people in some kind of an experimental design, which is obviously what we would like to do, is very difficult to do. In fact, one of the problems is it is

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almost impossible to do when you have a variable like religion that you are studying because you would have to randomly assign people into the control and experimental groups. And then you run into all kinds of other issues.

Now, one of the things that is really disturbing -- and I will be winding this up here -- is I did find a lot of studies on FBOs. The problem is they are not empirical. People like to write about the constitutional issues surrounding the FBOs, the compliance issues surrounding the FBOs. And so that is what you will find. So I found hundreds of studies, but as I go through the list, you just mark them off one after the other because they are not systematic studies and they're not experimental. Some of them are quasi-experimental and off a lot of case studies. This is what I found. I found 50 studies published. And, again, if I were to do this and had more time, I would find a few more out there. The trend is very positive. And this is not a meta. This is a systematic review. So I am only looking at whether or not it is beneficial, harmful, or some kind of a mixed outcome. And you can see there are next to no harmful outcomes associated with religion. Now, I would actually like to find some. That would really be a cool thing to find that religion causes harm. It would make me very famous. I have actually been praying about that. (Laughter.) God has not seen fit to answer that prayer. So if you believe in intercessionary prayer, that would be one thing that you could lift my way.

The basic news is this. The preliminary data seem to indicate that these programs are associated with benefit. Ready for Work is one example of something that you have heard about this conference. The President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative is another where we are just getting data in to look at. And, again, the task before us is a difficult one. And there are a lot of reasons why we don't have research. One of the reasons why we don't have good research, there is plenty of blame to go around. And that is that the government has not encouraged it until recently. So that if you were to submit a proposal to do some kind of a study on a faith-based intervention in the past, it would be the kiss of death. That, thankfully, has changed a bit, but we still have a long ways to go. A lot of faith-based organizations, quite candidly, have not been open to be researched. Why would they need to be if they know they are already effective? And so there is a problem on both sides, but I think increasingly that is changing. A number of organizations are saying, "We know we are not perfect. We will offer someone to come in and take a look at us to tell us where our shortfalls are that you might be able to help us get those worked out through good, solid research." And that is a good thing to have. So the evidence is very preliminary but is positive. I am very confident about that. And then I think that is my last slide. That's it. Yes. I will just skip through this. That is

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where you can find more of our research if you would like to. And I am sure I will be back with you. Thank you. (Applause.)

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: Thank you. We are next going to have Bill Galston. Dr. William Galston is College Park professor at the University of Maryland and a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. And, as I mentioned, he was also a leading light in setting policy for the Clinton administration. Thank you. (Applause.)

DR. GALSTON: Well, I have nine points to make in eight minutes. So I will have to hustle. (Laughter.) Let me just begin by associating myself with the sentiment that Byron uttered at the end of his remarks. I remember when I walked into the White House, one of my first assignments was to serve on an interagency committee charged with reforming and expanding HeadStart. So the first thing I did was call over to HHS. And I said, "Would you please comb your files and send me all of the high-quality evaluation studies on HeadStart?" There was an embarrassed pause at the other end of the line. And my interlocutor said, "You know, there really aren't any." I said, "What? This program has been in existence for decades. It serves hundreds of thousands of kids. And you are telling me that we don't know whether it works or not?" I gradually learned through two and a half years of service in the White House that government at no level makes the kind of investment in evaluation or gives the kind of emphasis to evaluation that these very important programs that you and others are working on deserve and need. And I hope that on a bipartisan basis we can change the way government does business so that we won't be flying as blind 25 years from now as we are today. (Applause.)

I stand before you not as a producer of research but as a consumer of research, including the research that the two gentlemen to my right, stage left for you, have been so instrumental in producing. So they do meta analyses, and I do summaries of their meta analyses. (Laughter.) And here is what I have come up with. I need these remarks to be sharp and intentionally challenging to some extent. I believe in these programs, but at the same time I think we need to be asking ourselves hard questions, even if others are not asking those questions.

So in the field, -- this is my first point -- the bright line distinctions between faith-based and secular social service agencies tend to blur to some extent. The stylized pictures in our heads don't conform perfectly to reality. There is a high degree of diversity in both of these broad categories. And it leads to a

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very substantial overlap, an overlap that is bound to affect the results of our evaluations. There are many differences right on the face of it. Let me just tick off some.

This will be my second point. There are pervasive differences in the sorts of staffing that these two different forms of organization tend to look for. Secular social service agencies emphasize credentials, official credentials, and faith-based and community organizations tend to emphasize fidelity to faith and to the mission of the organization. There is an emphasis in the one case on hard skills, let's say job skills, emphasis on the other soft skills and even personal transformation. There are differences in the duration of programs. Faith-based and community organizations tend to stick with people longer. There are distinctions in funding, categorical versus unrestricted. Surprisingly, a number of studies point in this direction. Community, local faith-based organizations receive relatively little support from organized religious congregations. And they are dependent on public funds or fund-raising in the community at large. Let me just say that I haven't found much evidence to support the charge that local governments and agencies systematically discriminate against faith-based organizations, either in awarding funds or in making referrals.

Point three. And I address this to my democratic and liberal brethren. Contrary to the views of many civil libertarians, most faith-based organizations don't aggressively proselytize or even force clients to listen to faith-saturated messages. This restraint is not only constitutionally appropriate, but it is prudent because, as many researchers have pointed out, many clients have had experiences earlier in their lives that have made them wary of, if not right hostile to, organized religion.

Point number four. There is, as far as I can see from the literature, no systematic aversion to faith-based organizations on the part of public agencies responsible for referrals and programmatic recommendations. In fact, it appears to be an extensive informal network of relations among the staffs at the local level.

Five, contrary to widespread belief, many of the larger, more established, better funded, more diversified and internally specialized agencies, frequently referred to with the omnibus adjective "bureaucratic," in fact, tend to have close ties to their communities. And so I would caution against the easy picture in our heads suggesting that small faith-related groups are embedded in communities and larger organizations are not. The research, the case studies, the data do not bear out this generalization.

Six, and continuing on the theme of overlap among these two kinds of organizations, there appear not to be any systematic differences between secular and faith-based organizations in categories such as

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the motivation and conduct of their volunteers or in the question of whether they offer narrow versus holistic approaches to service delivery or in the way they define their goals and the way they recognize and celebrate success or, as I suggested earlier, in their efforts to evaluate their programs, which are underfunded and weak across the board.

Point number seven. It is not clear, at least on the basis of the literature that I have reviewed, that faith-based organizations systematically seek out and accept harder-to-serve populations. On the one hand, there are strong religious motivations to help the "least among us." On the other hand, a comprehensive study by Steven Rathgeb Smith and his colleagues suggest that faith-intensive programs tend to work better for clients who are highly motivated to succeed in them and that these programs seek out people with just such motivation.

Number eight, -- and here is where I will dovetail with what we just heard and join forces with it -- as yet, there is no systematic evidence that faith-based organizations deliver better outcomes across the board than do other kinds of organizations. Some do. Some don't. I will share with you my suspicion that if we convened this meeting in 20 years to review the latest generation of research, you will probably discover that generalizations will be hard to come by and that different kinds of organizations with different kinds of programs, different kinds of approaches, secular, religious, and others, are better at dealing with different population subgroups.

I very much doubt that we are going to find that one kind of program is systematically better than another, but I am going to raise the following issue. Is this the right question? Does it really matter so much whether one category is better than the other or that they are roughly the same but it's a patchwork quilt of advantage and disadvantage? Does it really matter whether faith-based organizations are better or merely as good? I don't think so because the argument for involving them would be just as strong in either case. There are people who need help. There are people who want to help them. Right now the needs of those who need help are greater than what is available to help them. Hopefully your efforts have narrowed that gap. But there is more work to be done. And I think it is time to bring all hands on deck. Do I have one more minute, Karl?

This will be my final point. And I say this not only as a lifelong Democrat but as a lifelong observer of the political scene. As you know, one administration is coming to an end. There will be a new one. It may be of the same party. It may be of a different party. If these efforts are to continue and to be strong, it is going to be very important to create a sustainable consensus across party lines of the administrations. That

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means that it is particularly important that the mode of involvement in faith-based organizations can see and be constitutionally and legally appropriate. And in this connection, I would commend all of you a fine paper by two ranking scholars in this area, Ira Lupu and Robert Tuttle, both of George Washington University, both intimately involved with Dick Nathan's organization, who I think made a number of important points earlier today that everybody involved in this field should pay attention to. Thank you very much. (Applause.)

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: Thank you, Bill. We will finish up with Dick Nathan. And then we will have some time for questions, I believe, if you can start preparing those. Dr. Richard Nathan is the Director of the Rockefeller Institute of Government at the State University of New York, which is in Albany. He is also the senior statesman here with experience in government that dates back to the Johnson and Nixon administrations. (Applause.)

DR. NATHAN: Thank you, Karl. I am honored to be here. The title of this part of our program is "The Future of Innovation and Research." Knowing Jay Hein for a long time and admiring him and the people that are working with him, I know that has been his emphasis in the proceedings today and yesterday that there is a future, there are things to work on, innovations yet to come. The second part of the title is "The Future of Innovation and Research." That's my subject. And I am going to talk about research, and I am going to start with Byron and with Bill. In his major findings chart, the fourth point is rigorous research is long overdue, Byron. And I am going to speak about some work that we are doing that is underway that I hope he will feel and others of you will feel is on the right track.

Let me start by saying just a little bit about who we are, providing support from the Pew Charitable Trust to Rockefeller Institute and our director of our roundtable on research and social policy. Chip Lupu and Bob Tuttle are partners of ours. They spoke earlier today. We have actively with the support of the future of the trust, when monitoring developments under the initiative and the learning that has occurred about the initiative and we have done some learning of our own and have produced some papers that are based on work that Bill mentioned, Steve Smith, people in our roundtable group have done. We have a handout about our research, research we have done and the research that we are doing. Claire Hughes, who is here today for The Roundtable -- stand up, Claire -- who is covering this event for us to put on our Web site, both of us have copies of a summary about work we have done in Michigan, in New York City, in

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Seattle, in Mississippi, and in a number of different fields. I want particularly to concentrate on the flagship study that we are conducting with the support of also the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Duke University Research Program in this field. We are conducting a random assignment rigorous study of drug treatment programs in a major American city with cooperation from universities and public officials to try to see how, why religion makes a difference. One of the things that we have done -- and this is something that Bill mentioned -- in phase one of this research, which we have already reported on, we have looked very closely at this point, that secular and sectarian social program providers often are similar people in secular programs often have very strong faith orientations. And you need, you need, to look at the groups.

This is my experience. I have worked in this field a long time with the studies of the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation. You need to know what the independent variable is. And that's just not to say it. You have to go out and meet the people and talk to the people at the front line and in the field, who their sponsors are, what their purposes are. And you have to sort out what religion is as an input to then look at how religion makes a difference as an output and an outcome. So we are now in phase two with random assignment. It takes time. Studies can often be very complicated to undertake. I am a strong believer that you can't do classical social experiments on everything. They take time. They cost a lot of money. They are difficult to do. You have to use them when you need them. This is a good case of where I hope our study 20 years from now will make Bill feel like somebody does know something, but we will be done before that, Bill. Now, what we are doing is looking at outcome variables and tracking what happens to people in different types of programs based on our phase one research. And we are in the field, and we have all of the smart people who know about social experimentation helping us to avoid mistakes and do this carefully. The handout that we have describes that. There is more information to come. There is more information available from the Roundtable Web site. And so I think that I am proud to be able to tell you a little bit about that.

Now, I also agree with Bill Galston. When he said he had nine points, I started, Bill, to keep score. How many of those points am I okay on or do I agree with you on? I do okay, not great. But the first two points about diversity and differences, absolutely yes. And the point he made at the end, does it make a difference, you know, there is a role for a lot of different groups. Part of the question we ought to be thinking about and working on and considering what we can learn about different types of social program providers is how they should serve, who they serve, what kinds of people are most benefitted by involvement with the

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different kinds of groups. So this is not a matter of saying yea or nay. It is a matter of deep learning, rich and careful research in a place where it is important. This is a subject that we have been talking about for eight years. And we will see what happens next year. And it is obviously something we ought to try to dig into and understand better in the way that Byron said in his work we followed. He has been very active in our program and in the way that Bill said. We need to try to find better answers, good answers. And, yet, we need to look at this as a question of who does what, what could we learn from understanding different treatments, different groups, different outcomes, different areas of social policy. I make my living that way. And, as Karl said, I have been at it a very long time. (Laughter.) (Applause.)

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: Can we take questions, Jay? Is it possible to take? We will take questions. I think I am going to start us here. We have about ten minutes left, it looks like. You know, I think it was a sociologist, Peter Berger, who once said that if the most irreligious people in the world are the Swedes and the most religious people in the world are from India, you could describe America as a nation of Indians ruled by Swedes. (Laughter.)

You know, it does sometimes seem that there is a stark disconnect between the faithfulness of our citizens, of our people versus the insistence we often get from many elites that our public life should be entirely secular. This is a very weird disconnect, some of us feel, at least. I remember a survey came out a few years ago that was a survey of graduate students. And it showed that among white Americans with a graduate degree, four out of ten had "intensely antagonistic views towards Christians." And when there isn't open hostility, there is at least often a kind of neglect or kind of blindness about a religion. As we have heard, the academics often are strangely silent or ignore, skip over religious influences on human conditions. And I have to think that maybe there is more to that than just they weren't funded or nobody thought of the question yet. So I guess I want to start by asking our panelists, you know, given the many hints we have that religion can perhaps be a powerful force on health and prosperity and happiness and so forth and given that apparently many of our citizens understand that power and want to work with it, I am wondering if we can come up with some ideas as to why many American elites so often seem anxious to ignore or shun religion as a social force and put themselves in a very different position than rank and file voters.

DR. B. JOHNSON: Do you want to tackle that one?

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DR. NATHAN: You start out, and I'll follow you.

DR. B. JOHNSON: Well, Karl, what if I take an easier question than that one? (Laughter.) You kind of set me up on that one again, didn't you? (Laughter.)

Well, one of the things that I want to mention, I agree with Dick's and Bill's comments on the nature of this research. One of the things that strikes me is that when I lived in Philadelphia, you could get a vastly different picture of the Salvation Army's drug treatment program from one site in town to the other. And it points to your question that not only are there gray lines. Some of these organizations that are very much similar are, in fact, different. We had a grant this last year where we were an intermediary for the Department of Justice. And we founded 39 programs. It as a domestic violence intervention program. And 13 were faith-based. And the remaining were community-based. Once we brought those people together, you couldn't pick them out because a lot of people that worked in the community-based programs were indeed very religious people and quite outspoken about that. And when you labeled them as a community-based group, they were somewhat offended because their faith was important to them, like it is for most Americans. And so as we began to think about research, it would be very helpful for us to be able to take these kinds of distinctions, to look at these organizations, a little bit more closely. But going back to your question, Karl, the reality is most Americans are religious. All the survey research seems to indicate that. But it also indicates that people are religious in different ways. And so there is a great diversity in American religion that we really haven't fully appreciated because most of our surveys ask this question, do you believe in God or do you pray? Most people are very comfortable answering that in the affirmative, but then when you break that out and ask them more questions on religion, then you find out that there are some real sharp differences between us. I think some of that has worked its way into the elite and people that typically tend to be in powers of leadership. And certainly within the academic community, we see a lot of a different picture than we see among everyday people. DR. NATHAN: I can tell a story that picks up on what Byron said and what Karl asked. I find -- and I have been always very interested and motivated to do this -- Yogi Berra said the best way to observe something is to go look at it (Laughter.)

DR. NATHAN: I spend a lot of my time -- I have just spent two weeks in the field in Tallahassee and in St. Paul studying health policy program systems. You have to get out and talk to people that in a way is the

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independent variable. So I am now still a researcher. I was in New Jersey, and I was talking to a woman in a social service office. And I said, "Well, you know, that's interesting what you do, but, now, what about these faith-based programs? What do they do? And why is it different?" She got very annoyed with me. She said, "I am devoutly religious. It motivates everything I do. It influences everything I think about and care about in working with the people that are clients. I am not different. That is something that I carry and care about." So this point about who is out there and how important it is to be clear in our understanding, Karl, of the agents of change, we have a paper on our Web site by John Greene. And it is a new paper, a new congregation study. And this is a challenge for you, Jay. What it shows is that the message is getting out, but it is a hard message to use to reach a lot of small particularly congregations. So there are not only different players, but you need to know what their base is and what their capability is and their world view is to try to get their involvement in the way that has been worked on so vigorously in your work and in the work of the faith-based initiative. The faith-based initiative, we also did a paper on this. What is most distinctive about what President Bush did is he penetrated the government. He sent people into the agencies and said, "Try and do this." That is distinctive. And I am impressed by the fact that they did it. And I have learned a lot about how they did it. (Applause.)

We are out there. And we are doing our final report now. We are finishing up this work. It ends this year. And we are going to look in this final report on this -- we call it administrative presidency, digging into the bureaucracy, trying to change the signals on the ground. It is a challenge. There is more work to be done. (Applause.)

DR. GALSTON: Well, Karl, I am going to pick up your challenge. And without denying the statistics on the relationship between what some people have called over-education and attitudes towards religion, although by that standard everybody on this platform probably is "over-educated," what I do want to suggest is that that doesn't map as neatly as many people suppose onto partisanship and onto religious elites. And I will just speak from my personal experience. Just about the first assignment that I got from the President when I walked into the White House was, you know, a charge to make sure that the Religious Freedom Restoration Act made it to the finish line in good order. And we worked very hard on that. Two years later, the White House and the Department of Education worked very hard in conjunction with lots and lots of religious groups to clarify and, by clarifying, to expand the dimensions of clearly permissible religious activity and religious expression in public schools. A year after that, President Clinton did not oppose;

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indeed, he welcomed, the charitable choice provision of the Welfare Reform Act, which he signed I was a senior adviser to Al Gore's presidential campaign and played some role in Vice President Gore's decision to strongly endorse the expansion of charitable choice, which he did, if memory serves, in a speech to the Salvation Army in 1999. I could go on, but what I want to suggest is -- and I think this is good news as we move into an election year -- that there is a whole lot more consensus, the basic building blocks, not every detail but the basic building blocks, of what so many people in this room have spent so much of their lives doing. And that is good news. I think we ought to recognize it and celebrate it. (Applause.)

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: It looks like we can take one question. Forgive me. I don't know the mechanics, but is there somebody who -- is there a microphone out there somewhere? Can you just holler?

PARTICIPANT: (Question off microphone)
(Applause.)

DR. B. JOHNSON: Some of those studies that were reported on the health outcomes are, in fact, of people on the ground doing programs through local congregations, for example. So some of that has already happened. And there is a whole health literature that deals with religion and spirituality. And a lot of it is very applied. And so there is a lot of good work happening among congregations that connect, for example, diabetes to interventions on the faith-based side. So a lot of that translating has already happened. One of the problems with presenting so much all at once is when you throw 500 studies at people, you lose a lot in the translation.

DR. NATHAN: My personal mantra is to be a social scientist who works on studies that are useful and used, action research. And I stand alone in my business. No. Almost. (Laughter.)

It worries me. It worries me. Your question is a good one, that we need to do things that can inform and provide knowledge, informs the policy process. It doesn't matter what I think. We have got lots of politicians. It is not my values and my purposes that matter. It is to try to get the kind of deep understanding that can permit policy-makers, help policy-makers to make. As I said at the end of my comments, it is not a matter of either/or, religion works, religion doesn't. It is a matter of for whom and how and in what kinds

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of settings should different kinds of groups do things to deal with the toughest problems in the society, the under-class top problems, long-term dependency, compassion for the people who are really hurting and needing.

PANEL MODERATOR ZINSMEISTER: That strikes me as a very good last word. Thank you all.
(Applause.)