

Survey looks at religious 'sectarianism';

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A study finds U.S. "religious right" groups have negative attitudes toward similar religious groups on the right, making coalition forming more difficult.

But, in contrast, the University of California-San Diego study -- the first national survey of "sectarianism" among various religious traditions -- found "liberal" religious group members more inclined to build cooperative political partnerships with those of similar ideological views.

The study authored by sociology Professor John Evans, concludes, "What may be holding back the religious right from achieving its full potential is that, compared to the groups that comprise the religious left, participants in conservative religious groups do not want the other religious right groups to influence public opinion."

But the least sectarian of the religious right are those who "favor more of role for religious leaders in public life. Evans said.

The research is based on analysis of 5,603 opinions from people identified as being members of fundamentalist Protestantism, evangelical Protestantism and traditional Roman Catholicism. The groups on the left were identified as members of mainline Protestantism, liberal Protestantism, non-traditional Catholicism and liberal Judaism.

The survey is detailed in the Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion.

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