

***Not Only Faith-Based but Faith-Centered Too:  
A Reexamination and Close Reading  
of *Dry Bones Rattling****

*by*

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Over the past decade, an increasing number of scholars have reintroduced religion into the study of American politics.<sup>1</sup> Included in this new wave of research is research focused on “social capital” in the United States. The social capital line of research has become interested in religion in part as it is manifest in the rise of Faith Based Organizations (FBOs).<sup>2</sup> While increased scholarly interest in FBOs can serve to invigorate the discussions of how religious Americans shape politics and society, we must carefully note how religion is treated in these emerging social capital studies. What role do religion and Faith play in the social capital framework? What are religion and Faith credited with doing? When are religion and Faith no longer included in the analysis? This paper will attempt to address such questions by presenting a close-reading of Mark R. Warren’s *Dry Bones Rattling*.<sup>3</sup>

**The paper makes two central arguments.** *First*, the paper argues that Warren places too much separation between the religious and the political, when in fact the political becomes religious for Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) participants. *Second*, and building on this distinction between what constitutes the political and religious spheres, it will be argued that although Warren readily acknowledges the role of religion in the IAF, in the final analysis he writes Faith out of the picture.

**The paper is organized into three sections.** Section I provides an introduction to the issues at hand, attempting to address several prominent objections to the paper’s premise.

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<sup>1</sup> The volume edited by David C. Lege and Lyman A. Kellstedt (1993) provides many arguments for why scholars of American politics should engage in more careful examination of religion. Also cited frequently in this line of work are Wald (1992) and Wuthnow (1988).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Wood (1997) and Mark Warren (2001) speak most explicitly about the relationship between Faith-based organizations and social capital. Robert Putnam’s (2000) chapter on “Religion and Social Capital” in *Bowling Alone*, as well as his work with the Saguaro Seminar (2001) provides the theoretical background for these discussions.

Section II provides the bulk of the analysis, a detailed reading of *Dry Bones Rattling* text.

Section II answers the question, “How exactly does Warren write about religion?” Section III presents a discussion of the implications of the findings in Section II, addressing the question, “Why does it matter that Warren treats religion in this way?”

**Section II** highlights three patterns of note. **First**, it will be argued that Warren consistently presents a story of social activism that is “based” in Faith, but eventually moves toward a more secular purpose. In one sense, this is the difference between a “Faith-based” vs. “Faith-centered” description of FBOs. Warren treats the idea of “Faith-based” as meaning primarily that an FBO has its foundation and origin in Faith traditions. He does not give adequate attention to the notion that FBOs are also Faith-centered organizations – always and everywhere aware of God’s presence in their lives and work. **Second**, and related to the first point, the paper will argue that Warren repeatedly downplays or ignores comments from his research subjects that would point toward a more central role for Faith and God in the IAF’s story. Taking a close look at the way Warren treats these God-centered quotes reveals that although Warren is willing to put the quotes in front of the reader, he is not willing to dwell on the theological content the quotes contain. **Third**, the paper will suggest that Warren’s references to Sacred Scripture strip the Scriptures of much of what makes them unique to the Faith traditions from which they come.

In **Section III**, the paper will address three important implications of these three patterns in the text. **First**, because the IAF is not considered as a Faith-centered organization, a false

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<sup>3</sup> An alternative approach (and a different paper) would provide a comparative analysis of Warren’s work to another analysis of FBOs. One promising comparison would be with Mary Beth Rogers’ (1990) *Cold Anger*. A preliminary comparison is offered in Section III of this paper, but there are still many other routes left unexplored.

dichotomy is created between the work of the IAF and the Christian Right.<sup>4</sup> The theology of the IAF is not deeply probed, and the theology of the Christian Right remains unchallenged. **Second**, it will be argued that forcing the IAF into the social capital framework prevents the author from witnessing the whole IAF story.<sup>5</sup> A brief comparison will be made between Warren's work and Rogers (1990) *Cold Anger*. **Third**, the paper will conclude with a brief discussion of the public policy implications of Warren's analysis.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Faith-based organizations as the core of religion

Several introductory notes are useful for addressing prominent objections that might be raised to the premise of this paper. First, one might argue that the criticism of Warren in this paper is misplaced because he is, after all, a social scientist and not a theologian. He states that he "started [his] study out of frustration with our current understanding of how to revive American politics," not out of concern for the religious lives of Americans.<sup>6</sup> Thus, this line of objection would hold that even if Warren doesn't give religion its due, it's not his job to. In addressing this objection, the paper acknowledges that theologians and social scientists have different research agendas. As put by Wald and Smidt (1993), "modern social scientists recognize that they do not study religion per se but rather the social outcroppings of religious commitment. The core of religion – the realm of the transcendent, supreme beings, and the communication of divine mandates – is beyond the reach of social science."<sup>7</sup>

In most cases, this distinction seems workable. Theologians can look to the core of religion, and social scientists to the "social outcroppings." Problems arise, however, when the

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<sup>4</sup> In contrast to the IAF, the Christian Right is introduced as only a Faith-centered organization, one that refuses to become more broad-based and secular.

<sup>5</sup> Borrowing from Munson (2002), Warren gives us religion only as an independent and not as a dependent variable.

<sup>6</sup> p. ix.

“core” and its “outcroppings” cannot be so easily differentiated. This problem is acute in the case of Faith Based Organizations because one’s core theology is intertwined with one’s public work in the FBO. This is the case that Ziad Munson (2002) makes, arguing that religion is “continually constituted by the regular religious practice of individuals.”<sup>8</sup> The arrows point both ways between one’s religious beliefs and actions in the world. Thus, the premise here is that *when studying FBOs*, social scientists must be sensitive to the fact that whether they like it or not, they are entering individuals’ “religious cores.” Leaving theology wholly to the theologians will prevent social scientists from a full understanding of FBOs and the individuals in them. Warren can tell a story of the IAF that doesn’t fully engage the Faith component, but that story remains incomplete.

Warren writes that, “by highlighting the broader lessons that can be learned from the interFaith network, I seek to advance our understanding of how to build social capital, forge multiracial cooperation, and revitalize democratic politics in America” (p. 10). I do not challenge his goals (what he seeks to do), but I do challenge his methodology. I do not believe he can truly derive the “broader lessons” without engaging more seriously the theological component of the IAF and related organizations.

### **Absence of God in the Social Capital Framework**

A slightly different objection would be that the social capital theory in general, and not Warren’s book in particular, should be the target of criticism. This objection holds some merit, as Warren’s work is in some sense the natural working out of the more fundamental “religion and social capital” theory as advanced by Robert Putnam and his associates at the Saguaro Seminar.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Wald and Smidt (1993), 31-32.

<sup>8</sup> Munson (2002), Chapter 6, Page 11.

<sup>9</sup> A separate paper might address Putnam more directly, as Greeley (1997) does. Greeley observes “just how ill suited many social scientists are to take up the roles of biblical prophets or puritan divines,” p. 593.

Nevertheless, Warren's text can be studied as the single best example of what a fuller Putnam treatment of FBOs would look like.<sup>10</sup> An examination of the social capital backdrop will clarify the position that Warren is starting from.

Putnam takes the traditional social science perspective on religion, looking solely at the social outputs. From the outset of his discussions of religion and social capital, it is clear that Putnam wants nothing to do with "the realm of the transcendent, supreme beings, and the communication of divine mandates." Putnam's choice to completely ignore the Divine is striking. Although Putnam gives religion a full chapter in *Bowling Alone*, God is almost literally written out of the chapter. The only time the word God appears, in fact, is when Putnam cites poll data and writes that, "Virtually all Americans say they believe in God, and three out of four say they believe in immortality."<sup>11</sup> The lack of God references follows from Putnam's initial definition of religion and church – religion is something for and between *people*. To define church, Putnam uses a quote from Rev. Craig McMullen, that "The church is people ... It is the relationships between one person and the next."<sup>12</sup> While it is true that the church is people and relationships between those people, Putnam fails to recognize in his set-up that religion and church are more than purely social gatherings. A higher power is involved.

The public policy arm of Putnam's work, the Saguaro Seminar, treats religion in a similar fashion. While the Seminar notes the spiritual void in citizens' lives and recognizes a place for "religion and social capital," its language is decidedly neutral with respect to any particular religious stance. The Saguaro Seminar stance on "religion and social capital" states that "we do

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<sup>10</sup> That Putnam was on Warren's dissertation committee at Harvard gives weight to this point.

<sup>11</sup> Putnam (2002), p. 69. In Putnam's footnote 20, the details of the survey questions are given and the word "God" appears there as well. Technically, there are two other times the word "God" appears. First, there is a quote at the beginning of the chapter from Toqueville which notes that the "United State has been the most God-believing ... country in Christendom." The other time it shows up is when Putnam lists some Christian denominations and cites "Assemblies of God" and "Church of God in Christ" (p. 76).

<sup>12</sup> Putnam (2000), p. 66.

not advocate that public policy be based on explicitly religious tenets, nor do we favor relaxing the present restrictions on the role of religious institutions in politics.”<sup>13</sup>

Even more telling, however, is the Saguaro Seminar’s treatment of “houses of worship.” The Seminar sees houses of worship as teaching “civically relevant values, including compassion, forgiveness, fairness, altruism, and respect for the world beyond oneself ... [and they] are vibrant voluntary associations that teach people how to organize events, speak in public, and work together toward common ends – important civic skills on the wane in America.”<sup>14</sup> Amazingly, there is zero discussion of *who* these citizens are worshiping! As before, the point is not that Putnam needs to become a theologian. Rather, the point is that when Putnam studies houses of worship, he (like Warren entering a study of FBOs) is choosing to enter theological territory. To ignore the theology is to miss the central mission of the subjects he is studying.

### **Faith-based organizations avoid the theology too**

The most salient and important objection to my criticism of Warren’s treatment of religion is that the FBOs themselves are equally to blame for the fact that religion and Faith do not play a larger part in their public story. This objection has much weight because there is significant evidence in *Dry Bones Rattling* that the IAF chooses to keep theological discussions off the table.<sup>15</sup> Historically, of course, Saul Alinsky wanted little to do with the religion side of things. He is quoted as telling a Chicago priest, “You take care of the religion, Jack, we’ll do the

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<sup>13</sup> Saguaro Seminar (2001), p. 53.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 53

<sup>15</sup> One exception to the examples offered here is found in the story of Jennifer Barrash (page 208). She says that “her participation in the IAF ‘comes out of my Faith ... there is a real give and take. And since people are trying to know me as a person, an organizer, and a Jew, I’ve had to articulate my Faith.” This “give and take” about religion does not appear in most other quotes, but it is important to note that there are exceptions in the Warren text.

organizing.”<sup>16</sup> But even in the IAF’s present day form, members are hesitant to get into religious discussion.

Warren provides several important examples of IAF members choosing to table theological discussion. In one story, a clergyman offers this reflection:

We’d push each other and talk about the theology of it. One of the priests got up one night and said, “This is the only time we’ve ever talked about our own experience of God.” And he was angry with all of the other priests. It created a lot of tension and one of the old guys said, “Next time, let’s talk more organizing and less theology.” So we dropped it.<sup>17</sup>

The United Methodist minister Homer Bain also mentions that too much religion talk can be a problem, when he tells Warren that “if you get too preachy, Pearl will get upset.”<sup>18</sup>

The most direct statement comes from Reverend Terry Boggs who comments that, “even if we differ theologically, we are all part of God’s family. Some would like the Faith commitment to be stronger publicly. But we need to be careful not to exacerbate differences theologically.”<sup>19</sup> Warren goes on to write that “prayers that emphasize the affirmation of particular Faiths, or that are associated too strongly with particular denominations, are avoided.”<sup>20</sup> Following Boggs’ model, the IAF “organizers work hard to create a more comfortable environment for Jewish leaders. Christian ministers, for example, are encouraged to eliminate specific references to Jesus during prayers at IAF events, at least those that include Jewish participants.”<sup>21</sup> The national training also follows these lines of not getting into religious discussion. As noted by Warren, “IAF national training includes no discussion of the religious or value base of IAF organizing. Presumably, that can be taken for granted. If anything, as the

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<sup>16</sup> p. 45

<sup>17</sup> Warren (2001), p. 59.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 69.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 117-118.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 207

example of the Athenian role-playing suggests, IAF trainees attempt to stress the pragmatic side of politics.”<sup>22</sup>

If the story of Willie Bennett is a representative one, it is likely that most individuals in the IAF handle their theological struggles privately. Bennett, a fundamentalist Baptist, “had to struggle with the tension between his religious conservatism and the more broadminded theological orientation of the IAF.” He is able to justify his work with the IAF by identifying the IAF as political and not theological. “Part of my tradition is political liberalism, that does something to our theology ... that understanding of justice that allows me to be in a network that is theologically liberal. The work is political, so I can do it. If it was a Christian organization, I couldn’t be here.”<sup>23</sup>

Given that the IAF has decided to silence theological debate, one must be fair to Warren and admit that he can’t record what is not spoken. It must also be conceded that some members of the IAF such as Willie Bennett share Warren’s view that the IAF is strictly political and separate from the religious. But that said, two points can be made. First, as will hopefully be evident to the reader in the section that follows, there are many IAF members who say something much different from Willie Bennett. I do not suggest that *everyone* in the IAF understands their work to be a mix of the religious and political. I simply make the claim that there is more to this religious/political mix than Warren acknowledges. Second, precisely because the IAF is hesitant to talk about the tensions in its theological underpinnings, one would hope for a scholarly challenge. Warren offers such a challenge on the issue of race, calling for more public discussions of racism. It is fair to ask why he doesn’t make the same call for more public discussions of theology.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 223

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 127

## II. THE ROLE GIVEN TO RELIGION IN *DRY BONES RATTLING*

### A. The Story Warren Tells: Faith-Based But Not Faith-Centered

There can be no arguing the fact that Warren gives religion much consideration in *Dry Bones Rattling*. I will attempt to show in this section, however, that Warren does not *consistently* pay attention to religion. Rather, Warren emphasizes the importance of religion mostly at the origins of the IAF's work and as *initial* motivations for individuals. Warren generally ignores religion and Faith when he addresses the growth of the IAF and when he writes more generally about reviving democracy in America. Put another way, Warren paints "Faith-based" to mean based or beginning in Faith, but moving toward more secular motivations and purposes. In essence, Warren limits Faith to the private sphere of individual IAF participants and labels the public IAF sphere "political." To see how religion is confined in these ways, we can look at both a macro level (how the book is structured) and micro level (how certain passages and chapters are written). First, however, it is important to clarify the role Warren sees for religion.

From the beginning, Warren is clear that he feels "the IAF is a political organization, not a religious one."<sup>24</sup> Given this framework, where the IAF is strictly political, religion can only enter indirectly.<sup>25</sup> Warren sees religion entering in two primary ways. First religion is the moral code which motivates individuals to act. Warren suggests that "at its best, religion has provided a moral basis to conceive of our place in a larger human society and inspired people to work for racial equality, social justice, and democracy."<sup>26</sup> Religion is a motivating force, as "religious values provide a powerful motivation for participation in practical efforts to improve community

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 5

<sup>25</sup> In Section II.B I contend that this barrier between the "political" and the "religious" is in fact a mistaken barrier to erect, and that many IAF leaders see their social actions as both social/political and religious work.

<sup>26</sup> Warren (2001), p. 27

life.”<sup>27</sup> The second way religion comes into play is through the organizational base provided by religious congregations. Warren sees churches as “one of the most stable institutional bases for democracy.”<sup>28</sup> He finds this aspect of religion quite unique, remarking that “while most political organizations are composed of individuals, the IAF builds local organizations composed primarily of religious institutions, that is, congregations.”<sup>29</sup> Based on this notion of religion, Warren structures his book and the chapters within to minimize religion’s public role.

At the macro-level, the structure of the book supports the notion that the IAF’s story starts with religion, but moves to more general secular territory as it grows. We can see this by looking at the start and finish of the book.<sup>30</sup> Chapters 1 and 2 treat religion extensively, and Warren praises what he describes as an “interpenetration of religion and politics” and a “theology of organizing.”<sup>31</sup> Warren discusses how the new IAF under Cortes places a greater emphasis on religion and he even talks about Cortes’ theological training.<sup>32</sup> At the end of chapter 2, it would seem that religion and Faith are absolutely essential components to the IAF’s success. In other words, it would seem impossible to re-tell the IAF’s story without heavy emphasis on Faith. By the end of the book, however, there is a noticeably different tone and approach to religion. We can gauge this tone by looking at the structure of chapter 9. Warren gives Faith two pages at the opening of the chapter, acknowledges that it is the “bedrock” of the network, and offers a comparison of the IAF to the Christian Right.<sup>33</sup> But then Faith disappears from the discussion. In a transition that is representative of his writing style throughout, Warren

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 31

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 21

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 30

<sup>30</sup> Much of the middle of the book is discussed in the micro-level analysis to follow.

<sup>31</sup> Warren (2001), p. 42, 59.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 58. Warren writes that Cortes studied theologians such as “Reinhold Niebuhr, Paul Tillich, Karl Barth, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and Harvey Cox.”

<sup>33</sup> I argue that this comparison is quite flawed in Section III.A.

acknowledges Faith's role and then quickly (in the next sentence) tries to show that we should be more interested in things other than Faith. In Warren's own words,

The network offers our best strategy for creating participatory organizations that work for public policies responsive to the needs of poor and working families. The network accomplishes this goal because it grounds democratic participation in the institutions and values that sustain community life, first among them, those of religious Faith. **But the network goes farther:** it offers a new model for multiracial collaboration that creates broad-based alliances for progressive social policy by linking together diverse communities. And, drawing upon patient base building in these local communities, it builds federated networks that generate the power necessary to shape a public agenda on their behalf.<sup>34</sup>

Warren sees the IAF story as starting in religion, but "going farther" into non-religious territory. In the ensuing six pages on "a new model for multiracial collaboration" and five pages on "local organizing and effective power," Faith is not discussed. Most importantly, the final section of the book bears the title, "Community building and political renewal beyond the Faith context." In this section, Warren explicitly tries to argue that the IAF's core can be replicated in non-Faith contexts such as unions, schools, or CDCs. He suggests in fact that the IAF itself is moving to a more secular position. Warren observes that "people from different religious Faiths are forging modes of political discourse with people motivated by more secular community values." Warren ends up saying directly what he has been trying to argue all along: "The phenomenon is not limited to the IAF, or to Faith-based community organizing."<sup>35</sup>

Although Warren feels "the main conclusion of this study is that IAF organizing efforts offer a compelling model for rebuilding the 'missing middle,'"<sup>36</sup> his final discussion reveals that Faith and religion are not essentials. Warren is compelled by the IAF's model for other reasons, and his two final lessons are evidence of this. Warren writes that, "We can learn two key lessons from the Southwest IAF ... First, the foundation for any lasting gains in democratic politics must

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<sup>34</sup> Warren (2001), p. 241, bold is added to emphasize the subtle transition Warren uses to move away from Faith.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 262

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 241

come through patient base building at the bottom [and] ...the second lesson comes from the IAF's emphasis on relationship building ... we will have to respect diverse traditions, and find a way for collaboration to allow people to express their views differently." In Warren's final analysis, the interpenetration of religion and theology of organizing fade away. Faith and Religion are seen as one possible way of living out these two lessons, but they are not considered essential in Warren's eyes.

The macro-level structure is paralleled at a number of points within the text. I will highlight examples in chapters 3 and 4.<sup>37</sup> The first example to consider is what happens immediately after chapter two, when the story moves in "beyond local organizing" in chapter 3. In chapter 3, Faith is not treated with much interest. Rather, the story reads more like a traditional analysis of grass-roots politics and social action. The implication is that the religious motivations (chapter 2) should be understood as quite distinct from the pragmatic politics (in chapter 3). This is consistent with an understanding of the IAF as Faith-based as opposed to Faith-centered. In the purely Faith-based understanding, religion helps to get the ball rolling, but then politics, negotiation, and organizing take center stage. In Warren's eyes, this is not Faith-centered, but Cortes-centered activism: "Cortes stood at the center of this impressive collective, and perhaps held the personal authority that provided the necessary legitimacy to the process. As organizer Maribeth Larkin so aptly put it in a 1986 interview, 'we operate out of Ernie's vision.'" Faith here enters the public sphere only indirectly, as articulated by Ernie Cortes.

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<sup>37</sup> Examples that I do not discuss can be found elsewhere in these two chapters and also in chapters 5 and 6. In chapter 5 we see a pattern similar to that in chapter 4. Warren is clear that "the network's Faith basis plays no small part in keeping a diverse community of leaders committed to continuing to work together" (p. 154). But when case studies are presented, when we look at the actual actions and not just the motivations, it is not clear how religion is playing a role. In three consecutive examples – school organizing in Dallas (p. 143-147), job training in Dallas (p. 147-149), and disputes over after-school programs (p. 149-151) – religion is not a factor given much consideration. Similarly, at the beginning of chapter 6, Warren discusses job programs without much discussion of Faith (p. 168). He also treats congregations only as sites for mobilization, not centers of Faith and worship. Warren's final discussion of Project QUEST (p. 189) also fails to identify uniquely religious aspects of the program.

In chapter four, which deals with multiracial collaboration, religion is again treated as something useful only at the beginning of the process. Warren sees that religion plays a role in the initial movement to overcome racism, suggesting that “in order to establish an initial basis for multiracial cooperation, the ministers looked for allies that shared a common religious outlook and who sought to bring that tradition to bear in social and political action.”<sup>38</sup> Once this initial basis is set, however, Warren argues that religion is not as important to success. Warren argues that “if common religious values provided an initial basis of trust for multiracial cooperation, the institutional strategy of the IAF created the conditions for trust to deepen over time.”<sup>39</sup> We need not rely only on Warren’s statement to see that religion drops out. We also have evidence in the fact that religion is not mentioned as an important force in the three ensuing case study discussions of Morningside School, the school bond issue, and the Synergy job-training issue.<sup>40</sup> In the conclusion to the chapter, we get a sense of where Warren wants to take the discussion. He offers key lessons about the IAF, but also alerts readers to the last chapter of the book, which he says will consider “the extent to which more secular kinds of community traditions can play a similar unifying role.”<sup>41</sup>

### **B. In Their Own Words: How IAF Leaders Talk About Faith**

What, if anything, is wrong with the role of religion in Warren’s story? Without performing a comparable analysis to Warren’s (e.g. going down to Texas and conducting interviews and observations), the question of whether Warren “got the story right” remains to some degree unanswerable. What can be done, however, is to comb through the data Warren does present to see if there are signs that indicate that Faith played a larger role than Warren

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<sup>38</sup> Warren (2001), p. 103

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 106

<sup>40</sup> Morningside School is discussed on pages 106-110, school bonds on 111-112, and the Synergy job-training issue on pages 113-114.

allows it. To borrow a cliché, this is an effort to look for smoke because it might point us to the fire.<sup>42</sup>

To look for the role of Faith, we can look at the actual quotes Warren presents from IAF participants. To his credit, Warren offers us a number of rich quotes from his interviews with IAF leaders and participants. Most of the time, however, Warren offers interpretations of those quotes that do not adequately probe the complex understanding of IAF experiences as religious experiences, not just political experiences that influence religious beliefs.<sup>43</sup>

One of the interviewees that Warren refers to is Mrs. Beatrice Cortez. In talking about her experiences, Cortez recounts, “It gave more meaning to my Faith. I could now relate scripture to my life. If you really care for your brother, compassion and courage become real. It’s not anything you learn in school, church, or CCD. So when we went to an action, we looked to the Bible for inspiration. That’s the depth we want. We have a theology of housing.”<sup>44</sup> Warren describes this quote as an example in which “political experience deepened and clarified religious commitment.” An alternative and plausible interpretation of Cortez’ comments, however, is that religious commitment has been deepened and clarified because the IAF experiences are not just political – the experiences themselves are religious acts.

There is more evidence to suggest that IAF participants see their actions are religious experiences. Patricia Ozuna “reports that two things keep her going, ‘anger at injustice and that

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<sup>41</sup> Warren (2001), p. 122.

<sup>42</sup> This exercise in sorting through Warren’s quotes is actually a “hard case” to make because Warren has already used a filter (biased against what I’m looking for) in selecting the quotes to use in his book. It is my hunch that a look at the full transcripts of his IAF interviews would reveal even more God-talk than I find in the text.

<sup>43</sup> A counter-example which fits Warren’s pattern comes from Frank Pierson (page 192). For Pierson, “the expansion of democratic action follows from a right understanding of religious teachings. Most of scripture is about the relationship of the community to the poor. So, if you probe religious teachings deeply, they lead you to a democratic life.” This is an example of a casual relationship in which religion → democratic action. A significant number of quotes, however, are not in the same mold as Pierson’s.

<sup>44</sup> Warren uses this quote on page 58, and later references the Cortez story on page 198.

I'm doing the Lord's work.' It's my ministry for social justice."<sup>45</sup> Warren closes this passage by turning to a different part of her interview when he writes, "She emphasizes, though, a further reason for her continued involvement, declaring, 'I like banging heads!'" But if we dwell for a moment on the earlier portion of her quote, we see that Ozuna feels she is "doing the Lord's work" when she is socially active. It is difficult to see the "Lord's work" as anything but religious, Faith-centered activity, and most likely Ozuna does indeed see her work as both political *and* religious at the same time.

The idea of COPS activities as lived-Faith also resonates with a statement from Fr. Mike Haney. Fr. Haney comments that, "COPS is a way of implementing the Gospel's call to justice that it imposes on us. This happens in a couple of ways: dealing with issues themselves; and COPS calls us to work as a collective, to find strength in community, and that's a Gospel call itself."<sup>46</sup> Warren's reading of this type of sentiment is that "participation in the IAF offers the opportunity to make the social commitments of their Faith real."<sup>47</sup>

While Warren's reading seems accurate, he makes a subtle move by introducing the idea of "social commitments." To see the contrast, consider this alternative sentence, "participation in the IAF offers the opportunity to live the Gospel and make Faith real." This is another way of interpreting Haney's comments. When Haney talks about the Gospel's call to justice, it is not just a moral code that demands certain types of actions in the public sphere (certain social commitments). The call to justice includes social commitments, but it is also a Faith commitment. The public actions are thus a combination of social/political and religious.

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<sup>45</sup> Warren first uses this story on page 71, and later refers to it again on page 217 to argue that "involvement in the IAF has strengthened their religious commitment."

<sup>46</sup> Warren (2001), 195

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194

In addition to seeing their work as religious, respondents in Warren's study also give more credit to God than Warren acknowledges. Josie Duran, a member of ACT in Fort Worth, is a good example of the discrepancy between Warren's analysis and the actual quote.<sup>48</sup> In talking about her experience in chairing an accountability night, Duran says,

It was the first meeting I chaired. I give credit to God. I used to be a shy person. [But this time] I felt powerful and in control of the meeting. I didn't care if a candidate liked me. I've never felt that way before. I used to be a people pleaser ... I felt powerful because of the support from other people.

In analyzing this quote, Warren accurately writes that Duran "reports that she would never have done it without the encouragement of other leaders." He is also partially correct in commenting that "personal empowerment appears to be fostered through the support of collective leadership in IAF organizations." What is missing in Warren's analysis, however, is any recognition of Duran's first impulse to "give credit to God." Even before the support of others, it was God who gave Duran the strength to lead. While it is fine for Warren to argue that collective leadership is enough to foster personal empowerment, it is a mistake to argue that *Duran* believes this is also the whole story. From her quote, it is clear that she gives God much credit. By ignoring the God part of Duran's story, Warren offers an incomplete analysis.

Other examples can be found in which people put God first. Quite explicitly, Rev. D. L. Ellison says that his "tradition is to put God first. That's right. But the first thing God wants you to do is be a strong family man, a good father."<sup>49</sup> In talking about his experiences, pastor Barry Jackson also recognizes Christ at the forefront. Jackson "began to read about the multiethnic model. When Jesus was born, the first people to come were the shepherds, those left out. And the rich came. Christ brought them together."<sup>50</sup> What allows Jackson to accept the multiracial model

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<sup>48</sup> Her story is given on page 218.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137

is not just that he finds the IAF to be correct. Jackson's logic returns him to Christ, and based on a new vision of his Faith, he sees the IAF as being most true to that Faith.

Another prime example of Warren's avoidance of God's power pops up at the end of his chapter on multiracial collaboration.<sup>51</sup> Reverend Britt acknowledges that ultimately Jesus is the only true answer. Britt says that, "Working together is a necessary step. We can't address racial baggage first. We'll never deal with all of that. That will take to Jesus gets back." Britt goes on to talk about other issues as well, and Warren feels that "Britt captures the ongoing nature of discussion and struggle that is necessary to build bridging social capital." What Warren doesn't capture is Britt's testament to the saving power of Christ. If we translate Britt's comments into a social capital language, Britt is saying that bridging social capital is a good thing, but it is not enough. All the bridging social capital in the world won't be enough. The ultimate solution can only come from Jesus.

Warren's concluding chapter offers the most striking contrast between what the IAF leaders say and what Warren hears them saying. At the opening to chapter nine, Warren offers three quotes from the COPS 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Each of these quotes reflects back on the first 25 years of COPS and considers what the next 25 might bring. Fr. Richard Beck says, "What will fuel our efforts for the next twenty-five years? The same thing that has fueled the last twenty-five. Faith in God and Faithfulness to God's demand for justice ... we cannot stand idly by and watch our cities and our children crumble." Rev. Terry White adds, "As we leave this place may the power of God's Holy Spirit be the fire that burns within us and fuels us in our efforts to do God's justice." Finally, drawing on Jewish tradition, the delegates say, "our Faith will give us strength to mend our world."

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid., Chapter 5, pages 154-155.

If one turned to these three quotes to answer Warren's question, "how does the IAF revive American democracy?" one would be justified in offering any of the following answers. First, what has fueled the IAF and what will continue to fuel the IAF is "Faith in God and Faithfulness to God's demand for justice." Second, the power of the Holy Spirit is what will continue to fuel the IAF. Third, it is Faith that will provide the strength of the organization. Given these possibilities, how does Warren handle these quotes?

The answer is he doesn't. Although Warren prefaces the quotes by writing that "the Faith basis of the network remains its bedrock," he offers nothing in the way of further analysis. Rather, he drops the Faith line altogether and suggests that, "the Southwest IAF's twenty-fifth anniversary convention demonstrates the network's accomplishments in building an organized base for a public agenda focused on the needs and aspirations of poor and working families and their communities."<sup>52</sup> Once again in Warren's analysis, Faith is there at the beginning (the bedrock) but in the final analysis Faith drops out.

### **C. Sacred Scripture Without the Sacred**

The argument of this section is a straightforward one: When Warren refers to Biblical passages, he does so without acknowledging the presence of God in those passages. This will be shown in a series of passages, starting with the Dry Bones passage itself. There is a bit of irony in the fact that Warren chooses a passage from the Book of Ezekiel as the title for his book, *Dry Bones Rattling*. Ironic in that in a book that is motivated by a desire to find ways to strengthen social ties and democracy in America, the name Ezekiel "means 'God will strengthen' or 'God strengthens.'"<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 241

<sup>53</sup> Feinberg (1969), p. 11. Italics added for emphasis.

Further, while Ezekiel scholars may debate over the date and unity of Ezekiel, they seem to be in general agreement with the notion that whenever and whoever it was written by, the author of the book had a vision “of the return of the glory of the Lord to dwell among his people.”<sup>54</sup> As it is summed up in one introduction, “from the first to the last chapter of Ezekiel one supreme thought runs throughout, that of the sovereignty and glory of the Lord God.”<sup>55</sup> In the conclusion to a different study, the “vital message” of Ezekiel is considered to be that “God is just. God is gracious. God is not absent from us. [and] God will return us to our own land.”<sup>56</sup> One doesn’t have to be a scripture scholar to see that God plays a central role in the Book of Ezekiel. In the actual Biblical passage, the centrality of God is quite pronounced. The passage reads:

Son of man, can these bones come to life? “Lord God,” I answered, “you alone know that.” Then he said to me: Prophecy over these bones, and say to them: Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: See! I will bring spirit into you, that you may come to life. I will put sinews upon you, make flesh grow over you, cover you with skin, and put spirit in you so that you may come to life and know that I am the Lord.”<sup>57</sup>

As hard as it would be for God to be taken out of a passage such as this, Warren accomplishes it when he writes that, “in the twenty-five years since Ernesto Cortes, Jr. founded COPS in San Antonio, the Texas IAF has been rattling bones across the state to find a way to fulfill Ezekiel’s prophecy, that is, to rebuild some of our most devastated communities.”<sup>58</sup> Later Warren describes the prophecy as one where “a fractured people came together to rebuild a broken community.”<sup>59</sup> In Warren’s reading of the dry bones passage, Ezekiel’s prophecy is one in which humans work “to rebuild some of our most devastate communities.” Missing from this

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<sup>54</sup> Duguid (1994), p. 143.

<sup>55</sup> Feinberg (1969), p. 15.

<sup>56</sup> Duguid (1994), p. 142.

<sup>57</sup> Ezekiel 37:3-7. I used the translation found in the New American Bible, St. Joseph Edition.

<sup>58</sup> Warren (2001), p. 4.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60

reading are two utterly crucial components. First, it is God who is behind the rebuilding. Second, the rebuilding is not just to revitalize communities, but to revitalize communities so that people may come to life and *know that God is the Lord*.

Warren makes similar errors in interpreting Scripture when he discusses the Bible verses that the IAF shares with each other for inspiration.<sup>60</sup> Warren quotes parts of three passages: I John 3: 17-18, Isaiah 58:6, and Matthew 25:40. Warren offers no specific commentary on these passages, but the editing selections he makes are rather telling. Although talk of God abounds in each of the chapters he quotes from, Warren chooses verses that make no mention of God or the Divine. While this is done in all three quotes, the absence of God is most troublesome in the passage from Matthew 25:40. Warren cites only one line, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these, by brethren, you did it to me.”<sup>61</sup> Readers are not given any context for this quote.

Readers are left unaware that this line comes from a discussion of the Final Judgment, when sheep will be separated from the goats. The sheep will be given eternal life and the goats will be damned to eternal punishment.<sup>62</sup> The statement, “as you did it to one of the least of these you did it to me,” is being offered as explanation for why some are judged righteous and others are not. Without this context, the statement is disconnected from its fundamental meaning. And disconnected from the Final Judgment, Warren cannot communicate why these passages are so powerful for the IAF. For the IAF has indeed picked up on a powerful passage – what’s at stake in their work is something far greater than social capital.

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 118-121.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 118

<sup>62</sup> Matthew 25: 31-46.

### III. DISCUSSION OF IMPLICATIONS

I return in this section to a more normative discussion. Even if one generally agrees that Warren doesn't give much discussion to religion, it does not necessarily follow that he was wrong not to do so. In other words, I must address the objections raised in the Introduction: Why does it matter if Warren doesn't talk much theology? I will offer three diverse answers to this question in an effort to persuade the reader that Warren's approach to Faith-based organizations has serious implications for scholarship and democracy.

#### A. IAF and the Christian Right: Not So Different as Warren Thinks

First, Warren's reading of the IAF as Faith-based but not Faith-centered creates a false dichotomy with the Christian Right, with the IAF playing the role of an organization that doesn't push its theology on others and the Christian Right as a group that does. This is problematic both because it mis-characterizes the Right and more importantly, because it leaves no room for theological debate with the Christian Right. Warren argues in his concluding chapter that "the IAF, and what has come to be known as Faith-based community organizing more generally, pose a dramatic contrast to the Christian Right. The way Faith connects to politics in each effort ... are quite different."<sup>63</sup> I argue that if we see the IAF as Faith-centered, then their primary difference with the Christian Right is one of theology and not "the way Faith connects to politics."

Warren makes two distinctions between the IAF and the Christian Right. First, he argues, "people of Faith involved in the IAF draw upon different Faith traditions than those involved in the Christian Right."<sup>64</sup> Warren argues that the IAF draws from Catholic social teaching, African American Christianity, and the social gospel tradition of American Protestantism. The Christian

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<sup>63</sup> Warren (2001), p. 242

<sup>64</sup> Warren (2001), p. 242

Right, he writes, grows out of evangelical Protestantism.<sup>65</sup> Warren attempts to paint a picture in which the two sides are coming from different starting places. In some sense this is true, but it is too simplistic a picture for it does not account for the fact that the IAF and Christian Right both draw from many of the same denominations. As noted by Ronald Thiemann, “a growing rift between conservative and liberal or orthodox and progressive wings of every Christian denomination has become evident.”<sup>66</sup> In other words, the split between the Christian Right and the IAF is not just one of different religious traditions, but one of different interpretations of the same tradition. A clear example in *Dry Bones Rattling* is the objection of some Houston conservative Catholics to the work on the IAF. Both sides were drawing on the very same Catholic Faith tradition, yet they interpreted its meaning in very different ways.<sup>67</sup>

It may seem a small point to move the discussion toward these theological debates. But it is a very important move because it changes the discussion from, “Do we talk about theology or not?” to “Which theology is the better theology?” This is a similar argument to the one Richard John Neuhaus makes in *The Naked Public Square*:

Our quarrel with politicized fundamentalism is not that it has broken the rules of the game by ‘going public’ with Christian truth claims. Christian truth, if it is true, is public truth. It is accessible to public reason. It impinges upon public space. At some critical points of morality and ethics it speaks to public policy. Our quarrel with politicized fundamentalism is not so much over the form of religion’s role in society but over the substance of the claims made. To put it differently, our quarrel is primarily theological.<sup>68</sup>

Warren is arguing that the difference between the Christian Right and the IAF is not theological, but in the role they give public religion. Warren write that “the Christian Right attempts to pursue its particular moral agenda and make it the morality of the whole society, as the name

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<sup>65</sup> Even this analysis is suspect, and Rogers (1990) actually links the Social Gospel movement to the “fertile climate for the kinds of religious-based and values-laden organizing Cortes and the IAF were beginning to develop” (p. 141). In general, I find that Rogers offer a more theologically sound analysis of the IAF than Warren does.

<sup>66</sup> Thiemann (1996), p. 160.

<sup>67</sup> This discussion appears on page 64.

Moral Majority suggests ... the Christian Right pursues the goal of legislating fundamentalist morality.” In contrast, the “IAF see their political work as deeply moral, but draw upon those values to inform an agenda of economic and social justice.”<sup>69</sup> The contrast Warren is setting up is one where the Christian Right brings their morals into the public square, while the IAF only uses their morals to motivate and influence their public calls for justice.

This contrast is wrong on both fronts. The Christian Right, as evidenced by their frequent appeals to “American values” such as liberty, often try to offer public reasoning. More importantly to this paper, I have argued that members of the IAF do indeed bring their morals and religion into the public square. When the IAF tries to influence elections in Texas to help the oppressed, they are in fact trying to legislate morality. They may be trying to legislate morality more closely tied to liberation theology, but they are certainly trying to convince others that this morality is the right one.

Warren’s characterization of the IAF as different from the Christian Right has serious implications for the normative debate over what *ought* to be when it comes to public religion. The normative debate is of course informed by empirical findings. We argue for what ought to be after we evaluate what works and what doesn’t. Here is where Warren’s conclusions are most troublesome. Warren is arguing that the IAF’s strategy is one we ought to encourage. *But because he characterizes the IAF’s strategy as one where religion in the public square is downplayed, he is implicitly arguing that religion need not play a large role in the public square.*

I agree with Warren that the IAF’s strategy is one we ought to encourage. But because I characterize the IAF’s strategy as one in which public religion is pronounced, the implication in my reading is that religion ought to play an even greater role in the public square.

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<sup>68</sup> Neuhaus (1984), p. 19.

<sup>69</sup> Warren (2001), p. 243

To further define the differences between the two stances (Warren's and mine) over public religion, it is useful to introduce a passage from Ronald Thiemann's *Constructing a Public Theology*:

Our challenge is to develop a public theology that remains based in the particularities of the Christian Faith while genuinely addressing issues of public significance. Too often ... in the process [of public theology] the distinctive substance and prophetic "bite" of the Christian witnesses are undermined. On the other hand, theologies that seek to preserve the characteristic language and patterns of Christian narrative and practice too often fail to engage the public realm in an effective and responsible fashion ... If Christians are to find an authentic public voice in today's culture, we must find a middle way between these two equally unhappy alternatives.<sup>70</sup>

Using Thiemann's terminology, my argument is that Warren doesn't recognize the IAF's "prophetic bite" and furthermore that he doesn't want anything like it in the public square. I believe the IAF give Christian witness at the same time as they communicate effectively in public. But Warren argues explicitly against my position:

The IAF certainly draws upon the particular Faith beliefs of its adherents to inform its political agenda. But in the public sphere, the IAF argues for its campaigns on a wider basis of shared values and interests ... in public, IAF leaders advocate for job training on the basis of more widely shared values of fairness as well as the public interest that can benefit from a better educated workforce and economically healthier communities, not because God requires it.<sup>71</sup>

In this passage lies what I see as the most fundamental problem of Warren's contrast with the Christian Right, and indeed of his entire analysis. Warren believes that in the public square, "because God requires it" is not an appropriate reason to offer. But this is closely tied in with his refusal to see pragmatic politics as religious activity, and it also seems to ignore the fact that what makes the IAF successful is its street-smarts and willingness to play hard ball. When COPS protested at Joske's Department Store, there was no public discussion of shared values. Instead, there was a group of Faithful, committed citizens who believed that on this particular day and in this particular place, God required them to protest. Similarly, when the IAF builds up a voter

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<sup>70</sup> Thiemann (1991), p. 19

<sup>71</sup> Warren (2001), p. 244

base and uses it to sway elections, this is not politics and public reasoning wholly replacing Faith. Rather, this is the Faithful recognizing that God is calling them to work in the world, with the tools they have available to them.

Seen this way, the COPS protesters are not all that different from Christian Right protesters who believe that God requires them to protest at abortion clinics. True, they have different agendas. But they go about their agendas in a similar fashion. First, they try to talk it out, to tell others what God is requiring them to do. But soon (or almost immediately) they realize that they must change tactics and force the issue.

## **B. Social Science and Faith-Based Organizations**

Thus far, the paper has offered criticisms but no solutions. This section makes a transition away from “What Warren didn’t do” into “What Warren (or future analyses similar to Warren’s) could do.”<sup>72</sup> The first thing social scientists should do is acknowledge the limitations of their studies. Boston University Economist Glenn Loury has captured this limitation well:

... in order to grasp fully the nature of the human subject, intellectuals must reckon with this transcendent dimension. I am arguing against arrogance in the academy, not against the use of our intellects ... I reject is the presumption that intellect on its own can do for us what it plainly cannot—namely, tell us the meaning of our lives. Social science cannot finally resolve the most profound questions at the center of our struggles as individual persons, as families, and as a nation. Who are we? What must we do? How shall we live? What is right? When all the statistical analyses have been rendered, we still have to step back and ask questions such as these. Absent the spiritual grounding that permits such questions to be meaningfully posed, the rest of our intellectual efforts amount to so much puzzle-solving that, in the end, has no life.<sup>73</sup>

The second thing social scientists must do is recognize that those who have asked these larger questions have often gained valuable insights from the religious perspectives. In other words,

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<sup>72</sup> There is also the historical question, “What have other scholars done before him?” Related to the question of religion and the social sciences, I found the edited volume *Religion and Twentieth-Century American Intellectual Life* helpful. With historical perspective, my position seems to be one that is unoriginal and has, unfortunately in my view, taken a back seat to a more secular scholarly approach. I am less likely to say something new, therefore, but hopefully adding new volume to an older voice that has been muted.

when social scientists decide to venture into theological territory, they should be more willing to ask theologians for road maps.

Until this happens, social science treatments of religion and social activism will continue to miss important parts of the story. Just as economists chide historians when historians make economic history claims without consulting economists, so should theologians be concerned with social scientists who study religious groups. Good social science is not enough.

The state of the field is, however, one in which theologians have little say.<sup>74</sup> With the exception of Munson (2002), who seems to be more sensitive to the theological components, most studies seem theologically bereft. The edited volume *The Role of Religious Organizations in Social Movements* contains attempts by political scientists to explain the social actions of religious organizations using non-religious theories such as interest groups and organizational theory.<sup>75</sup> Katzenstein's (1998) study of Catholic nuns includes much discussion of the religious elements, but still lacks the tools to unlock the true meaning of feminist protest within the Church. Even the volume edited by Christian Smith (1996), which takes a step toward "bringing religion back in," chooses to frame "religious resources and motives" as "crucial variables." But Divinity schools are more than elaborate studies of an independent variable. What is called for is more serious consideration of the contention that *Faith is the crucial variable*.

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<sup>73</sup> This excerpt comes from Loury's keynote address at a University of Chicago conference on "Faith-Based Initiatives and Urban Public Policy." The full text of this address, as well as information on the conference (which was directed by Tracy Meares) is available on-line at: [www.law.uchicago.edu/lectureconf/meares/papers/loury.html](http://www.law.uchicago.edu/lectureconf/meares/papers/loury.html).

<sup>74</sup> The field of cultural studies is an interesting one to consider as well. While not religious per se, it recognizes that the religious and the political fold into one, i.e. into culture. One example of how this translates into political science scholarship on religion is Wilson Carey McWilliams (1984) book chapter, "The Bible in the American Political Tradition." Wuthnow's (1987) *Meaning and Moral Order* also takes a cultural analysis perspective.

<sup>75</sup> The volume contains five studies: "Public interest lobbies versus minority faction" by Andrew McFarland; "The role of religious organizations in the U.S. sanctuary movement" by Barbara Yarnold; "The role of religious organizations in the peace movement between the wars" by William Marty; "The role of religious organizations in the gay and lesbian rights movement" by Steven Haerberle; and "The role of religious organizations in evangelical and political activity: The moral majority and evangelicals for social action."

Warren, like Putnam's current work, turns to the IAF as an example of a group that is "increasing social capital" or in some way "making social capital work." Before the IAF is approached, therefore, the social capital goggles are already firmly fitted around the eyes. This is problematic because it limits the investigator's ability to see what's going on. As Section II attempted to show, Warren seems to have listened selectively to the folks he interviewed. An approach that is less concerned with proving something about social capital and more devoted to faithfully telling the FBO's story might be more promising. We can make a preliminary test of this hypothesis by making a quick comparison between Warren's treatment of the IAF and the story that Mary Rogers tells in *Cold Anger*.<sup>76</sup> Warren draws frequently on Rogers' work, but he draws significantly on chapter 12 in *Cold Anger*, a chapter titled "A Theology That Does Not Stop."

When Warren uses Rogers' theological framework, as opposed to developing his own assessments, he provides a more complete theological analysis of the IAF. But Warren still uses his social capital filter to highlight the community aspects and downplay the Divine. Warren cites two stories – Pentecost and Sinai – from Rogers' own account of the IAF. Warren writes that "According to the New Testament story of Pentecost, when Jesus' disciples met 50 days after his death, belief in his resurrection inspired them to build a church, that is, an institution for the community of religious believers."<sup>77</sup> In Rogers, more time is given to describing the story:

In the New Testament, the story of Pentecost symbolized the decision to begin the church, the decision to act on belief. Forty days after the death of Jesus, the disciples and the faithful gathered to celebrate Pentecost, a Hebrew festival that also commemorated the giving of the Law to Moses on Sinai. As the apostle Peter preached on this day, the despair and confusion over the physical loss of Jesus was miraculously lifted. Belief in the resurrection of Jesus infused the small band with a commitment to act – to build the church.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>76</sup> This would be another fascinating paper – a full blown comparison of the two texts, with special emphasis on the areas in *Dry Bones Rattling* that draw on Rogers work.

<sup>77</sup> Warren (2001), p. 59

Describing the Sinai story, Warren says, “the Old Testament story of the exodus of the Jews from Egypt symbolized the need for hope in the face of despair and the commitment to build a new nation.”<sup>79</sup> Rogers again gives a slightly longer account:

In the Old Testament, the story of the exodus of the Jews from Egypt and the 40 years of wandering in the desert provided a lesson in the forging of a people despite hardship, despair, and the apparent impossibility of their situation. The acceptance of the commandments delivered to Moses and the establishment of the covenant between God and Israel led to the action – the building of a nation.<sup>80</sup>

These comparisons between Rogers and Warren illustrate the filter Warren is using. It is not, as I have argued, that Warren is outright lying or misconstruing the Biblical passages. Rather, adhering to the social capital framework, he is selectively editing to de-emphasize the role of God in the passages.

Rogers’ account offers us is an approach that is more faithful to the IAF’s story. In fact, she even offers us an alternative way to consider community – not just as a renewal of social capital, but as a church community:

The UNO sponsoring committee wanted its members to see that not only were they part of the church, they *were* the church. All members of the church suffered when one suffered. And to protect the church, they had to protect each other. As such, the work of the church – their work – was here and now in the community.<sup>81</sup>

Warren is correct to see that community is a central theme in the IAF’s story. But it is not just any community. As Rogers alerts us to, it is a community of God.

### **C. Public Policy Implications**

The implications discussed thus far in parts A and B have been theoretical and scholarly, but there is also an important public policy implication: in Warren’s analysis, Faith is a potential *but not essential* component for revitalizing American democracy. This is the same sentiment

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<sup>78</sup> Rogers (1990), p. 133

<sup>79</sup> Warren (2001), p. 59

offered by Mark Kleiman in his opinion of the Ten Point Coalition.<sup>82</sup> Like Warren, Kleiman acknowledges that Faith plays a role, but then points to other (non-religious) factors that are more important. Kleiman acknowledges that “the Ten-Point coalition was part of [Operation Ceasefire’s] success,” but he argues that “there’s no reason to think” the Ten Point Coalition was primarily responsible for the drop in Boston violence. The policy implication for Kleiman is that we should “stick to policy as usual,” dropping the emphasis on Faith. In Warren’s story, we end up in a similar place: the policy implication is that we can find other, non-religious ways to revitalize American democracy.

The bulk of this paper has attempted to argue that we cannot draw this policy implication from the work of the IAF. The paper has argued that in fact the IAF’s story suggests that Faith is an essential component for success.

Kleiman quotes JFK, saying that “success has a thousand fathers. Failure is an orphan.” But for people of Faith traditions who believe that all good things come from God, success has only one Father. When the question is how to save ourselves, whether from deteriorating community life, violence, or other evils, people of Faith must remember that without God in the picture there can be no lasting success.

*For human beings this is impossible, but for God all things are possible.*<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Rogers (1990), p. 133

<sup>81</sup> Rogers (1990), p. 133. Italics in original.

<sup>82</sup> Klein (2002).

<sup>83</sup> Matthew 19: 26.

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