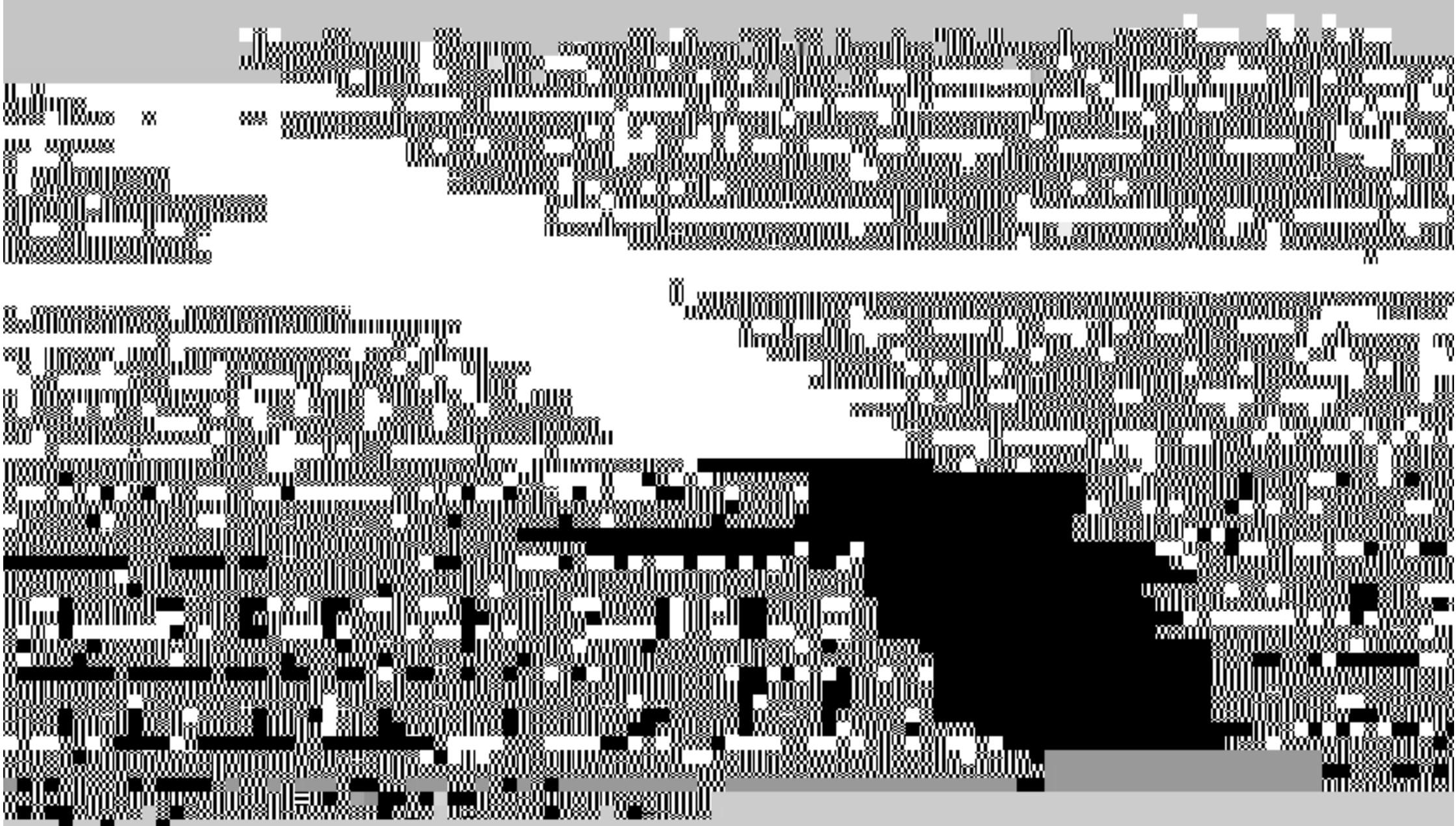


RELIGION AND POLITICS: U.S.A.

LISA SOWELL CAHILL

THE 2008 ELECTION SEASON was tumultuous, divisive, exhilarating, and historically unique. It yielded the first black president, Democrat Barack Hussein Obama, with third-term Vice President John Edwards, and decorated veterans Joseph Biden, Republican vice presidential candidate John McCain, and Sarah Palin, governor of Alaska, as vice president.

Obama's campaign to empower his message was massively effective. It recruited new African American voters all over whom hardly registered (N



The U.S. "pontifical and legal" tradition separates church and state...
for the sake of religious freedom, established as a religion, nor interferes with religious
self-identity.
religions, and
the Church's role in
the public square.

They resent lingering anti-Catholic sentiment that immigrant
communities Yet Catholics

"fire is not" "just one issue among many" (*n=2251*, *N=1*), "but serious threats include racism, the death penalty, drug use, war, nuclear weapons, and
immigration, race, political and economic". (*n=2251*, *N=1*) Abortion is an "urgent issue
which by definition conflicts in this sense and some degree" (*n=2251*, *N=1*), along with
genocide, citizenship calls
Oppose abortion, either advocate intrinsic evil even
for prudent, decent and conflict-free exercise of their right to life.

Excerpt from page 720, "Catholics must

rank&cap> Survey," <http://religion.pewforum.org/>

³ Pew Forum, "U.S. Religion, Religious org.,

⁴ See <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3051400/#>

nor be single-issue voters (no. 34). As the election nears

climated opposition to abortion has excluded the possibility of

reclaiming abortion to define Catholic politics, equating with commitment to make it illegal, and excluding

Catholicism from the public square. Other than

decision, *Roe v. Wade*, defining abortion as legal. Even with pro-abortion rights groups rise, Latin American countries have high rates due to poverty and

matter to the states, and most would allow snows that abortion rates decrease as some countries banning abortion. Women's low status in society

development."¹⁸ Yet Americans should limit their global concerns to less than

politics. Catholics of every stripe were remarkably active, going beyond their parishes, mainstream media, and Catholic magazines to press, to produce parish and campus panels, lecture series, action committees, and websites and blogs reaching a huge new audience. This too is a healthy development, despite frequently divisive rhetoric.

Benedict XVI sent Obama a congratulatory message, identifying "solidarity and justice" as the "especial issues" with which his administration should make progress.²³ Similarly, the papal encyclical on social teaching, *Caritas in Veritate*, identified health care, economic recovery, poverty, energy, trade, Iraq and Afghanistan, nuclear terrorism, and programs that empower women and support families. Myriad lay organizations, offices of the USCCB, local dioceses and parishes, Catholic education, Catholic political groups, and fellow traditionalists joined

in "peace, administration, budget balancing, Targets include de policy, immigration, reduction via pro-environment and support families. Myriad lay energy among lay spokespersons and agencies, Catholics, offices of the USCCB, local dioceses and parishes, broad education, Catholic political groups, and fellow traditionalists joined

in public office Catholic-sponsoring citizens of ever