Question:

Who are the “Evangelicals,” and what do they want?

Subquestions:

WHAT DO MOST PEOPLE THINK OF AS “EVANGELICALS?”
[i.e., Moral Majority1, Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Tim LaHaye]

[Local figure: Lon Mabon, his Oregon Citizen’s Alliance. Is this related? 1a]

WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE?
[see thesis in “what’s wrong with Kansas?”2]
[Also explore research on connections between Reagan and Bush campaigns, and religious right] 2a

POTENTIAL INTERVIEWEES?

Members of local “evangelical” churches: both religious right and other. Current Oregon Citizen’s Alliance? Campaign headquarters for candidates running on “family values” platforms? UO faculty in political science, sociology, religion?

Local Mitt Romney campaign official

SIDE ISSUES “Flavor”
How has the understanding of “evangelical” been recently narrowed, vis a vis Evangelical Buddhists (Nichiren Buddhism), Mormonism, or Evangelical Mennonites?

What is the purpose of being “evangelical?”
to recruit for what purpose? to spread the “good” word? to improve
people’s spiritual lives?

How has many intellectuals unhappiness with “evangelical” christianity and its dogma and political agenda inspired a backlash in the United States. [i.e. Richard Dawkins “The God Delusion”; Christopher Hitchens “God is not Great: How Religion Poisons Everything”2

How has this unhappiness translated into the current crop of anti-religious books?

Has the political agenda of Christian fundamentalist evangelicals combined with the fear of fundamentalist faiths abroad (i.e. fundamentalist Muslims) combined to produce this backlash?

What is the response to Dawkins and “The God Delusion/”

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1 Moral Majority

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_Majority

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1a

http://www.gayrightswatch.com/2006/05/oooh-lon-mabon-is-back.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Citizens_Alliance

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2

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/What's_the_Matter_with_Kansas%3F

Wedge Issues
Gustav Niebuhr, Published Feb. 21, 2000

THE 2000 CAMPAIGN: THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT; Evangelicals Found a Believer in Bush

The Rev. Allen Phillips said today that when members of his evangelical church in North Spartanburg voted for Gov. George W. Bush in the South Carolina primary, it was a matter of spiritual affinity rather than an organized effort by the Christian right.

"Conservative evangelical Christians identified with Gov. Bush," said Mr. Phillips, an associate pastor at First Baptist Church of North Spartanburg and a member of the Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. "He has the experience of knowing Jesus Christ as his savior."

Old-fashioned political activity on the part of some organized religious conservatives also may have aided Mr. Bush. Despite reports that the Christian Coalition is weaker in South Carolina than it once was, the organization's founder, the religious broadcaster Pat Robertson, said tonight that members had worked hard to warn religious conservatives about Senator John McCain.

another piece:

http://www.theocracywatch.org/bush2.htm

The Rise of the Religious Right in the Republican Party
a public information project of the Center for Religion, Ethics, and Social Policy
at Cornell University

[also see google results: religious right Bush]

3

From Publishers Weekly
The antireligion wars started by Daniel Dennett and Sam Harris will heat up even more with this salvo from celebrated Oxford biologist Dawkins. For a scientist who criticizes religion for its intolerance, Dawkins has written a surprisingly intolerant book, full of scorn for religion and those who believe. But Dawkins, who gave us the selfish gene, anticipates this criticism. He says it's the scientist and humanist in him that makes him hostile to religions—fundamentalist Christianity and Islam come in for the most opprobrium—that close people's minds to scientific truth, oppress women and abuse children psychologically with the notion of eternal damnation.

God is not Great


850 page book disputing Dawkin's type thinking:

http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=100

Charles Taylor's new book A Secular Age is well timed. Begun long ago, it is now published in the middle of intense public discussion about religion. But though the book reads like an argument with Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins, it won't be joining theirs at the front of the bookshops.
It is equally mistaken to believe—and this is Taylor's most fundamental point—that the survival of religious attitudes in our own day can only be explained by the process of secularisation having not gone far enough. For Taylor, insofar as we live in a secular age, this means not that religion is in decline or has declined—in some places it is on the rise—but that there is no religious orthodoxy; that religion and scepticism live side by side, often in the same person.

There are, Taylor thinks, several reasons why secularisation has not brought with it a thorough "atheisation." Most fundamentally, we moderns are subject to a number of "cross-pressures." We are proudly commonsensical, suspicious of extravagant belief systems and anything that smells of magic or superstition. Yet the modern or "immanent" universe can also seem flat and constraining. The spiritual and bodily disciplines and good work it demands can feel oppressive or limited. It leaves us with a very imperfect, often violent, nature and a particularly bloody political legacy—and no sure means of escaping these. No wonder the "buffered self" is prone to feel isolated—to hanker after a cosmic order or some route to spiritual transcendence.

Thoroughgoing naturalism in particular struggles to do justice to many of the things we moderns feel and believe. It tends to exist in tension with other aspects of the humanist inheritance—the sense that great works of art, especially music, can put us in touch with something higher; the feeling that some things (great cultural artefacts, what remains of wilderness, human life) are "sacred," or that some causes (the eradication of poverty, the end of political oppression, the preservation of species) are "transcendent." Hence we find even the most hardheaded naturalists, like Dawkins, insisting that atheism has a place for reverence, awe and the sacred.

Three Quarks (threequarks.com)
Average White Band
Gold record player in garage
Mom can order CDs for the Salem Library
Glenn Gordon needs computer/music help
Jimmy Cliff/The Harder They Come