

“Values” distinguish both candidates and voters

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CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (ABP)—“Values voters”—a term popularized by conservative evangelicals after the 2004 elections—may bring a wide array of values to the polls. Here’s a rundown of the two presidential candidates’ views on a number of issues cited by religiously motivated voters on both the left and right, as compiled by the website OnTheIssues.org :

- **Abortion.** John McCain supports overturning [Roe v. Wade](#)— the landmark 1973 Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion nationwide—with exceptions for incest and rape. He would prohibit late-term abortion procedures labeled by opponents as “partial-birth” abortion and ban public funding of organizations that advocate or perform abortions. He would prosecute abortion doctors, not the women who get them.

Sen. John McCain

Barack Obama supports Roe v. Wade. He believes common ground can be found by acknowledging there is a moral dimension to the abortion debate and that people of good will are on both sides. He says everyone can agree on working to avoid unwanted pregnancies that might lead someone to consider an abortion.

- **Capital punishment.** McCain supports broadened use of the death penalty, stricter penalties for violent crime and increasing spending to build more federal prisons.

While supporting capital punishment for some heinous crimes, Obama says the death penalty should be enforced fairly and with caution.

- **Gay marriage.** Obama opposes same-sex marriage but supports civil unions for gay couples. He says decisions about same-sex marriage should be left up to the states but opposes California's Proposition 8, which defines marriage as between a man and woman.

McCain supports Proposition 8 and has supported a statewide ban on gay marriage in his home state of Arizona, but he opposes a similar ban on the federal level, saying it should be left up to individual states.

- **Global warming.** McCain says climate change is real and must be addressed, and nuclear power is the best way to fix it. He also supports alternative fuels like wind, tide, solar, natural gas and clean-coal technology and favors offshore drilling to reduce America's dependence on foreign oil.

Obama favors nuclear power as one component of the nation's overall energy mix. He says 20 percent of the nation's power supply should come from renewable sources by 2020. He believes the Book of Genesis teaches stewardship of the earth and sacrifice on behalf of future generations.

- **Health care.** Obama says health care is a right for every American, and it is morally wrong when the terminally ill must worry about paying their medical bills. He says he would take on insurance companies to drive down health care costs and provide mandatory health care for children.



McCain says health care is a responsibility. He says affordable health care should be available to every citizen, but families, rather than the government, should make decisions about health care.

- **Immigration.** McCain says he would restart comprehensive immigration reform only after securing America's borders. He would deport 2 million people in the country illegally who have committed crimes and says he would veto any bill giving amnesty to illegal immigrants.

Obama says America has nothing to fear from today's immigrants. He supports immigration reform that secures America's borders, punishes employers who exploit migrant workers and requires the 12 million undocumented immigrants to take steps to become legal citizens.

- **Iraq.** Obama opposed the war in Iraq from its beginning and says it has distracted the United States from catching Osama bin Laden.

McCain believes in the Bush policy of pre-emptive war. He credits President Bush and the troops for the fact there has not been another major terrorist attack on American soil since 9/11. McCain says America is winning in Iraq. He views "radical Islam" as the greatest challenge facing the 21st century.

- **Israel.** Both candidates support a two-state solution of Israel and Palestine living side-by-side in peace.

McCain wants to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem to show solidarity with Israel. Obama says Jerusalem should be a final-status issue resolved between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

- **Labor.** Obama says workers should have the freedom to choose whether to join a union without harassment or intimidation. He says farm policy should benefit families, not corporations. He supports making the minimum wage a living wage and says customers having to pay more for consumer

items produced domestically is worth it to keep jobs in the United States.

McCain says Americans are not afraid of foreign competition and supports lowering barriers to free trade.

- **Race.** McCain voted against the federal holiday for Martin Luther King in 1990 but now says it was a mistake. He defended the Confederate flag as a “symbol of heritage” but said South Carolina was wise to fly the flag in front of instead of on top of the state house.

Obama says the Confederate flag belongs in a museum, not on public property.

- **Schools.** McCain says the key to improving the quality of public schools is to promote competition from charters, homeschooling and vouchers for private schools.

Obama supports charter schools but opposes vouchers.

McCain believes virtues contained in the Ten Commandments should be taught in public schools and that school prayer should be allowed but not mandated. Obama supports a stricter separation between church and state.

McCain says whether creationism should be taught alongside evolution is up to local school districts. He says he believes in evolution but sees the hand of God in creation. Obama opposes teaching creationism in public schools.

- **Stem-cell research.** Obama says America owes it to her citizens to explore the potential of embryonic stem cells to treat debilitating diseases like Parkinson’s and Alzheimer’s disease, spinal cord injuries and diabetes.

McCain also supports expanding federal funding of embryonic stem cell research.

- **Torture.** McCain disagrees with the White House position that waterboarding is not torture and says torture is supported only by people without military experience.

Obama says torture should not be used under any circumstance.