

**Does Homeschooling or Private Schooling Promote Political Intolerance?
Evidence from a Christian University**

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Abstract

Political tolerance is the willingness to extend civil liberties to people who hold views with which one disagrees. Some political theorists argue that the traditional primary and secondary public school system is the ideal institution for instilling political tolerance in children while private schools and homeschooling propagate political intolerance. Both private schooling — in particular, religious private schooling — and homeschooling have been viewed as institutions that propagate political intolerance by fostering separatism, religious fundamentalism, and an unwillingness to consider alternative worldviews or values. I empirically test this claim by using Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus's (1982) content-controlled political tolerance scale to measure the political tolerance levels of undergraduate students who (a) attend a fundamentalist Christian university but (b) have varying levels of exposure to different types of primary and secondary schooling (i.e., public schooling, private schooling, or homeschooling). I compare political tolerance levels between students with differing educational backgrounds by using ordinary least squares to regress political tolerance on years of private schooling and years of homeschooling, along with a rich set of demographic and ideological control variables. I find that (a) greater exposure to private schooling is not associated with any more or less political tolerance and (b) students with greater exposure to homeschooling tend to be more politically tolerant — a finding contrary to the claims of many political theorists.

Does Homeschooling or Private Schooling Promote Political Intolerance?

Evidence from a Christian University

Since the inception of the American primary and secondary public school system in the 19th century, one of its aims has been to prepare children to be healthy participants in civil society. Accomplishing this aim requires inculcating several civic virtues into children. One of these virtues is political tolerance, defined as the willingness to extend basic civil liberties to political or social groups that hold views with which one disagrees.

Though the public school system educates a majority of American children, many children have received formal education in private schools — especially, religious schools — or have been homeschooled. Yet some political theorists have questioned whether private schooling and homeschooling are institutions that are capable of inculcating political tolerance as well as other virtues necessary for healthy civic life in a liberal democracy. Both religious private schooling and homeschooling have been viewed as institutions that propagate political intolerance by fostering separatism, religious fundamentalism, and an unwillingness to consider alternative worldviews or values (Apple, 2000; Balmer, 2006; Levin, 1998; Lubienski, 2000; Reich, 2002a).

Critics of religious private schooling and homeschooling further contend that the traditional public school system has the comparative advantage in teaching children to be politically tolerant. These critics reason that a traditional public school takes all students and consequently exposes each of its students to different ideas and other people who come from a diverse set of backgrounds. Such exposure then creates opportunities for students to learn to be more open-minded, to cooperate with those who hold different perspectives than they do, and to overcome any prejudices that their parents may possess (Blackler, 1997; Meier, 1995; Reich,

2002a; Riley, 1997). Indeed, the founders of the US public school system argued that providing all students with a common schooling experience would temper the religious fanaticism that threatens to fracture civil society (Glenn, 1988).

These claims regarding the impact of public schools, private schools, and homeschooling on political tolerance are theoretically plausible, but do they comport with the empirical evidence? This study tests these claims by analyzing the political tolerance levels of students who attend a private, evangelical Christian university (henceforth, referred to as “the university” to maintain anonymity) but have varying primary and secondary schooling backgrounds. In particular, I seek to answer the following research question: Are children who attended traditional public schools more politically tolerant than children who were homeschooled or attended private schools? The aim is to paint a descriptive picture of the relationship between schooling background and political tolerance. The results will bring empirical evidence to bear upon the claim that public schools are more effective than private schools and homeschooling at instilling political tolerance into students. Without such an investigation, we are left with generalizations and articles of faith about the nature of public schools, private schools, and homeschooling and their respective effects on political tolerance.

The remainder of this paper is divided into four sections. What follows in the first section is a brief review of the previous research findings regarding educational background and political tolerance. Second, I describe the data set and methods that I use in this study. I present the results in the third section and conclude with a discussion of those results in the final section.

I. Literature Review

Private Schooling and Political Tolerance

Contrary to the widespread belief that public schools have the comparative advantage in instilling the virtue of political tolerance in children, empirical studies have generally concluded that children who attend private schools are at least as politically tolerant as children who attend public schools. Many studies, in fact, show that private-school children are more politically tolerant than their public-school counterparts (Wolf, 2005).

Several nationally representative studies provide evidence for this point. For instance, in a national survey of 3,400 Latinos, Greene, Giammo, and Mellow (1999) find that adults who have attended some private school for their primary and secondary education are more politically tolerant than those who have only attended public schools. Elsewhere, the National Household Education Survey (NHES) conducted by the US Department of Education reveals that children who attend Catholic and secular private schools are more politically tolerant than children who attend public schools (Belfield, 2004; Campbell 2002a). Although the NHES data also demonstrate that children who attend religious, non-Catholic private schools are *less* politically tolerant than public-school children, this result is contrasted by several other studies that find students who attend evangelical-Christian schools exhibit as much if not more political tolerance than their counterparts who attend public schools (Godwin, Ausbrooks, & Martinez, 2001; Godwin, Godwin, and Martinez-Ebers, 2004; see also Wolf, Greene, Kleitz, & Thalhammer, 2001).

Studies of private-school vouchers bring an additional body of evidence to bear upon the ability of public and private schools to instill political tolerance in their respective students. Because the vouchers are randomly awarded by lottery, these studies are able to utilize an experimental design to determine the causal effects of attending a private school. Outcomes of students who have applied for and been awarded a voucher to attend a private school (the

treatment group) are compared with students who have applied for but not been awarded a voucher (the control group). These studies report that voucher students are at least as politically tolerant as those who did not receive a voucher (Campbell, 2002b; Howell, Peterson, Wolf, & Campbell, 2002; Wolf, Peterson, & West, 2001). These experimental studies allow one to infer that greater political tolerance among private-school students is caused by private schooling instead of other factors that may have influenced these students to select into private schools absent a lottery.

Overall, the empirical evidence demonstrates that the belief that private schools instill illiberal and intolerant attitudes is mistaken. Rather, private schools are as able and, in many cases, more effective than public schools at inculcating political tolerance in students.

Homeschooling and Political Tolerance

On the other hand, little empirical inquiry has been conducted regarding the political tolerance levels of homeschooled children. In a rich, narrative study of six conservative Christian homeschooling families, Kunzman (2009) asked parents whether they would approve of government regulations to restrict other homeschooling parents from teaching religious views or other ideologies that they disagreed with. In each case, the parents generally disapproved of such regulations, despite their convictions against those opposing religions or ideologies.

Kunzman further observed that homeschooled children were more politically tolerant than their parents. But because the study only focused on homeschooling families, it contains no comparisons of political tolerance between homeschooled children and children who attend public or private schools.

Most studies that have compared homeschooled children with public-school children investigated other civic outcomes besides political tolerance. In one analysis, Smith and Sikkink

(1999) use the 1996 NHES data set and find that children who are homeschooled are more involved in civic activities (e.g., voting, attending public meetings, volunteering for community service, or contacting their public officials) than children who attend public schools. Kunzman (2009) and Ray (2004) both find similar results. Summarizing the research on homeschooling and civic engagement and participation, Medlin (2000) writes:

Home-schooled children are taking part in the daily routines of their communities. They are certainly not isolated; in fact, they associated with — and feel close to — all sorts of people....They may be more socially mature and have better leadership skills than other children as well. And they appear to be functioning effectively as members of adult society (p. 119).

This empirical work contradicts what other scholars have merely theorized, namely, that homeschooling diminishes a child's sense of civic engagement and participation (Lubienski, 2000; Reich, 2002b).

Although none of these studies specifically compare the political tolerance levels of children with different schooling backgrounds, they may help to form theories. For instance, it is not unreasonable to expect that those who are more community-minded tend to form more associations with others from different cultural backgrounds or hold different viewpoints, even without attending public schools. As a result, an increase in community-mindedness may be associated with an increase in political tolerance (Cigler & Joslyn, 2002). Given the research claims that homeschooled students are more community-minded than other students, it is sensible to predict that homeschooled students will also be more politically tolerant.

A second reason to suspect that homeschooled students are more politically tolerant is related to the degree of self-actualization that they have experienced. Sullivan, Piereson, and

Marcus (1982) theorized and empirically verified that individuals who have a stronger sense of their personal identity tend to exhibit more political tolerance. Greene (2005) explains:

A Catholic (for example) who is secure in his own identity as a Catholic will find it easier to accept that others are not Catholic, and thus to accept their right not to be Catholic, whereas a Catholic who is not secure in his own Catholicism may seek to prove (to others and himself) that he really is Catholic by denigrating non-Catholics and refusing to respect their rights (p. 194).

Individuals who are less secure in their identity tend to feel more threatened when their views are challenged. Hence, they wish to control or even quell these threats and ultimately are more uncompromising in their actions and outlook. Because homeschooling is a highly personalized educational arrangement and usually constitutes holistically introducing students to a particular worldview and way of life, it is possible that homeschooled students typically attain a higher degree of self-actualization and are consequently more politically tolerant than those who attend a traditional public school. In fact, traditional public schools may be an institution that stunts self-actualization for some of its students because it threatens those students' sense of self by endorsing a worldview that clashes with the one held by those students (Kunzman, 2010).

Indeed, the US Department of Education (2009) has documented parents most often choose to homeschool their children because they “desire to provide religious or moral instruction” (p. 14). Critics of homeschooling charge that this desire is precisely the problem: Instilling a single worldview into children causes them to be more narrow-minded and intolerant. However, recent empirical work suggests that this may not be the case; rather, religious values are consistent with and conducive to foster values necessary for a liberal democracy. For instance, Eisenstein (2006) has documented that Christians largely agree that the principles of

their faith require them to be tolerant of others who hold views with which they disagree. Thus, homeschooling that places an emphasis on religious and moral instruction may actually help to foster political tolerance. At the very least, families engaging in homeschooling for religious and moral reasons may value others' right to religious freedom and exhibit more tolerance simply because they recognize that their ability to homeschool is founded upon that same right.

Yet despite several theoretical reasons to suspect why homeschooling may lead to greater political tolerance, there are no empirical studies intended to test these theories. This present study is intended to begin to fill this gap in the literature about homeschooling as well as add to the empirical literature that compares the political tolerance levels of students who attend private and public schools. The data and methods used in this study is the topic of the next section.

II. Data and Methods

Measuring Political Tolerance

An individual's level of political tolerance is measured by widely-used instrument developed by Sullivan et al. (1982), who have also shown the instrument to possess a high degree of validity and reliability. The instrument, called the *content-controlled political tolerance scale*, consists of two parts. In the first part, the political tolerance scale provides the respondent with a list of popular social and political groups, such as Republicans, gay-rights activists, or fundamentalist Christians. The respondent is asked to select the group with beliefs that he opposes the most; this group is called his *least-liked group*. If there is an unlisted group that the respondent opposes even more, he is given the option to write down the name of that group.

The second part of the political tolerance scale measures the respondent's willingness to extend basic civil liberties to members of his least-liked group. The respondent is presented with

a series of statements about his least-liked group and is asked to indicate his level of agreement with those statements. For instance, one statement proposes, “Members of your [least-liked group] should be allowed to make a public speech.” The respondent then selects one of five answer choices in reply to that statement: strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, or strongly agree. Agreeing would be the more tolerant answer for this specific statement, whereas disagreeing may be considered more tolerant for other statements. The responses to each statement are coded and combined to create an overall measure of political tolerance for the respondent.

Study Sample

The study sample consists of 304 out of the approximately 4000 undergraduates at the university — a private, Christian university in the western United States. I collected data using a survey with the content-controlled political tolerance scale and several questions asking about the study participants’ demographic and ideological background characteristics. Study participants also indicated the type of school (i.e., traditional public school, private school, homeschool) that they attended for each year throughout their thirteen years of primary and secondary education. A stratified sampling method was used to create a representative sample of the university’s student body. Specifically, because all students either (a) live in one the many campus dormitories or (b) live off-campus and commute, the student population was stratified by place of residence. The university’s administrative office provided data detailing the number of students who lived in each dormitory and the number of students who commuted. The research team then randomly sampled students within each stratum, administering the surveys face to face. The data that the research team collected was ultimately weighted by strata to make the

study sample reflective of the student population at the university. Descriptive statistics of the sample are displayed in Table 1.

«TABLE 1 APPROXIMATELY HERE»

There are three reasons why the university's student body provides a useful population to explore this study's research question. First, the university was founded upon and continues to operate according to a more fundamentalist Christian tradition. In fact, one of its missions is to provide a biblically-based education, and all undergraduate students must agree to a doctrinal statement in order to apply for admission and regularly attend chapels throughout the school week. At minimum, describing the political tolerance levels of students who selected into this type of university will be valuable, especially because critics of private schooling and homeschooling contend that students who have greater exposure to religiously conservative environments do not learn to tolerate alternative viewpoints. Indeed, the students at the university who attended private schools or were homeschooled for their primary or secondary education likely did so for religious or moral reasons.

Second, students at the university have experienced different amounts of public-schooling, private-schooling, or homeschooling. Not only have many students received their formal education in only one of the three schooling sectors but also many others have received their formal education in more than one of these sectors. For instance, some students attended public primary schools but then attended private secondary schools. Others were homeschooled before attending public or private schools. This variation enables me to answer the original research question by using ordinary least squares regression analysis to estimate the relationship between amount of schooling in a particular school sector and political tolerance. It is rare to

conduct such an analysis because of the difficulty in finding populations that include substantial proportions of homeschooled students while being more easily accessible for data collection.

Third, though the students differ in schooling background, they have all self-selected to attend the university. Thus, they are similar on many observable and unobservable characteristics (e.g., religiosity, academic achievement) that may have led to this selection. This homogeneity naturally acts as a way to control for many background characteristics, helping to isolate the explanatory power of schooling background on political tolerance. Of course, the sample is not perfectly homogenous, so I still control for various observable background characteristics in my empirical model when possible.

Empirical Model and Analyses

In particular, I estimate the following model:

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 H_i + \beta_2 P_i + \beta_3 \mathbf{X}_i + \mu_i,$$

where y_i is the political tolerance score for student i and \mathbf{X}_i is a vector of variables that control for ideological and demographic background characteristics; μ_i is the error term. P_i and H_i are the variables of interest and are equal to the number of years of private schooling and homeschooling that student i received, respectively. As mentioned earlier, I weight the observations by sampling strata (the place of residence) in order to correct for any discrepancies between the study sample and the population of undergraduates at the university.

I also cluster my standard errors by sampling strata. Clustering is necessary because unobserved variation between students who live in the same place of residence may be correlated. For example, each residence hall community may develop its own distinct identity and eccentricities, which then influence all students who live there. Thus, students living in the same residence hall cannot be considered independent observations. Absent clustering, standard

errors would typically be understated, consequently distorting the results by producing type II errors.

Note that years of public schooling is not included as a covariate. All students indicated the type of school they attended for each of the thirteen years of primary and secondary schooling, so once the number of years of homeschooling and private-schooling are determined, the number of years of public schooling is also determined. Thus, the estimate of β_1 in the regression model is interpreted as the partial effect on political tolerance that results from replacing one year of public schooling with one year of homeschooling. Likewise, the estimate of β_2 is interpreted as the partial effect on political tolerance that results from replacing one year of public schooling with one year of private schooling. I present the results in the following section.

III. Results

Survey Responses

Table 2 lists the least-liked group that study participants have selected as well as the proportion of them who have chosen that group. It is unsurprising that most study participants have chosen Atheists, Pro-Choicers (people who support abortion), and gay-rights activists as their least-liked group, given that they attend an evangelical-Christian, and hence more religiously conservative, university.

«TABLE 2 APPROXIMATELY HERE»

But the choice of a least-liked group is not an indication of political tolerance. Measuring levels of political tolerance requires analyzing the study participants' willingness to extend various civil liberties to members of their least-liked group, whatever it might be. Table 3 lists the eight Likert-scale items aimed at capturing this willingness and shows how the study

participants responded to each statement. For example, about half of the respondents strongly disagreed that the government should be able to tap the phones of their least-liked group.

«TABLE 3 APPROXIMATELY HERE»

The last item in Table 3, “I feel that [that group] is dangerous,” is not intended to capture political tolerance and hence is not included in the derivation of the political tolerance measure. Rather, that question is a measure of perceived threat. Studies have shown perceived threat is an important determinant of political tolerance, so it is included as an independent covariate in the regression models to distinguish its effect on political tolerance from other predictors of political tolerance (Eisenstein, 2006; Greene, Mellow, & Giammo, 1999; Sullivan et al., 1982; Wolf Greene, Kleitz, & Thalhammer, 2001).

I code responses on the eight Likert-scale items on a scale of -2 to 2, with the higher numbers indicating the more politically tolerant answer. I then average the responses to the statements to generate a continuous measure of each study participant’s political tolerance level. As mentioned in Table 4, the average political tolerance level is 0.860 with a standard deviation of 0.790. Political tolerance levels also range from slightly less than -1 to 2.

«TABLE 4 APPROXIMATELY HERE»

Results of Regression Analysis

Table 5 displays the results from various specifications of the model that I use to estimate the relationship between political tolerance and educational background. The first column is a rudimentary specification in which political tolerance scores are regressed on years of homeschooling and years of private schooling without any demographic or ideological control variables. This specification suggests that replacing a year of public schooling with homeschooling is associated with an increase in political tolerance by about 0.04 scale-points

(about 5 percent of a standard deviation in political tolerance). This result is significant at the level of $p < 0.01$. On the other hand, replacing one year of public schooling with one year of private schooling is associated with a decrease in political tolerance by about 0.01 scale-points, a result that is only marginally significant ($p < 0.1$).

«TABLE 5 APPROXIMATELY HERE»

However, background demographic characteristics such as gender, race, or socioeconomic status have been shown to be important predictors of political tolerance (Campbell, 2001; Wolf, Greene, et al., 2001). And even though the study sample consists of students at a conservative Christian university, political leanings and denominational affiliations may still vary. Because these demographic and ideological background characteristics are also predictors of political tolerance, it is essential to explicitly control for them in my analysis to avoid omitted variable bias (Eisenstein, 2006; Sullivan et al., 1982).

As shown in columns 2 and 3 of Table 5, adding only the demographic variables or both the demographic and ideological variables substantively changes the results. The decrease in political tolerance that is associated with private schooling is no longer statistically significant, and the positive relationship between homeschooling and political tolerance remains robust to these additional control variables.

It is worthwhile to mention that coefficient estimates of the control variables generally point in the expected direction. For instance, students who come from racial or ethnic minority backgrounds exhibit less political tolerance relative to white students. This result is consistent with the theory that a greater sense of perceived threat — a sense more common to individuals from racial or ethnic minority backgrounds — is associated with less political tolerance. This theory also explains why coefficient estimates for males and parent's income are positive even

though they are not statistically different from zero. That is, males and individuals from higher socioeconomic backgrounds perceive less threat than females and individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, respectively. The coefficient estimate for the variable capturing political ideology is also not statistically different from zero but is positive as expected; those who hold a more liberal ideology are more politically tolerant. Likewise, individuals who voted in the most recent election, an indication of civic-mindedness, are more politically tolerance than those who did not. Finally, students who are further along in their degree program, and probably have experienced a greater degree of self-actualization, exhibit more political tolerance. In general, the direction of the coefficient estimates point to what previous studies have found and theory predicts, giving confidence to the validity of the analysis (Sullivan et al., 1982; Marcus et al., 1995).

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

This study brings two contributions to the existing research on schooling and political tolerance. First, the finding that increased exposure to private schooling does not decrease political tolerance comports with and adds to the empirical evidence that students who attend private schools are at least as tolerant as students who attend public schools (Wolf, 2005). Second, this study adds new insight into the political tolerance outcomes of homeschooled children — a topic that, to the best of my knowledge, has not been empirically investigated until now. Specifically, among a relatively homogenous group of undergraduates, all of whom attend an evangelical Christian university, those with more exposure to homeschooling relative to public schooling tend to be more politically tolerant.

Both of the results conflict with the belief that a common system of public schools is essential not only for all students but particularly for religiously conservative students to learn

political tolerance. Instead of decreasing political tolerance among students who are more conservative in their religious beliefs, homeschooling is associated with greater political tolerance, and private schooling is not associated with any less tolerance. In other words, members of the very group for which public schooling is believed to be most essential for inculcating political tolerance (i.e., those who are more strongly committed to a particular worldview and value system) actually exhibit at least as much or more tolerance when they are exposed to less public schooling.

On the other hand, this study is unable to provide insight into how students at the university compare with others who do not attend the university. So it is unclear to what the extent the two conclusions that (a) homeschooled students exhibit greater political tolerance and (b) private-schooled students do not exhibit less political tolerance than public-school students are generalizable to other populations. More importantly, the findings of this study would be undermined by selection bias if the university disproportionately attracts particularly tolerant students who happen to have more years of homeschooling or private schooling while simultaneously attracting particularly intolerant students who happen to have more years of public schooling. Although such selection is highly unlikely, it remains useful to conduct similar analyses using different samples from other contexts to investigate the generalizability of this study's findings.

It is also important to note that this study is not sufficient to establish any causal relationships. It is unclear whether an increase in political tolerance is due to the exposure to homeschooling or because of selection: It is possible that unobservable factors that lead students to choose homeschooling may also lead students to be more politically tolerant. For example, those who ascribe to a more libertarian ideology may choose to exercise their liberties by

schooling their children at home rather than in a public school. At the same time, those who ascribe to a more libertarian ideology may tend to recognize others' right to freedom of conscience and hence, be more politically tolerant. If true, a causal link between homeschooling and political tolerance cannot be established.

Earlier, two theories for why homeschooling may cause an increase in political tolerance were suggested. First, students who are homeschooled may attain a greater degree of self-actualization because homeschooling is highly conducive to personalized instruction and enables students to be taught a consistent worldview. Second, the religious values taught in a homeschooling environment as well as in many religious private schools are consistent with political tolerance and other values necessary for a liberal democracy. Verifying these theories requires showing that homeschooling (a) does indeed lead to a greater degree of self-actualization, which Sullivan et al. (1982) have shown to lead to greater political tolerance, and (b) is more conducive to inculcating religious values that are consistent with and help to develop political tolerance. Such additional investigation is outside the purview of this study but doing so in the future may help to better identify and understand the factors that lead to different levels of political tolerance for students with varying schooling backgrounds.

Until then, the results of this descriptive study remain valuable: Among a relatively homogenous group of students that have chosen to attend an religiously conservative, evangelical-Christian university, more exposure to private schooling is not associated with greater political intolerance as is commonly believed. And contrary to conventional belief, more exposure to homeschooling is associated with greater political tolerance.

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Table 1: *Sample statistics*

Age ^a	20.21
Gender	
Female	60.86
Male	39.14
Year in School	
Freshman	22.11
Sophomore	27.39
Junior	27.06
Senior	20.46
Fifth-year or more	2.97
Major	
Humanities	31.91
Life Sciences	24.01
Business	10.20
Social Sciences	8.22
Education	10.53
Technical Sciences or Engineering	12.50
Undeclared	2.63
Racial or Ethnic Background	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.66
Asian or Pacific Islander	20.93
Black	1.00
Hispanic or Latino	12.96
White	60.80
Mixed-Race	3.65
Years of Homeschooling ^b	
0 years (No homeschooling)	78.95
1-6 years	8.56
7-12 years	7.57
13 years (Only homeschooling)	4.93
Years of Private Schooling ^b	
0 years (No private schooling)	50.00
1-6 years	24.67
7-12 years	15.46
13 years (Only private schooling)	9.87
Years of Public Schooling ^b	
No public schooling	21.05
1-6 years	18.08
7-12 years	20.07
Only public schooling	40.79

Note: N = 304. ^adenotes results are averages; all other numbers are percentages. ^bStudents were asked to indicate whether they received private schooling, public schooling, or homeschooling for each of their 13 years of primary and secondary education. For purposes of brevity, figures presented in the table are aggregated into the four categories (a) no years, (b) 1-6 years, (c) 7-12 years, and (d) 13 years.

Table 2: *Least-Liked Group Selection*

Group	Percentage
Atheists	36.18
Pro-Choicers (People who support abortion)	29.61
Gay-Rights Activists	12.83
Muslim	7.24
Conservative Christians	6.25
Democrats	2.96
Other	1.65
Pro-Lifers (People who oppose abortion)	1.64
Republicans	1.64

Table 3: *Responses on the Tolerance Scale*

Likert-Scale items	Response (Percentages)				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The government should be able to tap the phones of [that group].	49.34	32.57	14.47	2.63	0.99
Members of [that group] should be allowed to teach in public schools.	7.26	12.21	20.79	36.30	23.43
Members of [that group] should be allowed to make a public speech.	3.62	7.57	15.46	42.43	30.92
Members of [that group] should be able to run for president or other elected office.	7.95	14.24	17.88	33.11	26.82
Members of [that group] should be able to hold public demonstrations or rallies.	5.2	14.14	22.37	33.55	24.01
Books that are written by members of the [that group] should be banned from the public library.	40.40	34.11	14.57	8.61	2.32
I would allow members of [that group] to live in my neighborhood.	0.66	4.98	8.97	43.19	42.19
[That group] should be outlawed.	40.53	26.58	15.95	9.97	7.97
I feel that [that group] is dangerous.	19.41	22.70	21.71	24.67	11.51

Note: N = 304. Scale comprised of the first 8 items. Cronbach's alpha = 0.87.

Table 4: *Relative Frequency Table of Political Tolerance Levels*

Score	Frequency (%)
-2.00 to -1.50	0.0
-1.51 to -1.00	2.0
-1.01 to -0.50	4.6
-0.49 to 0.00	8.9
0.01 to 0.50	19.4
0.51 to 1.00	25.0
1.01 to 1.50	18.1
1.51 to 2.00	22.0

Note: Average political tolerance score = 0.860. Standard deviation of political tolerance scores = 0.790. Political tolerance scores are derived by coding responses to each Likert-scale item and averaging them. Political tolerance scores can possibly range from -2 to 2. Higher scores mean that the individual is more tolerant. N = 304.

Table 5: *Educational Background and Political Tolerance*

Variable (range)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Years of Homeschooling	0.040*** (0.009)	0.028*** (0.009)	0.027*** (0.008)
Years of Private schooling	-0.010* (0.006)	-0.009 (0.005)	-0.009 (0.007)
Perceived Threat	-0.204*** (0.033)	-0.201*** (0.022)	-0.207*** (0.024)
<i>Demographic Controls</i>			
Male		0.154 (0.114)	0.140 (0.127)
Year		0.088** (0.038)	0.088** (0.041)
Age		-0.033 (0.042)	-0.035 (0.042)
<i>Racial or Ethnic Background^a</i>			
Black or African American		-1.327* (0.698)	-1.335* (0.651)
Latino or Non-white Hispanic		-0.188** (0.074)	-0.169** (0.067)
Asian or Pacific Islander		-0.254*** (0.070)	-0.219*** (0.070)
American Indian or Alaskan Native		-0.023 (0.291)	-0.114 (0.309)
Mixed Race		-0.080 (0.085)	-0.0826 (0.064)
Parent's Education		0.006 (0.020)	0.010 (0.023)
Parent's Income		0.010 (0.036)	0.008 (0.037)
Two Parent Household		-0.115 (0.141)	-0.122 (0.143)
<i>Ideological Controls</i>			
Evangelical Denomination			0.091 (0.214)
Religion Influences Behavior			0.080 (0.070)
Ascribes to a Liberal Ideology			0.036 (0.094)
Voted in Last Election			0.131* (0.062)
Constant	0.802 (0.0351)	0.781 (0.915)	1.363* (0.700)
R ²	0.153	0.210	0.218

Notes: ^aOmitted category is "White" ***p<0.01; **p<0.05, *p < 0.10.