

Principles for Working Effectively with the Media

The eminent church historian Martin Marty once observed that “there is no news in the news today that is not somehow related to religion news.” Some of the most critical issues in our national dialogues rest at the cross section of religion and public policy. Everywhere we turn, the issue of “the faith angle” keeps coming up. Many members of the mainstream media recognize this as well. They embrace their role as responsible stewards of a national conversation, and realize that a deficit of knowledge of their fellow citizens’ religious convictions can hamper their coverage. Our speaker will explain how his “Faith Angle Forum” program for journalists aspires to correct this imbalance and lack of perspective.

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Five Propositions

- 1) Red God, Blue God: the need to understand the different worldviews of secular elite’s vs religious believers.
- 2) The lack of knowledge among secular journalists and reporters of religious believers and of religious belief in general.
- 3) We all live in “one country, but composed of several cultures.” (James Davison Hunter and Gertrude Himmelfarb’s research)

4) The strategy to educate secular and elite journalists about religion and public life.

5) Helping journalists “kick the secularist habit.”

Suggested Readings:

The Faith Angle Forum website (for many transcripts of past sessions with scholars and reporters discussing various aspects of religion and public life). Go to: www.eppc.org/FAF

“Blind Spot: When Journalists Don’t Get Religion”, edited by Paul Marshall, Lela Gilbert, and Roberta Green Ahmanson (Oxford University Press , 2009).

Quoting God: How Media Shape Ideas about Religion and Culture, edited by Claire H. Badaracco, (Baylor University Press, 2005).