

## Evangelicals in the United States

We often hear about the growing numbers and influence of “evangelicals” or “evangelicalism” in the United States. Despite the frequency with which we hear these labels, how much do you really know about this group? The Association of Religion Data Archives (ARDA) allows you to find and analyze empirical data from many sources concerning religion in the United States. The following exercise illustrates how you can use this source to explore a relevant issue in American religion

If you find yourself lost at any point, look to the instructions on the right.

Open your web browser and go to the homepage for the Association of Religion Data Archives.

The first question you want to answer is simply, “where in the United States are Evangelicals, and how are they distributed across the nation?”

1. What states or region(s) do you think would have the highest rates of adherence to Evangelical churches?

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Fortunately, the ARDA has data that will allow you to test your hypothesis about the geographical distribution of Evangelicals. Let’s look at a map of the United States depicting the *rates of adherence* for Evangelical denominations.

2. Was your hypothesis correct? What states or region(s) have the highest rates of adherence for Evangelical denominations?

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**Open your web browser.**

**Go to [www.thearda.com](http://www.thearda.com)**

**Click on the “Maps/Reports” tab.**

**Select “U.S. Maps.”**

**Scroll down and highlight “Evangelical Denominations-Rates of adherence per 1000 population.”**

**Click “Submit.”**

3. Which states have the highest and lowest rates of Evangelical adherence?

Highest: \_\_\_\_\_

Lowest: \_\_\_\_\_

Let's find out how many Evangelical adherents are in the county where you live.

4. Your county's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Go ahead and find the membership report for your county by clicking on the "Maps & Reports" tab again.

5. Looking at the bar graph, where do Evangelicals fall in size (i.e. largest, smallest, etc.)?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What religious body had the most adherents in your county in 2000?

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Adherents: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Is this largest group an Evangelical denomination? Hint: Look to the right of the group's name under the "Theology" column.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Click on the "Maps/Reports" tab.**

**Select "Counties" under "Browse Membership Reports."**

**Select your state from the menu.**

**Then select your county.**

**Click "Submit."**

8. Just out of curiosity, which religious group grew the most between 1990 and 2000 in **percent change**? Which group decreased the most?

Increased the most: \_\_\_\_\_

Decreased the most: \_\_\_\_\_

Now we have some idea about the geographical distribution of the Evangelical denominations in the United States. What if you want to get some data concerning the characteristics of these individuals who consider themselves to be “evangelicals.”

Let’s see how the ARDA can help address these questions. In the upper-right hand corner you will see a search box. Type in “evangelical” and see what survey questions you find.

You will probably find several interesting questions. However, for now focus on one called **Q3E** from the Baylor Religion Survey, 2005.

9. What does this question ask?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Take a more detailed look at this question by clicking on the “Analyze results” link below it.

10. What percent of respondents answered “yes” to this question?

\_\_\_\_\_

11. What percent of those who said “yes” to this question voted for George Bush in the 2004 Presidential election?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Under the bar graph, click on the “1990-2000 Change” tab.**

**Search for “evangelical” in the upper-right hand corner.**

**Click on “Analyze results” below the Q3E question.**

12. John Kerry?

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13. What do you think the relationship between education and responding “yes” to this question is? Write your hypothesis:

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14. Fill in the following table:

	Less HS Grad	HS Grad	Some College	JR College	BA Degree	Graduate Degree
Yes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

15. Was your hypothesis supported?

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You should have a good feel for how to locate and analyze survey questions on the ARDA’s website. Go ahead and find another variable related to evangelicals or evangelicalism. It can be in the Baylor Religion Survey, 2005 or some other survey (hint: use the search box).

**Print out the results you find and attach them to this module.**

16. What is the question you found?

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17. What is the name of the survey or study the question comes from?

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18. What does your analysis of the question show? Are responses different by race, age, education, or some other variable? Describe below:

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