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CAPITALIZING ON COVID-19: CRISIS EXPLOITATION IN THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT'S INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR FAMILY VALUES*

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Religious movements face a critical choice when global crises emerge: adapt or decline. This article examines how the transnational Christian right chose adaptation during the COVID-19 pandemic, transforming potential threats into strategic opportunities. Drawing on theories of crisis exploitation and frame extension, I demonstrate how these organizations leveraged the pandemic to advance their longstanding objectives. Although COVID-19 initially challenged the Christian right's interests by diverting public attention and resources, their advocacy organizations rapidly reframed this challenge as an opportunity. Through systematic frame extension strategies, these groups integrated the pandemic into their existing campaigns, emphasizing renewed urgency and relevance. To illustrate this strategic adaptation, I analyze the advocacy efforts and media coverage of two prominent organizations within the Christian right movement: ADF International and the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam).

How do transnational advocacy organizations respond to crises that appear to be unrelated to their core business? Scholars of interest groups have used population ecology theory to argue that competitive pressures result in specialization or “strategic differentiation” (Bush and Hadden 2019; Eilstrup-Sangiovanni 2019; Shibaïke 2023). This creates the expectation that advocacy groups ignore developments outside their range. The upshot is a division of labor.

Yet, reality often runs counter to this expectation. Advocacy organizations sometimes *do* operate outside of their presumed wheelhouse. This article demonstrates that faith-based organizations frequently criticize measures that governments across the globe have taken in response to the coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic. The vigil for Sarah Everard, a woman who a police officer brutally murdered, provides a case in point. After the London Metropolitan Police arrested several women for violating COVID-19 regulations during the vigil, the Alliance Defending Freedom International compared the arrests to a clampdown on anti-abortion activism. The conservative organization, which specializes in legal advocacy, argued that the pandemic should not be used to curtail *any* woman’s right to protest:

And so, Sarah has become all of us—an emblem of every single woman who should not have to fear attack simply when walking home. Of every single woman who is valued, whose voice matters. That’s why fears of the societal outcry being silenced are so deeply sensitive. But if this movement is about all of us, it must really be about all of us. That includes women who reject police brutality. Racial injustice. Lockdown. Sexual violence. Abortion (McLatchie 2021).

As such, ADF International achieved the seemingly unimaginable: to connect a global health crisis to demonstrations outside abortion clinics.

The advocacy group is not unique in this respect. Other organizations with overlapping mission statements—concerning, *inter alia*, the defense of religious freedom, human dignity from conception to natural death, and the traditional family—have similarly incorporated the

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pandemic into their day-to-day activities. In the United States, the First Liberty Institute has filed lawsuits to defend the right to refuse COVID-19 vaccines on religious grounds (Burns 2022). In the Netherlands, *Civitas Christiana* (2020), a radical fringe group in the international movement “Tradition, Family, Property,” has seamlessly weaved the pandemic into its conspiracy theories about an elite-led “ideological reversal.” In France, the president of *La Manif Pour Tous* seized the pandemic as another opportunity to sing the praises of the “natural family” (De la Rochère 2020). This active involvement with COVID-19 is surprising. After all, as ADF International’s communications officer admitted, the issues these organizations initially worked on “had nothing to do with the coronavirus” (McLatchlie 2021).

This article argues that transnational organizations of the Christian right have attempted to turn the pandemic from a threat to their agenda into an opportunity. The Christian right constitutes a dominant subset of actors within the anti-gender movement (Corredor 2019; Paternotte and Kuhar 2018). Whereas the overall movement mobilizes around heteropatriarchal notions of life and the family, the Christian right views these notions through an explicitly religious lens. Member organizations often articulate a statement of faith that details how religious beliefs inform their advocacy (e.g., ADF International, n.d.). This religious outlook notwithstanding, the Christian right’s mission aligns with that of (nominally) secular anti-gender organizations: to defend “traditional family values” against the scourge of “gender ideology,” an amorphous and capacious term that is used to contest a plethora of women’s and LGBTQ+ rights, ranging from abortion to same-sex marriage and from legal gender recognition to comprehensive sexuality education (Paternotte 2023).

To explain the Christian right’s efforts to capitalize on COVID-19, I draw on different literatures—agenda-setting theory, crisis exploitation theory, and social movement scholarship on framing—to set up a three-stage argument. First, COVID-19 constitutes a threat to the Christian right’s policy agenda. Agenda-setting theory commonly treats crises as focusing events that arise suddenly and demand policymakers’ attention. Because space and time on the policy agenda are finite, this attention comes at the expense of other, less urgent issues. The Christian right, therefore, fears that the coronavirus pandemic will snow their concerns under. Yet, at the same time, COVID-19 constitutes an opportunity. This second part of the argument draws on crisis exploitation theory, which holds that political actors can manipulate a crisis to their advantage. Crises are not objective events but socially constructed phenomena that “are all in the eye of the beholder” (Boin et al. 2009: 83). The Christian right may, I venture, try to alter the meaning of COVID-19. If advocacy groups expand the pandemic’s interpretation beyond health to include religious and moral dimensions, they can convert what threatens their objectives into an opportunity to advance their agenda.

To explain precisely how actors engage in such crisis exploitation, I draw on framing theory. Scholars of social movements have outlined various tactics, or “frame alignment processes” (Snow et al. 1986) that movement organizations can employ to ensure that their understandings of social reality align with those of individuals. Frame extension is one such strategy. It entails depicting an organization’s “interests and frame(s) as extending beyond its primary interests to include issues and concerns that are presumed to be of importance to potential adherents” (Benford and Snow 2000: 625). By connecting its advocacy to the pandemic, the Christian right thus hopes to remain relevant. In other words, frame extension is a strategy through which movement organizations can increase the resonance of their agenda during a crisis.

This insight reinforces the common finding in the burgeoning literature on anti-gender politics that conservative organizations increasingly claim to act in the name of international norms such as decolonization, democracy, human rights, and sustainable development (Cupać and Ebetürk 2021; Evang 2022; Sanders and Jenkins 2022). To progressive actors, these efforts appear disingenuous and disconcerting. When anti-abortion activists, for example, argue that the right to life applies to the unborn child, they, in fact, undermine a woman’s reproductive rights. When anti-gender actors denounce international organizations’ defense of LGBTQ+ rights as a colonial project, they conveniently ignore that “many of the organizations that are

leading anti-gender coalition and movement building are based in the Global North” (McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023). Some feminist actors, therefore, use the label “anti-rights” actors to expose the anti-gender movement’s disingenuous turn to human rights language (Ipas 2023; Shameem 2021). Frame extension, when seen in this light, is a duplicitous strategy.

To examine this argument empirically, the article analyses over 200 digital communications of two advocacy organizations with a transnational presence: ADF International and the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam). This sample includes social media posts, news articles, and legal briefings published in the 2020-21 calendar years.

The article proceeds as follows. I first set up the theoretical framework, suggesting that advocacy organizations can use the strategy of frame extension to turn crises into opportunities. The following section discusses the study’s research design. Subsequently, the empirical analysis details how two organizations of the Christian right have sought to align the coronavirus pandemic, a health crisis that is *prima facie* unrelated to their core business, with their objectives. The conclusion summarizes the main argument and discusses the broader relevance of the findings.

TURNING THREATS INTO OPPORTUNITIES: ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS, CRISIS EXPLOITATION, AND FRAME EXTENSION

Understanding how crises spread across policy domains requires examining three fundamental theoretical mechanisms. First, drawing on agenda-setting studies of crises and focusing events, I suggest that a crisis in one issue area threatens the interests of actors working in other issue areas. Second, however, crisis exploitation theory teaches us that crises are not an unalloyed hazard; they also constitute opportunities that strategic actors may exploit. The third subsection then puts forward frame extension as a prominent tactic actors may employ to establish a connection between a crisis and their interests. The coronavirus pandemic serves as a critical case study throughout, illuminating how these theoretical insights operate in practice.

Agenda-Setting Theory: Crises as Threats

A crisis is a “breakdown of familiar symbolic frameworks legitimating the pre-existing sociopolitical order” (’t Hart 1993: 39). Crises, whether they are natural or human made, shock the system. They upend the usual way of governing societies, exposing both the inadequacies of existing policies and the incapacity of policymakers. Crises are often called focusing events in the literature on agenda-setting (Birkland 1997; Kingdon 2014). “By definition,” such an event “increases attention to a public issue or problem” (Birkland and DeYoung 2013: 177). The “focal power” of a crisis thus consists of its ability to monopolize the attention of policy elites and the general public (Birkland 1997: 11).

Herein lies the problematic nature of crises: because they can be all-consuming, crises threaten actors’ ability to control or influence the policy agenda. Space on this agenda is finite. Even under normal circumstances, groups compete for the attention of policymakers. Crises exacerbate this competitive dynamic: they stack the deck against actors who advocate for policy change in unrelated areas. As John Kingdon (2014: 96) put it, “sometimes crises come along that simply bowl over everything standing in the way of prominence on the agenda.” Not only do focusing events become policymakers’ top priority, but they may also motivate a reallocation of resources. Once COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, “the immediate expectation” was, therefore, “that social movements were destined to enter into a period of latency, or at the very least, invisibility” (della Porta 2022: 1). In short, crises disrupt the policy agenda.

This disruption is especially threatening for specialized interest groups. The literature on population ecology connects the survival rates of organizations to the environment within which they operate. “Fitness,” as Michael Hannan and John Freeman (1977: 937) argue, concerns “the probability that a given form of organization would persist in a certain environment.”

Adaptability becomes crucial to survival; organizations that manage to acclimate will prosper, whereas those unable or unwilling to respond to changes in the external environment will perish. Generalist organizations typically prove more adaptable than specialist organizations (Baum and Singh 1994). They are less dependent on niche funding streams and have a greater ability to rebrand themselves and restructure their activities in response to external developments (Dupuy et al. 2015; Gray and Lowery 1997). Specialist organizations, on the other hand, “are vulnerable when their issue-area suddenly disappears” (Dupuy et al. 2015: 427). Crises tend to provoke such a disappearance; they constitute focusing events that upset the policy agenda, shifting policymakers’ attention away from unrelated issues (Alexandrova 2015).

Crises threaten the interests of nongovernmental actors in several ways. First and most importantly, they affect who policy elites want to speak to. Decision makers may require crisis-related information and expertise. Alternatively, they may want to reach out to actors who were hit especially hard by the crisis for legitimacy reasons. Advocacy groups whose work is unrelated to the crisis will, in both cases, see their access to policymakers reduced significantly. Indeed, Wiebke Junk et al. (2022) found that organizations’ “affectedness” by the outbreak of COVID-19 shaped access to policymakers in ten European democracies. Unaffected interests lost out. Second, crises may increase the competition for policy attention. Interest groups mobilize in response to the government’s attention to policy issues (Leech et al. 2005). When crises upend the policy agenda, this subsequently influences the profile of interest groups that populate decision-making centers. Timothy LaPira (2014), for example, notes how the events of 9/11 sparked an influx of new interest groups. Existing interest groups suddenly faced increasing competition for policymakers’ attention. Lastly, crises may affect existing patterns of interest mobilization by increasing public salience. Public salience turns quiet politics into noisy politics, decreasing interest groups’ influence over policymakers (Culpepper 2010). The financial crisis of 2008, for instance, constrained the lobbying behavior of corporate actors in the EU (Kastner 2018; Keller 2018)

Agenda-setting theory thus treats crises as threats. This diminishes nonstate actors’ ability to shape the policy agenda. At the same time, however, these actors need not stand idly by as policymakers shift their attention to the crisis. The literature on population ecology already underscores the importance of adaptability. A different literature suggests that actors can exploit crises for their own gain.

Crisis Exploitation Theory: Crises as Opportunities

Crisis exploitation theory emphasizes the opportunities that sudden disruptions of the status quo may bring. Crises may overwhelm actors, but these actors retain agency. “Disruptions of societal routines and expectations,” as Arjen Boin et al. (2009: 82) note, “open up political space for actors inside and outside government to redefine issues, propose policy innovations and organizational reforms, gain popularity and strike at opponents.” Crises open windows for policy reform (Keeler 1993). Others have conceived crises, including pandemics, as critical junctures that trigger transformation within social movements, “challenging them to adapt to new conditions and pushing them to develop alternative practices and ideas” (della Porta 2022: 1; Tarrow 2021).

Yet, crises are not objective developments but open to multiple interpretations. This semantic ambiguity inspires “framing contests” (Boin et al. 2008, 2009). Different actors craft their own narratives about unexpected developments—their origins, dimensions, and policy implications—and subsequently vie to have their framing of these events accepted as the dominant narrative. Some actors may interpret these unforeseen events as a crisis, whereas others object to this label (Boin et al. 2009: 85; Brändström and Kuipers 2003).

Of course, these narratives are not neutral. Actors frame the crisis in ways that benefit themselves. For political actors, these narratives often revolve around laying blame and taking credit. Governmental leaders, for example, frequently engage in blame avoidance by arguing

that the crisis was unavoidable or by shifting the blame onto other actors (Baekkeskov and Rubin 2017; Brändström and Kuipers 2003). Such dynamics are well-known in the European Union, with member-state governments shifting the blame for unwelcome developments to Brussels (Kriegmair et al. 2022). Blame attribution was also a popular tactic during the coronavirus pandemic, both among governmental actors (Hinterleitner et al. 2022; Kreuder-Sonnen 2018; Raza 2021) and the political opposition (Greer et al. 2022; Zahariadis et al. 2020). Eager to avoid blame, some political leaders even decided to withhold information.

The blame game, however, only captures one dimension of the narrative. Framing contests also concern policy solutions (Boin and 't Hart 2022). Actors want to ensure that the steps taken to address the pandemic, as well as the lessons drawn, match their objectives. This holds for actors both inside and outside of government. Concerning the former, scholars have observed how the pandemic has reinforced authoritarian developments across the globe. Political leaders faced an incentive for “crisification,” characterized by “permanent firefighting” as opposed to democratic deliberation (Truchlewski et al. 2021: 1354). Some autocrats used the pandemic as an opportunity to sideline their political opponents by declaring a state of emergency (Guasti 2020; Stasavage 2020). Even many democratic governments—and academic institutions!—embraced controversial surveillance technologies (Greitens 2020). Therefore, Amanda Edgell et al. (2021) speak of “pandemic backsliding,” as political leaders saw COVID-19 as an opportunity to suspend or abolish democratic standards.

Although the literature predominantly analyzes how policy elites enter into framing contests, there is reason to believe that advocacy groups also treat crises as opportunities. Like other political actors, they can “scan their horizons for “problems” to promote their own preferred “solutions,” and may seek to appropriate critical incidents of various kinds for precisely that purpose” (Boin et al. 2009: 83). COVID-19 confirms this expectation. Geoffrey Pleyers (2020: 303), for example, describes the pandemic as a “battlefield for alternative futures”; social movement organizations compete with each other to shape the way policymakers and the general public make sense of COVID-19. Kate Hunt (2022), in turn, finds that pro-abortion rights organizations in Canada, Ireland, Northern Ireland, and the United States treated the pandemic as a discursive opportunity structure to further their own advocacy.

That said, for many advocacy groups, connecting a crisis to their endeavors is no easy feat. The connection between the pandemic and abortion, for instance, is not immediately apparent. How, then, can advocates transform crises from threats into opportunities? I argue that the answer lies in a particular framing strategy: frame extension.

Frame Extension: Turning Threats into Opportunities

Frames, following Goffman’s (1974: 21) seminal account, are “schemata of interpretation” that enable actors “to locate, perceive, identify, and label a seemingly infinite number of concrete occurrences.” In other words, they are tools with which actors can make sense of the world around them. Scholars have identified various strategies through which social movement organizations seek to align their ideas with those of individuals, including frame bridging, amplification, and transformation (Benford and Snow 2000; Snow et al. 2019). However, a fourth strategy is particularly relevant for my purposes: frame extension.

Frame extension comes into play when an organization believes that its own agenda appears to be disconnected from the concerns of potential supporters. Its activities thus fail to strike a chord. Frame extension may enable advocacy groups to reach those would-be adherents unresponsive to their usual frames. For David Snow et al. (1986: 472), this strategy entails a concerted effort by a social movement organization “to extend the boundaries of its primary framework to encompass interests or points of view that are incidental to its primary objectives but of considerable salience to potential adherents.” They note, for instance, how the peace movement used rock-and-roll and punk music to inspire “otherwise uninterested individuals” to participate in disarmament protests (Snow et al. 1986: 472). Other scholars have detailed how anti-abortion activists in the United States sought to win over a new constituency by

suggesting that their objectives were not merely pro-life but also pro-woman (Rose 2011; Trumpy 2014). In a similar vein, Kate Hunt and Amanda Friesen (2021) find that movement organizations on both sides of the Irish abortion debate sometimes used novel frames that specifically targeted men.

Frame extension can be especially useful in times of crisis. If a movement organization's conventional frames already lack resonance in ordinary times, this problem will only be exacerbated when new developments suddenly preoccupy potential adherents. Crises then not only prevent the organization from winning over new backers, but they may even threaten to undercut the existing support base. Frame extension may remedy this problem if advocates can successfully connect their movement's goals to the crisis.

While establishing such a connection can be a challenge, preliminary evidence suggests that some movement organizations have been able to reframe their objectives through the prism of COVID-19. Hunt's (2022) study mentioned above on abortion activism is a case in point. She finds that anti-abortion organizations initially ignored or downplayed the pandemic but gradually came to see it as an opportunity to reframe their longstanding objective of shutting down abortion clinics. Pro-choice organizations, meanwhile, emphasized the importance of facilitating telemedicine abortion during a pandemic when traveling across (inter)state borders. Similarly, youth climate activists in Cyprus folded COVID-19 into their pre-existing "fears and anxieties about a livable future" (Christou et al. 2023: 195). The empirical analysis will reveal similar attempts at frame extension by transnational organizations of the Christian right.

In short, by employing frame extension as a strategy, a movement organization emphasizes frames that are not central to its ideology but intended to resonate with target audiences. While advocacy groups may initially believe that crises threaten their interests, this article suggests that frame extension can be a useful strategy for transforming this threat into an opportunity. Frame extension, in other words, holds the key to crisis exploitation.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This article examines the Christian right's response to the coronavirus pandemic. I adopt Doris Buss and Didi Herman's (2003: 18) definition of the Christian right as a network of organizations "that have tended to form coalitions, both domestic and international, around an orthodox Christian vision and a defense of the traditional nuclear family formation." Scholars have also suggested other labels for actors who promote traditional family values and oppose the specter of "gender ideology." The terms "pro-family movement" (Fetner 2011) and "anti-gender campaigns" (Kuhar and Paternotte 2017), for example, appear to be agnostic about the religious orientation of the participants. Alternatively, the concept of the "Religious right" leaves the door open for the participation by non-Christian actors (Fetner 2008; Mos 2018). Authors have described such cross-denominational efforts to thwart gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights as an "unholy alliance" and a "Baptist-burqa network" (Bob 2012; Chappell 2006). That said, most scholars continue to speak of the "Christian right" to capture the well-established movement for traditionalist values in the United States. Because the organizations that I look at are Christian in outlook and American in origin, I follow this scholarly convention.

More concretely, I examine how two organizations responded to the pandemic: ADF International and the Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam). The two organizations share many similarities. They are among the most prominent, endowed, and influential exponents of the Christian right. Both have American roots but engage in transnational advocacy, focusing on international organizations. The organizations are both explicitly Christian-conservative in their outlook: whereas "fidelity to the teachings of the Church" is one of C-Fam's core values, ADF International requires its employees to sign a Statement of Faith in which they pledge "adherence to the inspired, infallible, inerrant, and authoritative Word of God in Scripture" (ADF International, n.d.; C-Fam, n.d.). At the same time, the case selection covers two different denominations: evangelical (ADF International) and Catholic (C-Fam).¹

Moreover, the organizations engage in faith-based action; they parlay their religious beliefs into a traditionalist worldview. C-Fam (2022) requires its staff members to “demonstrate their commitment to the protection of life from the moment of conception to natural death and the natural family founded on the union of a man and a woman.” ADF International sees itself “at the forefront of defending religious freedom, the sanctity of life, and marriage and family worldwide” (Van De Walle and Kuby 2022: 56). The Southern Poverty Law Center (2024) classifies both organizations as anti-LGBTQ+ hate groups. Because they strive towards the same values, it should come as no surprise that C-Fam and ADF International often work together, including in their attempts to discredit the work of the Southern Poverty Law Center (Perkins 2017).

Importantly, although this article sees ADF International and C-Fam as two of the most prominent members of the transnational Christian right, it treats them as stand-alone cases. The objective is not to develop and test a generalizable argument but to accurately capture how two high-profile Christian right groups responded to the coronavirus pandemic.

To capture these responses, I conduct a framing analysis of the organizations’ online communications on COVID-19. I used three keywords to identify relevant documents on the websites of the three groups: COVID, corona*, and pandemic.² The analysis is limited to the 2020-21 calendar years. The data collection yielded 210 relevant documents, of which 62 belonged to ADF International and 148 to C-Fam. I filtered out documents that did not concern COVID-19 or only mentioned the coronavirus in passing. I also only included English-language articles.³ The documents include original articles as well as publications in other outlets to which the organizations redirected their readers, including conservative news outlets like the *Daily Signal* and the *Washington Examiner*. Representatives of ADF International and C-Fam authored most of these articles. The appendix provides a complete overview of all documents.

To find evidence of frame extension, I compare the organizations’ framing of COVID-19 with the arguments that these organizations typically used about international organizations *before* the pandemic. This part of the analysis relies on purposively sampled blog posts, legal briefings, news reports, and white papers. The two parts of the analysis will enable me to demonstrate how the two organizations’ discussion of the pandemic extended their preexisting framing of international organizations.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS: THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT’S EXPLOITATION OF THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

As COVID-19 spread, policymakers and practitioners worldwide invoked Winston Churchill’s famous exhortation never to let a good crisis go to waste. Not all actors, however, found themselves well-positioned to take advantage of the pandemic. Organizations of the Christian right had spent years defending their conception of “pro-life” and “pro-family” values. A global health crisis and the economic havoc that it wreaked, were an unwelcome distraction from this traditionalist campaign.

Yet, the Christian right adapted rapidly. ADF International and C-Fam extended their usual frames to the pandemic. The former integrated COVID-19 into its advocacy for the freedom of religion, arguing in particular that “worship bans” violated the rights of believers. C-Fam, on the other hand, argued that COVID-19 reinforced the urgency of its longstanding fight against the efforts of international organizations and their secularist henchmen to promote abortion.

ADF International: COVID-19 and the Campaign to #LetUSWorship

ADF International is the Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) international outgrowth. Prominent U.S. evangelicals founded the organization in 1994 as the Alliance Defense Fund, initially aiming to fund and coordinate the defense of Christian conservative values. Over time,

however, the advocacy group became active on the legal battlefield. This motivated a name change in 2012. As Alan Sears, the organization's founder, explained, "Defending Freedom" communicates the essence of what the alliance does: legally defending and advocating for religious freedom" (ADF 2012). ADF quickly established itself as a linchpin of the Christian right within the United States. Observers describe it as "the largest and most heavily resourced New Christian right public interest law firm" (Hollis-Brusky and Wilson 2020: 3); and "the leading legal network of the Christian right's evangelical wing" (Clarkson 2013). The organization concurs with these portrayals while emphasizing the global scale of its operations. ADF (n.d.) calls itself the "world's largest legal organization committed to protecting religious freedom, free speech, marriage and family, parental rights, and the sanctity of life."

ADF International embodies this global reach. The international advocacy branch was created in 2010. Today, the organization operates seven global offices and a multimillion-dollar budget (Provost and Milburn 2017). Much of its advocacy is directed at leading international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and the EU. However, ADF International also monitors developments and engages in direct litigation at the national level. The latter became especially apparent during the pandemic, when, as we will see, the organization decried the steps some countries took to halt the spread of the coronavirus.

To make sense of this activism, however, it is essential first to understand how ADF International framed its activities before COVID-19. The organization advertises the defense of religious freedom through legal means as its core business. The throughline in this legal advocacy is the allegation that Christians are a vulnerable minority who face discrimination, oppression, and rights violations across the globe. This exemplifies what Ruth Wodak (2015) calls the "perpetrator-victim reversal": as they stand accused of discriminating based on gender and sexuality, organizations of the Christian right's claim that they are the true victims of discrimination. As Hannah Dick (2021) argues, the "rhetoric of Christian persecution" underpins ADF's activities. This rhetoric is used explicitly in defense of Christians who are imprisoned, tortured, or even subjected to religious "genocide" (Ochab 2016). ADF International (2021e) consequently created a "Global Religious Freedom Team" "in response to the growing efforts of authoritarian regimes to stamp out Christianity and other minority religions." When it comes to democratic countries, the narrative centers instead on discrimination against Christians. ADF International reasons that anticonversion laws, hate speech laws, and equal treatment legislation all run roughshod over the rights of Christians (e.g., Coleman 2016; Fischer 2018; Portaru and Clarke 2020). Paul Coleman, ADF International's executive director, summarizes his organization's vision as follows:

There can be nothing more fundamental than our freedom to live out our faith. And today, we've never seen greater challenges to this freedom. ADF International sees these challenges and seeks to stand up for people who are under pressure as they seek to live out their faith in public life. And we stand for those people in courtrooms and at the highest institutions of power (ADF International 2018).

Religious freedom serves as a master frame, which ADF International uses to craft a narrative of victimhood.

The COVID-19 outbreak threatened to disrupt this narrative. To be sure, ADF International had previously addressed the topic of healthcare in its advocacy. But its efforts had always centered on classic "pro-life" concerns such as abortion, euthanasia, and surrogacy. None of the alliance's news reports, white papers, *amicus curiae* briefs, or court cases had ever dealt with infectious diseases. The pandemic would, therefore, appear to be an unwelcome distraction for an advocacy group preoccupied with religious liberty.

Yet, ADF International rapidly unfurled a strategy of frame extension. Merely a month after the World Health Organization (WHO) classified COVID-19 as a pandemic, the organization connected the coronavirus to its advocacy. Thus, Robert Clarke (2020) used the international response to COVID-19, which had "shown much of the best of humanity,

particularly in the way that communities around the world have supported and cared for the vulnerable,” to reinforce his organization’s campaign against assisted suicide. ADF International similarly folded the coronavirus into its anti-abortion activism. Like C-Fam (see below), it argued that international organizations used the pandemic as a pretext for increasing “abortion funding.” These measures, as the organization’s spokesperson at the UN argued, not only “rob the innocent of life” but also “in no way fortify us with the physical and spiritual nourishment that we need to survive the pandemic” (Koren 2020). In India, where ADF International had long addressed the issue of violence against Christians, the organization provided humanitarian aid to communities in lockdown. Staff members were committed “to serve others in need just as how they serve our Christian brothers and sisters in times of persecution” (ADF International 2020). The pandemic thus did not interrupt ADF International’s advocacy; instead, the organization drew parallels between the health crisis and its agenda.

The #LetUsWorship campaign provides the clearest example of frame extension. Early in the pandemic, senior counsel Adina Portaru (2020) already warned that “short-term precautionary measures” risked becoming “long-lasting encroachments on the fundamental rights that are the core of our collective humanity.” ADF International argued that freedom of religion was especially fragile during the pandemic. It drew inspiration from the activism of a Christian musician and worship leader, Seun Feucht, who started the Let Us Worship movement—effectively a series of nationwide concerts that deliberately defied lockdown measures—in the United States (Dias and Graham 2022). ADF International adopted the movement’s name and took its defiance of lockdowns in a legal direction. Under the hashtag #LetUsWorship,⁴ the organization protested alleged violations of religious freedom from Chile to Uganda and Russia to Scotland.

In particular, the campaign took issue with “blanket bans on worship” (ADF International 2021a). Under international law, the freedom of religion includes the right to manifest one’s faith, whether in public or private. ADF International, however, believed that many governments trampled upon this right during the pandemic. The Scottish government, for example, forced all places of worship to close. A campaign video on Ireland’s ban on public worship opened by noting that “those who risk attending a service could face fines or jail time” (ADF International 2021d). In Uganda, before they were forced to close altogether, churches had to have trained medical personnel and security guards on site (ADF International 2021b).

ADF International questioned both the necessity and the proportionality of these actions. Governments often distinguished between essential and nonessential businesses and service providers in designing lockdown measures. ADF International argued that churches and other religious institutions should have been treated no differently than grocery stores. As Robert Clarke, Deputy Director for Advocacy, explained: “For people of faith, worshipping together can be as important as receiving food and water” (ADF International 2021a). “Unlike attending a bank or a factory or bicycle repair shop, freedom of worship is a fundamental right” (ADF UK 2022b). If anything, COVID-19 heightened the significance of places of worship. ADF International assisted Canon Tom White, a Scottish priest who argued that the pandemic marked his parishioners’ “hour of need”; churches needed to be open “to offer them comfort, to offer them solace, to offer them hope” (ADF International 2021c). The #LetUsWorship campaign argued that governments’ unwillingness to allow churches to provide such support violated religious freedom. As Tom White concluded, “It’s a fundamental and inalienable human right that we enjoy freedom of religion and belief and that is actually what is being challenged here” (ADF International 2021c).

Moreover, ADF International extended the rhetoric of discrimination to the campaign. The Ugandan case, for example, supposedly “mirrors [a] global trend,” as pandemic restrictions were “shown to discriminate against people of faith” (ADF International 2021b). ADF International also argued that Scotland’s lockdown measures were discriminatory because other parts of the United Kingdom allowed churches to remain open. As the priest above complained, “there will be those asking why the Scottish government has denied the people of Scotland that

which our English neighbors enjoy” (ADF International 2021c). The #LetUsWorship campaign thus drew on a well-developed discourse of contention.

Notably, despite its consistent focus on religious freedom writ large, ADF International had seldom emphasized the freedom to worship before COVID-19. The #LetUsWorship campaign thus demonstrates the alliance’s ability to apply its master frame of religious freedom to the pandemic. As such, the organization used frame extension as a strategy to stay relevant when policymakers and the general public alike worried more about public health than about those topics—e.g., Christian persecution, pro-life issues, conscientious objection—that defined ADF International’s policy agenda. For Paul Coleman, the belief that governments “sacrificed religious freedom quicker and more greatly than some other areas of life” was, therefore, emblematic of a culture that was increasingly hostile to Christians even in pre-pandemic times (Turley 2020).

C-Fam: Fighting ‘Abortion Overreach’ in Pandemic Times

Whereas ADF International relies on legal argumentation, the Center for Family and Human Rights adopts a more confrontational approach. C-Fam (n.d.) was founded in 1997 to “defend life and family at international institutions.” Its current name, however, obscures both the center’s religious background and its focus on “pro-life” issues. Concerning the former, C-Fam was originally known as the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute. The center enjoys close ties to the Holy See. Minutes from its first meeting make clear that one of the organization’s “major mandates will be to act as a real resource and information office to the Holy See delegation.” At the same time, staff members were instructed to “be discrete [sic] about Holy See Connection” (Kissling and O’Brien 2001). The name change facilitates this discretion. Moreover, the name, with its generic reference to family and human rights, downplays the center’s position as a key player within the transnational “pro-life” movement. C-Fam originated as a secret derivative of Human Life International after this major anti-abortion organization was denied consultative status at the UN because of its intolerant and aggressive brand of activism (Kissling and O’Brien 2001). C-Fam, meanwhile, attained such consultative status in 2014.

Where ADF International uses religious freedom as a master frame, C-Fam is primarily concerned with “pro-life” issues. Its vision is to preserve “international law by discrediting socially radical policies at the United Nations and other international institutions” (C-Fam, n.d.). The foremost of these “radical” policies are reproductive rights. The center’s central contention is that international organizations promote abortion and other measures of population control. C-Fam has, for instance, accused the UN Population Fund of launching an “assault on the world’s peoples” (Sylva 2002); scolded UNICEF for embracing “the ideology of radical feminism” (Sylva 2003); exclaimed that the World Bank is “staffed by numerous population control advocates who engage in policies that offend large numbers of people all around the world” (Essig 2007: 36); and vilified the UN’s treaty-monitoring bodies for attempting to create a right to abortion “by stealth” (Sylva and Yoshihara 2007). C-Fam, in short, sees international organizations as key drivers of a pro-abortion agenda.

The coronavirus would seem to be unrelated to this agenda. Yet, C-Fam managed to integrate it into its activism seamlessly. The pandemic raised the profile of the World Health Organization, a UN agency that the center had long criticized. In a 2010 white paper titled “The World Health Organization’s Abortion Agenda,” C-Fam labeled the WHO “one of the world’s top abortion research and advocacy institutions.” It accused the agency of having adopted a “special agenda to train abortionists, conduct abortion experiments on pregnant women, and promote the highly controversial idea that access to “safe” abortion is a human right” (Essig 2010: 5). Ten years later, C-Fam published an updated version of the white paper. The new report, titled “The World Health Organization’s Abortion Overreach,” was written while the coronavirus spread across the globe (Oas 2020). The core message echoed that of the original publication: the WHO, largely because of its dependence on “the special interests of donors,

powerful lobbies, and entrenched bureaucratic interests,” has consistently “promoted the liberalization of abortion laws” (Oas 2020: 2). Although its contents are mainly unrelated to the pandemic, the report provides ample evidence of frame extension.

Take, for example, the way that Susan Yoshihara, the director of C-Fam’s International Organizations Research Group, begins her foreword to the report:

In April 2020, President Donald J. Trump halted funding to the World Health Organization for mishandling the novel coronavirus crisis, the virus that causes COVID-19. In the aftermath of that decision, policy analysts focused on ways to reform the WHO, circumvent it, or scuttle it with a view to creating a new organization. In this International Organizations Research Group White Paper, Rebecca Oas, Ph.D. examines an often overlooked department within [sic] WHO that has had outsized influence in promoting a particular agenda, widespread legal and accessible abortion (Yoshihara in Oas 2020: 5).

The connection between the pandemic and the WHO’s alleged pro-abortion agenda is tentative at best. Instead, this excerpt shows how C-Fam tried to exploit others’ criticism of the agency’s management of COVID-19 to further its efforts to discredit the WHO. This framing is evident throughout the report. The author, Rebecca Oas, notes how “even before the pandemic [...] there were warning signs” regarding the WHO’s performance. She cites a critical commentary on the role that a lack of independence played in the WHO’s failure to respond effectively to the pandemic, published in the left-leaning *The Atlantic*, to support her argument that “the WHO has long exhibited [...] a dangerous tendency to parrot the talking points of donors and its entrenched bureaucracy—with devastating effects for women and children” (Oas 2020: 1). She continues, “At a time when the WHO has been in the global spotlight for its lack of independence in responding to COVID-19, it is useful to examine the agency’s track record more broadly,” especially concerning its “overreach in promoting abortion” (Oas 2020: 39). The report proceeds by framing the widespread critiques of the WHO’s pandemic management as an invaluable opportunity to right the ship. As Oas (2020: 39) concludes, “there is no better time to restore the WHO’s credibility and independence.”

In other publications, C-Fam took the argument one step further. It argued that UN bodies, including the WHO, were using the pandemic to push abortion and other reproductive health services. As such, the pandemic continued a trend of “systemic and unlawful abortion promotion by UN agencies, the Secretariat, and other UN entities” (C-Fam 2020). The center claimed, for instance, that the UN’s emergency response plan to COVID-19 “echoes the abortion industry’s concerns” (Gennarini 2020a). The WHO, in particular, stood accused of “using the pandemic as an opportunity to promote abortion as an ‘essential’ health service” (Gennarini 2020b). Because the WHO peddled “abortion as humanitarian relief,” C-Fam even called upon President Trump to withdraw from the WHO (Gennarini 2020b).

There is an irony to C-Fam’s approach to the coronavirus. While the center accused UN actors of exploiting the outbreak to advance a pro-abortion agenda, this very accusation reveals how the organization itself made creative use of COVID-19. The pandemic itself was irrelevant to C-Fam’s agenda. Instead, as the report on the WHO demonstrated, the center criticized international organizations’ handling of the coronavirus to continue its efforts to delegitimize these actors. C-Fam’s publications on the pandemic, in short, provide evidence of frame extension.

CONCLUSION

This article has argued that transnational advocacy organizations can take advantage of international crises that *prima facie* are unconnected to their core business. The discursive strategy of frame extension holds the key to this crisis exploitation. Crises are threats to advocacy groups because, as agenda-setting theory shows, their “focal power” eats up policymakers’ attention and resources (Birkland 1997: 11). But by applying their usual argumentation to these major

upheavals, no matter how tentative these framing efforts may be, advocacy organizations suggest that their agenda and policy vision remain relevant.

This is precisely how the transnational Christian right adapted to the coronavirus pandemic. ADF International's advocacy revolves typically around the master frame of religious freedom, with a strong emphasis on the persecution of and discrimination against Christians. C-Fam, on the other hand, consistently defends a "pro-life" and "pro-family" agenda at international organizations. These conventional frames lack obvious relevance during a global health crisis. Yet, both advocacy groups extended their frames to the pandemic. Even though it had only occasionally addressed the freedom of worship as a pillar of religious liberty before COVID-19, ADF International launched the #LetUsWorship campaign to protest church closures across the globe. The claim that "religious freedom was a collateral casualty worldwide" summarizes the organization's frame extension (ADF UK 2022a: 14). C-Fam meanwhile seized the pandemic as an opportunity to continue its smear campaign against international organizations. As the WHO came under fire for its response to the coronavirus, the center sought to further weaken the UN agency's reputation by accusing it of "abortion overreach" (Oas 2020). C-Fam simply extended its previous framing of global governance, and the WHO in particular, to the pandemic. This finding shows that conservative actors are not only able to use the progressive language of human rights to their advantage, something that extant studies of the anti-gender movement already demonstrate (McEwen and Narayanaswamy 2023; Sanders and Jenkins 2021), but also that these actors can successfully transform health crises from a threat into an opportunity. Future scholarship could more systematically compare and contrast the Christian right's response to the pandemic.

This article's argument may apply to other subgroups of civil society who, like the Christian right, risked being marginalized by the pandemic. I expect that any actor whose advocacy did not directly touch upon the spread of infectious diseases saw COVID-19 as a threat to their interests. All these actors, therefore, had an incentive to exploit the crisis through creative framing strategies. It is thus worthwhile to examine whether the argument holds up beyond the Christian right. Similarly, future studies could explore how transnational advocacy groups have tried to exploit crises other than the coronavirus pandemic. C-Fam, for example, seized upon the global financial crisis, and its associated budget cuts to suggest that international organizations should stop funding "fake civil society" (Von Krempach 2012). This plea extended the center's recurrent framing of international organizations as "sock puppets" of progressive nonstate actors—what C-Fam often refers to as the "abortion industry," "radical feminists," and the "homo-lobby" (Von Krempach 2012).

Last, this article's main argument may apply to state actors as well as to nonstate actors. Existing studies already show that political leaders across the globe, especially in authoritarian settings, took advantage of the pandemic to push through controversial and undemocratic policies (e.g., Barnes and Makinda 2021; Stasavage 2021), a trend that is labeled "pandemic backsliding" (Edgell et al. 2021). The WHO's alleged abortion overreach thus finds an echo in some decisionmakers' "executive overreach" (Scheppele and Pozen 2020). While the crisis exploitation itself is well-documented, we still know little about the discursive legitimization of these exploitative policies. Therefore, a fruitful avenue for future research would be to analyze the framing strategies, including frame extension, that state actors used to justify restrictive measures during the pandemic.

APPENDIX: DOCUMENTS ANALYZED

ADF International:

- 31 January 2020, “Christians ‘Persecuted Even after Death’ as China Cracks Down on Religious Funerals: Report”
- 9 April 2020, “Indian Christians Experience ‘Brief Respite from Violence’ over Easter Due to Corona Measures”
- 14 April 2020, “What Covid-19 Has Revealed about Euthanasia”
- 16 April 2020, “Coronavirus Measures Underline the Importance of Protecting the Vulnerable”
- 17 April 2020, “Indian Lawyers Become Aid Workers as Poorest Face Humanitarian Crisis”
- 28 April 2020, “Russian Authorities Prohibit Use of Church Building”
- 30 April 2020, “Russian Pastor May Be Forced to Tear Down His House for Hosting Religious Services”
- 8 May 2020, “(Newsweek) Coronavirus Funding Is Used to Promote Abortions by the United Nations”
- 8 May 2020, “Keeping Churches Open in Chile”
- 13 May 2020, “The NHS’s Contract-Tracing App is a Step Towards Mass Surveillance”
- 15 May 2020, “What to Watch as the Coronavirus Pandemic Continues”
- 19 May 2020, “Religious Freedom in the Top Ten European Countries Impacted by COVID-19”
- 19 May 2020, “The United States Stands for Life against the United Nations”
- 27 May 2020, “COVID-19 in Chile: Will All Religious Gatherings Be Banned?”
- 28 May 2020, “DIY Abortions Amidst a Health Crisis Is Anything But ‘Female Empowerment’”
- 28 May 2020, “On the Spectrum of Discrimination: Autistic People Have Been Asked to Sign ‘DNRs’ During the Pandemic”
- 29 May 2020, “The COVID-19 Response in Vietnam Harms Religious Minorities”
- 2 June 2020, “The WHO’s COVID-19 Response Plan for Ecuador Harms the Unborn”
- 9 June 2020, “Nepalese Police Arrest Pastor for Preaching about COVID-19”
- 13 June 2020, “ADF International Executive Director Reflects on Religious Freedom in Europe Today”
- 15 June 2020, “Christian Teenager in India Murdered for His Faith”
- 22 June 2020, “Censoring Information Is Not the Answer to a Public Health Crisis”
- 17 July 2020, “Covid-Endangered Women in Poor Countries Need Better Medicine, Not Risky Abortion Drugs”
- 24 July 2020, “UN Human Rights Council Exploits COVID-19 Pandemic to Support Funding for Abortion”
- 5 August 2020, “Chile: COVID-19 Arrests of Pastors Ruled Unconstitutional”
- 18 August 2020, “GOP Congressmen Ask the US to Defund UN Groups That Promote Abortion”
- 31 August 2020, “Response to the Questionnaire of the UN Working Group on Discrimination against Women and Girls”
- 31 August 2020, “UN Attempts to Exploit COVID-19 to Push Abortion”
- 12 October 2020, “The United Nations Continues Its Abortion Advocacy”
- 12 November 2020, “One Attack Per Day on Christians in India”
- 9 December 2020, “A Hard Christmas for Women Around the World”
- 23 December 2020, “Court Out: Court Delays and Backlogs Gave the Government Wide Margins of Authority During Covid-19”
- 23 December 2020, “Africa’s Pandemic: A Gateway to Neocolonialism” [Video]
- 17 February 2021, “LET US WORSHIP: Scottish Government Has Less Than a Week to Respond to New Legal Challenge on Church Closures”
- 17 February 2021, “Glasgow Priest Takes Legal Action Against Ministers to Stop UK Divide on Lockdown Right to Worship”
- 18 February 2021, “The Times – Priest Sues for Right to Reopen Churches in Lockdown”
- 18 February 2021, “Canon Tom White – Let Us Worship” [YouTube Video]
- 24 February 2021, “LET US WORSHIP: Catholic Priest to Join Other Faith Leaders in Scottish Church Ban Challenge”
- 4 March 2021, “Catholic Priest Joins Legal Action Against Government over Church Closures”
- 10 March 2021, “Scottish Government Announces Concessions as Legal Challenge to Worship Ban Set to Begin”
- 18 March 2021, “The Right to Protest in the UK Has Been Under Threat Since Long Before COVID-19”
- 24 March 2021, “Let Us Worship: Churches Rejoice as Worship Ban Declared Unlawful”
- 24 March 2021, “Open Doors: Court Declares Worship Ban Unlawful”
- 25 March 2021, “Why Christians in Scotland Are Breathing a Sigh of Relief”
- 29 March 2021 “Chilean Supreme Court Rules Worship Ban Discriminatory”
- 30 April 2021, “Let Us Worship: Ireland” [YouTube Video]
- 12 May 2021, “Paul Coleman: Cum a devenit Covid 19 pretextul îngrădirii libertății noastre religioase? | TVR” [Video]
- 1 April 2021, “Worship Ban in Ireland – Doors Remained Closed over Easter”
- 30 April 2021, “‘A Critical Movement for the Future of Faith in Ireland’: Court Challenge Must Continue as Ireland Announces Partial Lifting of Worship Ban”
- 4 June 2021, “Glasgow Priest Overturns Blanket Ban on Churches: #LetUsWorship”
- 6 June 2021, “‘A Critical Movement for the Future of Faith in Ireland’: #LetUsWorship”
- 6 June 2021, “How the Irish, and Many Others, Lost Their Religious Freedom to COVID Restrictions”
- 5 August 2021, “LET US WORSHIP: Legal Challenge Filed in Uganda to Overturn ‘Draconian’ Covid-19 Worship Ban”
- 6 August 2021, “‘Let us worship’: Church, Muslim sue Ugandan gov’t over ‘draconian’ COVID-19 worship ban”
- 9 August 2021, “In One of the Most Christian Countries on Earth, Everyone Is Banned from Church”
- 1 September 2021, “Mozambique (38th Session)”
- 8 September 2021, “LET US WORSHIP: Faith Representatives Turn to Uganda’s Constitutional Court to Lift Worship Ban”
- 27 September 2021, “AVISO: Webinar – The Forgotten Christian Minorities in Myanmar”
- 30 September 2021, “As Churches Reopen, Ugandan Faith Groups Recommit to Challenging Summer Worship Ban”

- 5 October 2021, "Let Us Worship: Geneva"
- 12 October 2021, "Europe's Top Court to Rule on Covid-19 Worship Ban Challenges"
- 19 October 2021, "Challenging Uganda's Worship Ban: #LetUsWorship"

Center for Family and Human Rights (C-Fam):

- 5 March 2020, "UN Cancels Women's Conference Over Coronavirus Fears"
- 9 March 2020, "The Social and Legal Challenges That Fuel the Trafficking of Women and Children"
- 12 March 2020, "Empty Halls, No Abortion Language, Frustrates Feminists at UN Women's Conference"
- 12 March 2020, "Will Abortion Fight Overshadow Food Security Agenda at Upcoming UN Population Commission?"
- 17 March 2020, "Changing the Status of People with Down Syndrome for Good: Mothers, Families and Professionals Laying the Foundation for the Future"
- 18 March 2020, "The Many Harms Coming from Abortion after Cairo and Beijing"
- 26 March 2020, "Abortion Groups Exploit Coronavirus Pandemic"
- 1 April 2020, "Public Health Research at the Service of Political Correctness"
- 2 April 2020, "Abortion 'Essential' in UN's \$2B COVID-19 Funding Plan"
- 2 April 2020, "UN Bureaucrats Undercut US State Pro-Life Laws"
- 9 April 2020, "Children's Charities Urge EU to Include Sexual and Reproductive Health in COVID-19 Response"
- 16 April 2020, "UN LGBT Expert Wants to Punish Religious Opponents"
- 21 April 2020, "The Coronavirus is Reminding Us of Biological Differences Between Men and Women"
- 23 April 2020, "The WHO Abortion Agenda: Another Reason to Defund It"
- 1 May 2020, "How Feminists Are Keeping Abortion on the UN Agenda During COVID-19 Shutdown"
- 1 May 2020, "State Department Keeps Funding WHO Regional Office that Violates US Law"
- 7 May 2020, "The World Health Organization's Abortion Overreach"
- 8 May 2020, "Governments Allow Do-it-Yourself Abortions During COVID-19 Crisis"
- 14 May 2020, "\$9B Global Aid Bill to Fight COVID Would Give Away US Sovereignty and Fund Abortion"
- 14 May 2020, "Pandemic and Geopolitics Will Collide at Next Week's World Health Assembly"
- 18 May 2020, "USAID Head to UN Secretary General: Stop Peddling Abortions as COVID-19 Relief"
- 21 May 2020, "Top UN Official Leaves Post, Charged with Phony Credentials"
- 21 May 2020, "World Health Assembly Includes Reproductive Health in COVID-19 Resolution, US Objects"
- 28 May 2020, "UN Expert Group: 'Sexual and Reproductive Health Services' Includes 'Safe, Legal Abortion'"
- 3 June 2020, "Breaking News: US Blocks UN Agreement Over Abortion"
- 4 June 2020, "Should the US Withdraw from the World Health Organization?"
- 4 June 2020, "US Blocks UN Agreement over Pro-Life Concerns, UN Member States Ignore"
- 12 June 2020, "Democrats Lash Out at USAID Head for Opposing Abortion in COVID-19 Response"
- 18 June 2020, "War Continues Between US and UN over Abortion Promotion in COVID Response"
- 18 June 2020, "WHO Urges Telemedicine and Do-it-Yourself Abortions During COVID Pandemic"
- 25 June 2020, "Trump Executive Order on Religious Freedom Could Help Abortion Fight"
- 8 July 2020, "UN Commission Fails Again over Abortion and Anti-Sovereignty Language; Kenya Splinters African Group"
- 8 July 2020, "US Submits Notice of Withdrawal from WHO"
- 16 July 2020, "Democrats Pack Overseas Funding Bill to Benefit Abortion Groups"
- 17 July 2020, "Secretary Pompeo Says American Rights Tradition Is Under Assault in Legacy Speech"
- 13 August 2020, "Cash-Strapped Treaty Bodies Expand Pro-Abortion Lobbying Amid Calls for Reform"
- 19 August 2020, "Congress Calls on Trump Administration to Block US Funds from UN Abortion Activities"
- 26 August 2020, "US Ambassador Andrew Bremberg Lambasts UN Experts Who Promote Abortion"
- 2 September 2020, "UN Secretary General Tells Feminists He Won't Let Trump Undermine Abortion Rights"
- 16 September 2020, "Pro-Life Intervention of the Holy See at the UN General Assembly"
- 18 September 2020, "US Cited Pro-Life Concerns in Vote Against COVID-19 Resolution"
- 22 September 2020, "Evidence of Systemic and Unlawful Abortion Promotion by UN Agencies, the Secretariat, and Other UN Entities"
- 24 September 2020, "COVID Lethargy Stalks UN General Assembly"
- 12 November 2020, "US Pushes Back on Abortion at Human Rights Council"
- 19 November 2020, "US Fails to Capitalize on Growing Pro-Life Support in UN General Assembly"
- 26 November 2020, "UN Agency Wants to Force Controversial Sex-Ed on All Children"
- 15 October 2020, "Countries Use COVID-19 to Promote LGBT Agenda with US Support"
- 30 October 2020, "BREAKING: Trump Administration Calls Out Secretary General on Abortion"
- 30 October 2020, "LGBT Issues Come Back Hard at UN Negotiations"
- 13 November 2020, "European Union Humiliates US and Russia at the United Nations"
- 13 November 2020, "C-Fam Written Statement at the 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development"
- 26 November 2020, "EU Commissars to Crack Down on 'Homophobia'"
- 14 December 2020, "Who Will Save Multilateralism from Itself? The United Nations at 75"
- 24 December 2020, "C-Fam's Top 5 Moments for Life and Family Internationally"
- 1 January 2021, "C-Fam's Worst 5 Moments of 2020 for Life and Family"
- 7 January 2021, "New UN Report Builds Rationale for Abortion"
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- 22 January 2021, "Abortion Activists Hope to Advance Their Agenda at Generation Equality Forum"

- 28 January 2021, “Will the International Community Join in Condemning China’s Uighur Genocide?”
- 12 February 2021, “Global Family Planning Coalition Subsumed in Abortion”
- 26 February 2021, “Biden Returns US Diplomacy to Pro-Abortion Fray”
- 5 March 2021, “COVID-19 Bill Annuls Longstanding Federal Restrictions on Overseas Abortion Funding”
- 9 April 2021, “UN Agency Drafts Blueprint for Unrestricted Access to Abortion”
- 29 April 2021, “UN Agencies and Western Donors Reveal Sexual Agenda Ahead of HIV/AIDS Summit”
- 6 May 2021, “UK Cuts to International Family Planning Threaten Global Abortion Industry”
- 13 May 2021, “Sexual Left Readies Radical Abortion Resolution at European Parliament”
- 17 May 2021, “Protection of the Family and Family-Oriented Policies in the Time of COVID-19”
- 19 May 2021, “Biden’s First 100 Days: Positioning the US to be the World’s Abortion Provider”
- 20 May 2021, “Family and Marriage Paid Dividends During COVID-19 Lockdowns”
- 10 June 2021, “G7 Embraces Abortion Language in Communiques as US Reverses Position”
- 24 June 2021, “European Parliament Votes in Favor of Abortion-on-Demand as a Human Right”
- 1 July 2021, “Responses of Pro-Life and Pro-Family Organizations to the Questionnaire of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health on ‘the Right to Sexual and Reproductive Health – Challenges and Possibilities during COVID-19’”
- 8 July 2021, “Abortion and LGBT Debate at the 47th Session of the Human Rights Council”
- 15 July 2021, “UN Experts Warn of COVID-19 Fertility Cliff on World Population Day”
- 22 July 2021, “EU Commission Will Sue Poland and Hungary at the EU Court over LGBT Issues”
- 22 July 2021, “The WHO Pushes ‘De-medicalization’ of Abortion in Updated Self-Care Guidelines”
- 1 September 2021, “How UN Agencies Promote Abortion and Sexualize Children” [YouTube Video]
- 9 September 2021, “UN Human Rights Experts Mess with Texas Pro-Life Law”
- 4 October 2021, “Evidence of Systemic and Unlawful Abortion Promotion by UN Secretariat, Agencies, and Other Entities”
- 14 October 2021, “UN Health Expert to Promote Abortion at the General Assembly”
- 21 October 2021, “Cancer Risk of Hormonal Contraceptive Methods Inspires Award-Winning Contraceptive Concept for Men”
- 19 November 2021, “The Significance of the Geneva Consensus Declaration”
- 26 November 2021, “EXCLUSIVE REPORT: 90 Countries Back ‘Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity’ at the United Nations”
- 27 December 2021, “‘Self-Care’ that Harms and Kills: The WHO’s Push to ‘Demedicalize’ Abortion”
- 30 December 2021, “C-Fam’s 5 Worst Moments of 2021 for Life and Family at the United Nations”
- 30 December 2021, “With Biden Support, UNFPA Steps Up Abortion Advocacy”

NOTES

¹ In fact, C-Fam was originally known as the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute.

² For C-Fam, I consulted its official website (<https://c-fam.org/>). This strategy is less suitable for ADF International because it regularly removes articles from its official website (<https://adfinternational.org/>). I, therefore, used its Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ADFInternational/>) and Twitter (@ADFIntl) accounts to identify deleted articles, which I accessed through the Wayback Machine. In addition, I consulted the websites of ADF International’s parent organization, ADF (<https://adflegal.org/>), and its branch in the United Kingdom (<https://adf.uk/>). All documents are on file with the author.

³ This did not introduce any bias. Although C-Fam also publishes in Spanish and French, these articles are almost always translations of English documents.

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