

Chapman University

## Chapman University Digital Commons

---

Student Scholar Symposium Abstracts and Posters

Center for Undergraduate Excellence

---

Fall 12-4-2019

### The End of the World: Fear of the Apocalypse

Hannah Richardson

*Chapman University*, [richa236@mail.chapman.edu](mailto:richa236@mail.chapman.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd\\_abstracts](https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts)



Part of the [American Politics Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Richardson, Hannah, "The End of the World: Fear of the Apocalypse" (2019). *Student Scholar Symposium Abstracts and Posters*. 345.

[https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd\\_abstracts/345](https://digitalcommons.chapman.edu/cusrd_abstracts/345)

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Undergraduate Excellence at Chapman University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Student Scholar Symposium Abstracts and Posters by an authorized administrator of Chapman University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [laughtin@chapman.edu](mailto:laughtin@chapman.edu).



# The End of the World: Fear of the Apocalypse

Hannah Richardson

Department of Political Science, Chapman University; Orange, California

## Introduction to Research

- This study analyzes the fear of the end of the world in the United States and attempts to determine the source of this fear.
- While there are minoritized preparation groups such as Doomsday Prepper's, the fight for preparation is not commonly accepted by average civilians.
- There has been a significant rise in discussion of the end of the world since the introduction of nuclear weapons.
  - There have been multiple nuclear scares around the world that have uncovered the small levels of preparation that civilians hold.
- Many people come together during times of fear, and this can be seen with cults.
  - More specifically, Jim Jones is known as a cult leader who persuaded his followers to commit mass suicide after growing their fears of the end of the world.
- There are many different interpretations of the end of the world, and some predict that it will come from nuclear war, environmental destruction, or religious reasons.

## Who are the Doomsday Preppers?

- A group of people from all around the country, but mostly the South of the United States, who live their life based on preparation for disaster.
- The mentality is, "You're on your own." Preppers prepare not only for disaster, but for the other unprepared people who may come to them for assistance in the event of an emergency.
  - Guns are always carried on their person, and prepper's are typically more conservative.
- Prepper's Camp takes place once a year, and is a weekend long getaway for preppers to discuss new ideas, explore further preparation, and meet others who are passionate about preparation.
  - While new friends are made, should there be a disaster, preppers are unwilling to help others, and most are willing to kill in order to survive.
  - They are willing to shoot intruders, protect their families, and save the stockpiles of food and supplies in their pre-determined locations.

## How will the World End?

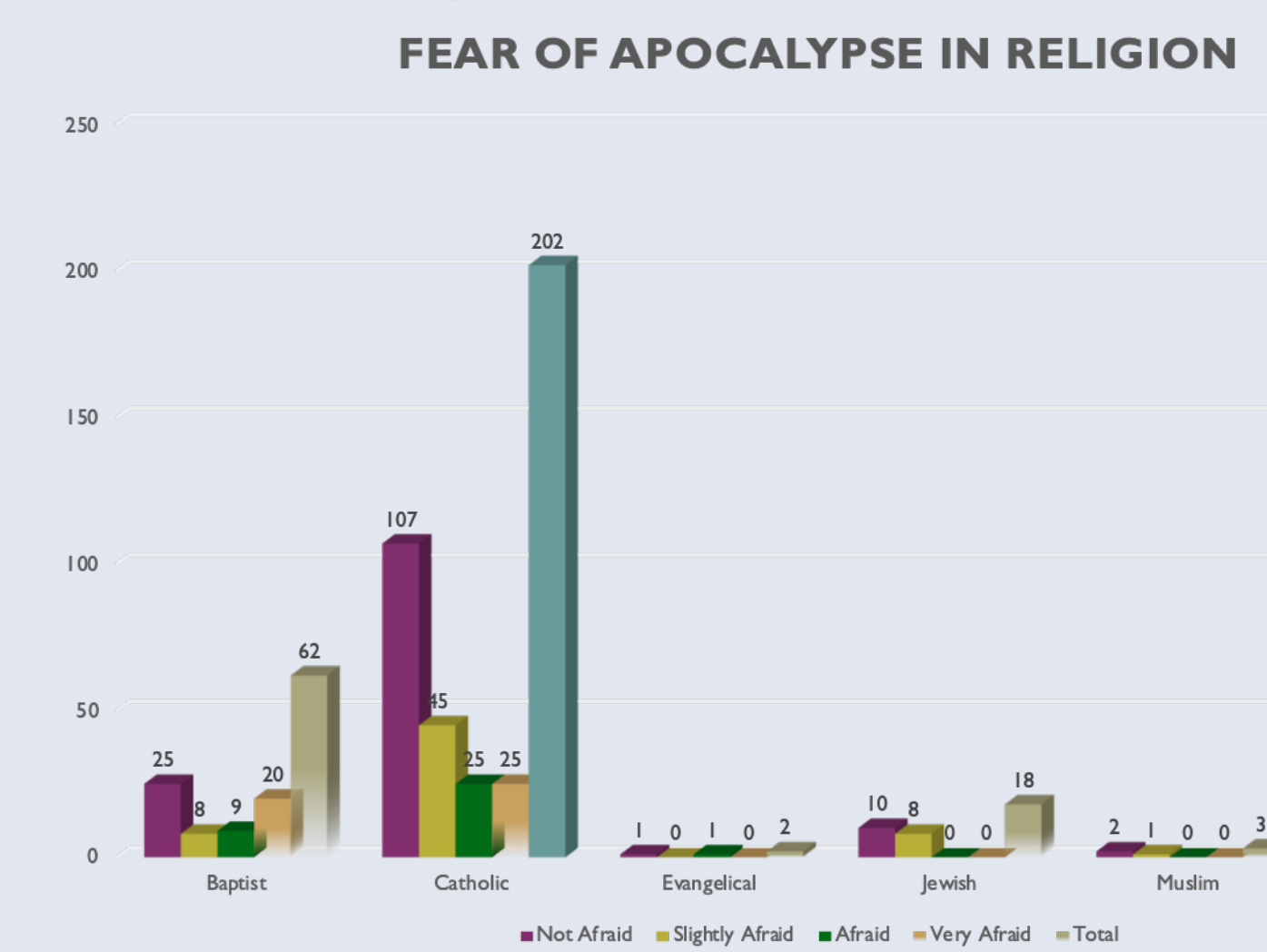
- According to a *Fear Itself* survey, 13% of respondents believed that the world will end sometime in their lifetime.
- Most of these respondents believe the world will end as it is planned out in the Christian Bible, the Armageddon.
- With rising nuclear tensions, some believe that nuclear war will lead to the end of the world.

## Hypotheses:

- Hypothesis 1: Fear of the world ending is greater among respondents with more religious affiliation.
- Hypothesis 2: Fear of the world ending is correlated to a fear of the use of nuclear weapons.
- Hypothesis 3: Those who are fearful of the apocalypse are more likely to have an emergency supply kit in their home.

## Data

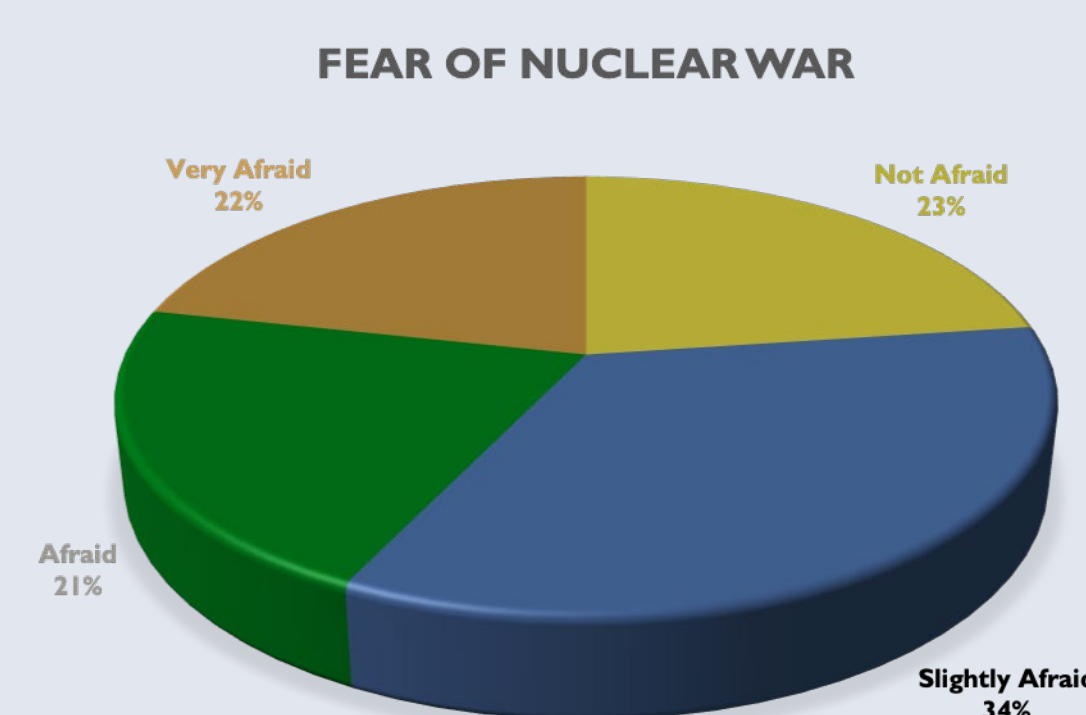
### Hypothesis 1: Religion



### Table Interpretation

- This table measures fear of apocalypse by religion, analyzing whether there is a relationship between religious affiliation and fear of the end of the world.
- The most significant finding is that 32.3% of respondents who identify as Baptist are "very afraid" of the apocalypse.
- The more that a respondent attends a religious service, the more likely they are to be afraid of the apocalypse, with a significance level of .000, with .05 being statistically significant.
- With this, there is no statistical significance that religious affiliation leads to a fear of the apocalypse.

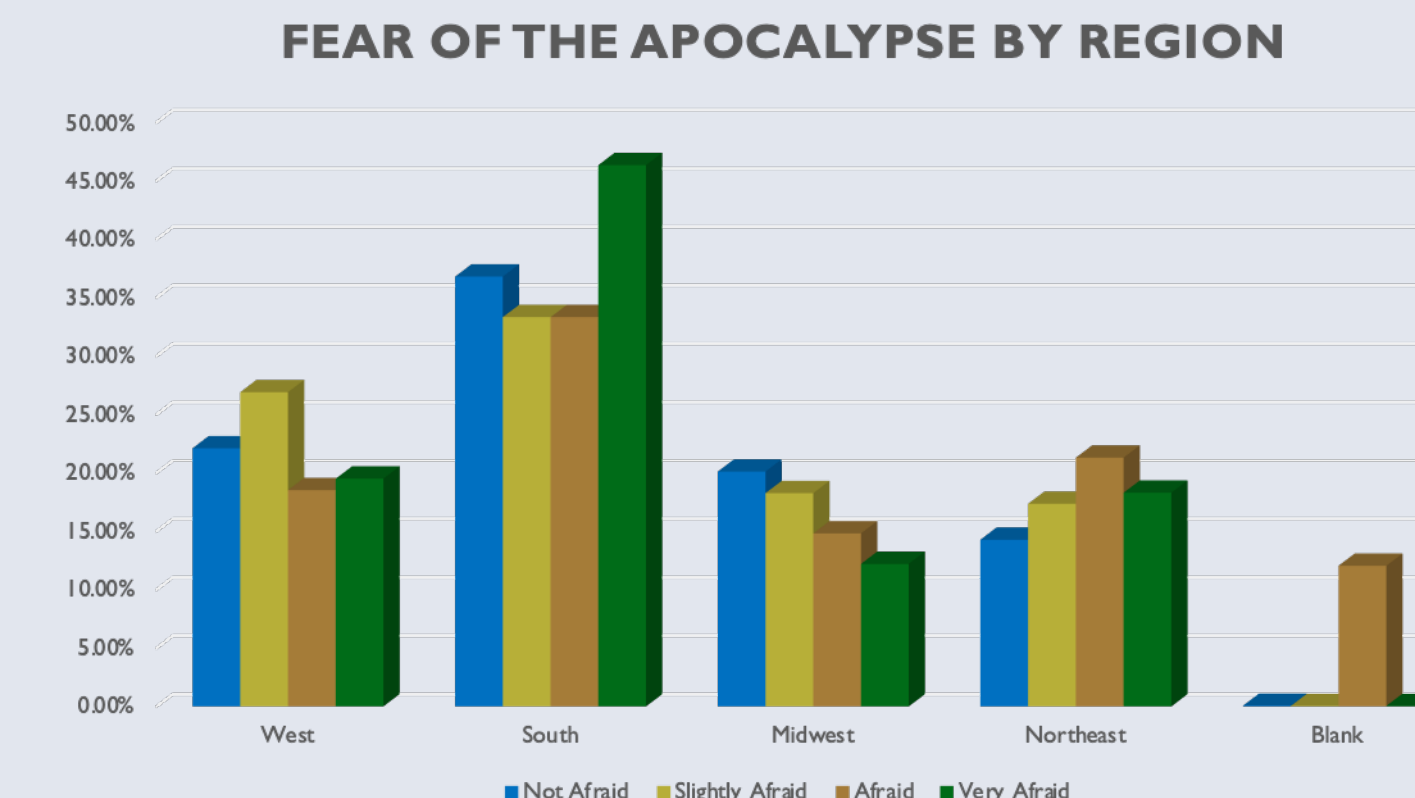
### Hypothesis 2: Nuclear Weapons Attack



### Table Interpretation

- There is an apparent fear of nuclear war, with 42.9% of respondents claiming to be either afraid or very afraid of a nuclear weapons attack.
- There is a significant relationship between fear of nuclear weapons attacks and a fear of the apocalypse, with a significance level of .000 and a value of .252 being beta.

### Regions and Fear of Apocalypse

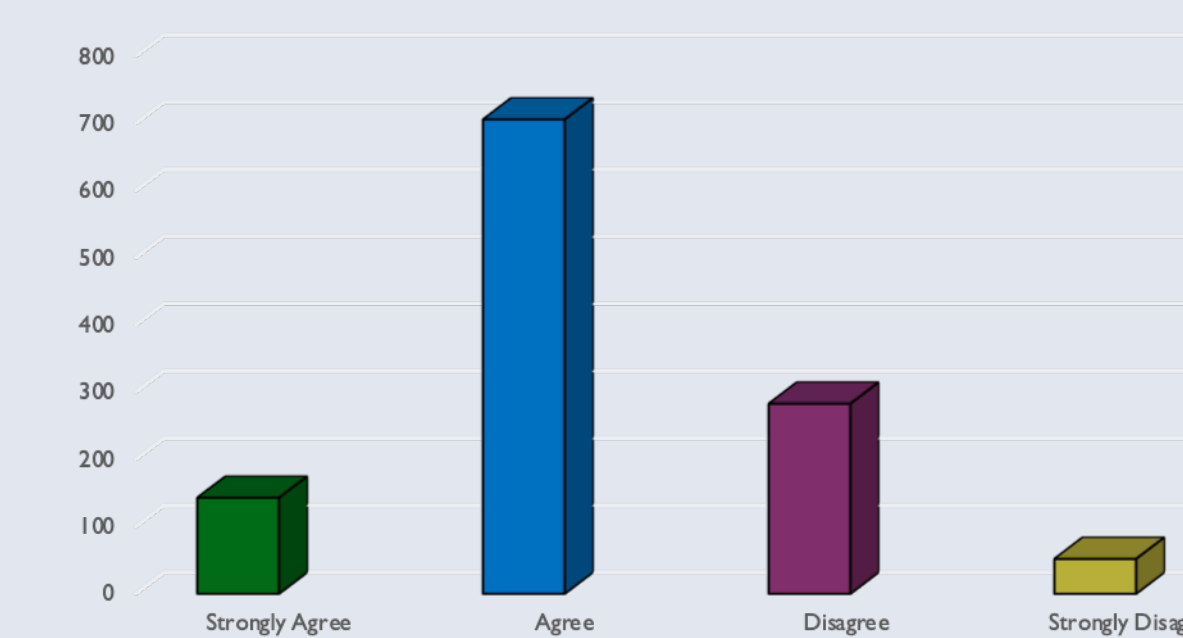


### Table Interpretation

- This table looks at the correlation between region and a fear of the apocalypse.
- This table shows that majority of respondents who identify themselves as being from the south are "very afraid" of the apocalypse.
  - This is a significant finding because it uncovers a correlation between the South and a fear of the apocalypse.
- It can be assumed that should these particular respondents vote, they may vote for a more conservative candidate or more conservative policies to ensure the freedom of their decisions and preparation.

### Hypothesis 3: Emergency Preparedness

#### I FEEL CONFIDENT IN MY ABILITY TO PREPARE FOR DISASTER



### Table Interpretation

- This table reveals that most respondents feel that they are confident that they know how to prepare for disasters.
- While most may feel confident, there is no statistical significance that shows a relationship between fear of apocalypse and having an emergency supply kit ready.
  - The significance level for those confident in their ability to prepare is .005, while the significance level for actually having an emergency preparedness kit is .416, meaning that there is no relationship between the dependent and independent variable.

## Findings

### H 1: Religion

While many apocalyptic fears may come from belief of the Armageddon, there is no significant statistical evidence showing a relationship between religious affiliation and a fear of the apocalypse. Instead, there is a relationship between number of religious events attended and having a fear of the apocalypse.

### H 2: Nuclear Weapons

42.9% of respondents in the 2018 Chapman Fear Survey were either afraid or very afraid of nuclear war. The data from this study show that there is a significant relationship between a fear of a nuclear weapons attack and a fear of the apocalypse.

### H 3: Emergency Preparedness Kits

People in Japan and the United States are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on bunkers in case of nuclear war or disaster, but this has not carried into average homes. There was no statistically significant relationship between those having a fear of the apocalypse and having an emergency supply kit in case of disaster. Only 12.1% of Chapman Fear Survey respondents said they felt prepared if there were to be an emergency.

## Conclusions

- While many people believe that the world will end according to the Christian Bible, there is no statistical evidence showing that those who are religious have a fear of the apocalypse.
- The end of the world is a topic that is frequently discussed in the world, but not enough people are preparing for disasters.
  - This is significant because people may not be voting because they believe there is no need to vote, as the world will end soon.
- This can be the reason that people are not preparing for disaster with emergency preparedness kits, and are not confident in their preparations for disaster.
- The influence of film and the apocalypse could be another reason for lack of emergency preparedness, people may believe they do not need to prepare because they can survive with their own hard skills.

### References

- Brenan, M. (2019, September 4). North Korea Surges to Top of U.S. Enemies List. *Conroy, J. Oliver. "An Apocalyptic Cult, 900 Dead: Remembering the Jonestown Massacre, 40 Years On." The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 17 Nov. 2018. [www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/17/an-apocalyptic-cult-900-dead-remembering-the-jonestown-massacre-40-years-on](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/17/an-apocalyptic-cult-900-dead-remembering-the-jonestown-massacre-40-years-on).
- Fitzpatrick, M. (2019, October 7). How Japan Could Go Nuclear. Retrieved from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/asia/2019-10-07/how-japan-could-go-nuclear>.
- Garfield, L. (2017, May 4). Inside an underground nuclear bunker in Japan that's made to withstand war with North Korea.
- Gow, J., & Leahy, T. (2005). Apocalypse probably: Agency and environmental risk in the Hunter region. *Journal of Sociology*, 41(2), 117-141. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783305050966>
- Moses, Michele. "What Drives Doomsday Preppers." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 17 June 2019. [www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/what-drives-doomsday-preppers](http://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/what-drives-doomsday-preppers).
- Nagourney, A., Sanger, D. E., & Barr, J. (2018, January 13). Hawaii Panics After Alert About Incoming Missile Is Sent in Error. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/13/us/hawaii-missile.html>.
- Powaski, Ronald E. *March to Armageddon: the United States and the Nuclear Arms Race, 1939 to the Present*. Oxford University Press, 1989.
- PrepperCamp.com
- "Public Trust in Government: 1958-2019." *Pew Research Center for the People and the Press*, 29 May 2019. [www.people-press.org/2019/04/11/public-trust-in-government-1958-2019/](http://www.people-press.org/2019/04/11/public-trust-in-government-1958-2019/).
- Reinhart, R. J. (2019, September 4). Far Fewer Americans See North Korea as Greatest U.S. Enemy. Rice, Doyle. "Doomsday Clock: It's Still 2 Minutes to Midnight Because of Nuclear Weapons and Climate Change." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Inform.