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Moral and Faith Development in Fundamentalist Communities:
Lessons Learned in Five New Religious Movements

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Abstract

“Faith and Moral Development in Fundamentalist Religious Communities: Lessons Learned from Five New Religious Movements” is, first, a work of practical theology. The practical theology employed in this study understands religious communities as carriers of practical reason, asking of each of them the normative and descriptive questions: Are these communities representing the ideals and norms of their respective traditions as carriers of religious knowledge? In what ways are these communities implementers of practical religious wisdom and what is it that this wisdom teaches? With Browning (1991), my conviction is that religious communities can and do constitute embodiments of practical theology and these respective theologies participate in practical wisdom through their religious symbols, histories, narratives, and rituals.

Second, this study represents an effort to take seriously subcultures of fundamentalist New Religious Movements (fNRMs). It is a response to prevailing theories of moral and faith development as suggested by the cognitive structuralist tradition. Suspecting that cognitive structuralist based assessments, and thus, their theories, render fNRM adherents’ faith and moral development in overly simplistic terms, this study proposes a qualitative method to analyze the sociological, historical, theological, and anthropological factors involved in the religious worlds created within fNRMs. This method, alongside traditional developmental assessments, elevates, for full view, the complexities of faith and moral development in fundamentalist communities. The studies of these five fNRMs moved in different directions, but systematically revealed different but complex factors, sophisticated

styles and modes of integration in patterns of reasoning involved in the daily negotiations of living in faith communities, thinking through the contents of faith, and maintaining faith-based commitments. The results of this study point toward poststructuralism, with its theories of multiple subjectivities, to account for the complex patterns of reasoning required to negotiate multiple subjectivities in an increasingly demanding world. Perhaps a poststructuralist theory of both moral and faith development are needed to more accurately describe both of these processes as we now understand them in the context of postmodernity. Poststructuralism suggests that, rather than stages of faith and moral development, individuals adopt constellations of patterns of reasoning that are locally and communally driven.

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Frequently Used Abbreviations

Charisma --- Third-Wave Restoration Charismatic Churches

coC --- churches^{*} of Christ

DIT --- Defining Issues Test

FDI --- Faith Development Interview

fNRM --- Fundamentalist New Religious Movement

HK --- Hare Krishna(s)

ISKCON --- International Society of Krishna Consciousness, the legal corporation of Hare Krishna communities

NWT --- *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (Jehovah's Witnesses)

QED --- *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*

WTS --- Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the legal corporation of Jehovah's Witnesses

* The churches of Christ reject the claim and resist the notion of being a denomination. They consider themselves a group of believers who practice New Testament Church. Therefore, it is appropriate to not capitalize the "c" in "churches" when describing this group.

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Introduction

The present study of “Faith and Moral Development in Fundamentalist Religious Communities: Lessons Learned from Five New Religious Movements” is, first, a work of practical theology. The practical theology employed in this study understands religious communities as carriers of practical reason, asking of each of them the normative and descriptive questions: Are these communities representing the ideals and norms of their respective traditions as carriers and implementers of religious knowledge? In what ways are these communities carriers of practical religious wisdom and what is it that this wisdom teaches? With Browning (1991), my conviction is that religious communities can and do constitute embodiments of practical theology and these respective theologies participate in practical wisdom through their religious symbols, histories, narratives, and rituals (11).

Second, this study represents an effort to take seriously subcultures of fundamentalist New Religious Movements (fNRMs). It is a response to prevailing theories of moral and faith development as suggested by the cognitive structuralist tradition. Suspecting that cognitive structuralist based assessments, and thus, their theories, render fNRM adherents’ faith and moral development in overly simplistic terms, this study proposes a qualitative method to analyze the sociological, historical, theological, and anthropological factors involved in the religious worlds created within fNRMs. This method, alongside traditional developmental assessments, elevates, for full view, the complexities of faith and moral development in fundamentalist communities.

The present study combines work ethnographic work within five fundamentalist NRMs: ISKCON (Hare Krishna), Jehovah's Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists, churches of Christ and Charismatic Restorationists, all of which are well represented in the greater Atlanta area. The studies of these five fNRMs moved in different directions, but, in each case, systematically revealed different but complex factors, sophisticated styles, and modes of integration in patterns of reasoning involved in the daily negotiations of living in faith communities, thinking through the contents of faith, and maintaining faith-based commitments. The results of this study point away from structuralism and toward poststructuralism, with its theories of multiple subjectivities, to account for the complex patterns of reasoning required to negotiate multiple subjectivities in an increasingly demanding world. Perhaps a poststructuralist theory of both moral and faith development are needed to more accurately describe both of these processes as we now understand them in the context of postmodernity. Perhaps poststructuralism suggests for us that, rather than stages of faith and moral development, individuals adopt constellations of patterns of Knowing that are locally and communally driven.

This study originally grew out of a project with Heinz Streib at the University of Bielefeld in Germany. With German researchers affiliated with the Center for Biographical Studies in Religion at Bielefeld, Christopher Silver, then a M.A. candidate at the University of Chattanooga and Rob Swanson, a candidate for a Psy.D. at Fuller Theological Seminary, I completed the Atlanta segment of data collection on a project called "Deconverts from Fundamentalist New Religious Groups: Biographical Trajectories, Transformational Processes, and the Need for

Intervention.” That project utilized Fowler’s Faith Development Interviews (FDIs) and an extensive background and demographic survey to develop biographical case studies and typologies of persons practicing within fundamentalist New Religious Movements (NRMs) and those who had chosen to leave. Phase One of the project included the collection of FDIs, demographic and background data from almost two dozen subjects in the greater Atlanta area.

Before participating in the Streib project, I had already decided to study moral cognition in addition to faith development and to bring a sociopolitical challenge to the “-logics” of these theories. More specifically, I questioned logical positivism and structural functionalism, suggesting that such “-logics,” when viewed as a collection of practices, assumed the “unmarked” position from which every “Other” is conceptualized and categorized. As that unmarked scientific position also assumes a nominalist role to all “Other-ness,” its discourse is problematic when placed into sub- and quasi- cultural contexts. By naming and controlling for the unmarked position, I hoped to shift discourses and practical positions to explore links between culture and cognition from a position of “mark-ed” marginality.

In each of the five traditions, I completed an ethnographic study of the tradition, functioning as a participant observer in each case. I worshipped with the disciples, I practiced the religion they practiced, studied as they studied, ate as they ate and, in the case of the Hare Krishnas, dressed as they dressed. This exhaustive participant observation was to better understand the religious and moral culture of the NRM. I also collected short Faith Development Interviews and moral judgment assessments with four individuals --- three in the tradition and one who had left the

tradition within 24 months of the interview. Interviews were collected in both the Atlanta and Chattanooga areas. From the FDI with each subject, I tried to uncover and understand the subject's construction of moral and religious knowledge as I worked within the social context to uncover the social construction of group memory.

Each FDI was transcribed so that a trained scorer could rate them consistent with the *Scoring Manual for Faith Development Research*. The expert scoring person helped revise an edition of the *Scoring Manual*, which had been written and compiled by James Fowler along with Romney M. Moseley and David Jarvis. Further, each transcribed interview has been subject to a narrative analysis, to further understand each participant's subjective experiences of religious practice. Finally, each study participant completed a Defining Issues Test 2 (DIT-2), so that I might get a snapshot of their moral developmental profile at the time of their testing.

Consequently, this study in fundamentalist NRMs includes some measure of the following four elemental questions:

1. Identifying the features of culture through history, literature survey, and ethnography;
2. "Difference" in ethical values in response to various social conditions of religious culture, or the personal and social construction of moral sensibilities and religious group memory;
3. Discourse analysis: Uncovering schemas for cultural interpretation and matching, using hermeneutical and narrative strategies in the analyzing transcribed Faith Development Interviews;
4. Schemas, Culture, and Moral Texts using neo-Kohlbergian cognitive-developmental moral acquisition as indicated on the DIT-2; and,
5. The classic Faith Development Interview with aspect scores, global or continuous and stage scores.

Organization of this Paper

Chapter 1 of this paper will present a survey of the sociology of New Religious Movements (NRMs) with considerations relative for practical theology.

Issues of history, sociology, and theology unique to each group are presented in subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 covers a literature review of measures and their models for the study of moral and faith development. Chapters 3-7 are the intensive studies of each NRM studied herein, including a short summary of the community, why it is considered a fundamentalist NRM, its history, a survey of sociological studies, its theology, and a snapshot of my insider experience(s) with the worshipping community of the NRM. Throughout these chapters about each NRM, the reader will encounter the voices of members of each particular group, highlighting points of resonance or consistency with some of the history, sociology or theology in that chapter. Chapter 3 introduces the Hare Krishnas (ISKCON), Chapter 4 relates my experience with the Jehovah's Witnesses, Chapter 5 describes Seventh-day Adventism, Chapter 6 gives us a snapshot of the churches of Christ, and Chapter 7 describes the most recent NRM in this study, the Charismatic Restorationist churches.

Chapter 8 brings together the results of this study, answering the question, "What happened here?" in the course of the work within the five communities. Chapter 9 holds the conclusions, the "lessons learned" in community, the subjective experiences of the religious cultures from the viewpoints of both the participants and the researcher/participant/observer, as it also suggests areas for further study.

It has been a remarkable journey and, along the way, there have been more people to thank than I could possibly do here. I have endeavored to express my profound gratitude to everyone, along the way, who has assisted me in telling this story that I am just realizing I have come to love dearly. I pray that this narrative thanks each of them for their contributions and for the powerful "lessons learned" by

this outsider, who was trusted enough to find her way inside. As I have already promised most of them, “I will never forget!”

Reference

Browning, Don S. *A fundamental practical theology: Descriptive and strategic proposals*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991

Chapter 1: Modern Epistemology, Fundamentalist New Religious Movements, and a Practical Theological Response

“Often in the minds of (some) Euro-Americans, when one thinks of black folks, the issues of moral behavior frequently spring to mind, for example, the escalating crime statistics (the immorality of delinquency and violent behavior) or teen pregnancy, single motherhood, and welfare reciprocity (the immorality of sexual promiscuity and traditional family breakdown). Yet African Americans know that while some of our behavior to others may seem self-contemptuous, when we turn our gaze inward, we have a different story to tell” (Ward, 1991, 268).

Like the concern articulated by Ward above, moral and faith development theories describe fundamentalist New Religious Movements as similarly “delinquent or inadequate.” Dominant theories supported by structural developmental theories may be inadequate when compelled to offer descriptive and normative features of the contents of fundamentalism. My heart was aimed at transformation, at creating a theoretical intervention that casts a suspicious eye toward the “-isms” directed to persons whether marginalized by race or religious practice. More important to the cause of transformation was a constructive task to propose an alternative inclusive “critical” position that would allow for heterogeneous truth claims and knowledges of multicultural Others. The guiding question throughout the study was, Can theories that are inescapably linked to power and politics be viewed and articulated in a more egalitarian and socially/historically constructed ways?

To be clear, I did not assume the existence of connections from social science or of structural developmental theories to power and politics. My concern was to demonstrate how certain dimensions of these formulations participated in either

hierarchializing persons through their lens or completely devaluing persons in their academic production. In other words, I wanted to illuminate and demonstrate how modern formulations validated only one voice and one type of knowledge from its inquires, even as certain ontological and epistemological assumptions remain unquestioned.

Enter Heinz Streib's "Deconverts" project. Streib, a 1991 Emory PhD graduate, now professor of Protestant theology at the University of Bielefeld, is also the director of the Center for the Biographical Studies in Religion there. Streib's dissertation, which involved the methodology of James Fowler's Faith Development Theory, led him to question, among other things, the efficacy of the power of metaphor, symbol, and narrative in persons from fundamentalist faith traditions. The power of metaphor, symbol and narrative are integral features of the aspects that comprise a faith development stage profile. If a given population fails to grasp these elements in its religious thinking, its faith development profile will label it "deficient." Streib's subsequent work at Bielefeld has been to interrogate this fundamentalist orientation and to raise questions about the modern epistemological assumptions that underlie faith development theory. His "Deconverts" project, which also utilized the measure associated with faith development theory, was one way to view the fundamentalist orientation vis a vis the orientation of an individual who had recently emerged from a fundamentalist tradition. His aim was to explain more fully the fundamentalist orientation and to supplement faith development theory with a perspective that would more adequately account for these people and their practices. While "marginalization" has never been a part of Streib's narrative, his intent was,

nevertheless, to develop a method to minimize the marginalization of people in fundamentalist groups by the faith development theory.

This explanatory digression takes me away from the present task of describing modern epistemology and fundamentalist New Religious Movements (fNRMs). The important ingredient for my interests was that faith development theory, based on certain modern assumptions in the structural-developmental model, could not adequately capture the faith developmental processes of people in fundamentalist traditions. This took me back to my initial problem of how modern epistemology receives “Other” knowledges and truth claims, and how only “one (validated) voice” emerges as definitive and normative. The issue of my project involves a serious questioning of the epistemological assumptions of modern, rational, and Enlightenment thought.

Epistemology

University of Chicago philosopher Langdon Gilkey calls the 21st century “a critical moment of reinterpretation,” capable of shifting primary meanings and paradigms of knowledge (Gilkey, 1981, 3). Educational theorist Henry Giroux defines a “new democratic citizen” as a person capable of naming and creating reality for herself or himself, able to reject authoritarianism of “master” narratives, and who rejects the Western notion of selfhood as a coherent and stable self (1991, 3). From these two statements by these two thinkers, it becomes clear that the 21st century must interrogate paradigms of knowledge because they are involved in primary meanings and the construction of the self. Knowledge, meaning-making, and subjectivity form the basis of who we are individually, and how we construct our worlds.

Who a person **is** and where a person is **located** in space or time affects what that person can know. The ‘is’ (ontology) and the location of persons at any given time affects their modes of being, and these modes of being, in turn, affect what persons can know. From the perspective of scientific inquiry, these factors, ontology and location, converge to determine which individuals emerge as validated Knowers and which ones do not. If modes of being and location are factors in knowing, then, it is not difficult to understand how I, a black woman living in the 21st century, might view the potential of theory differently than did privileged white men who lived several decades ago.

Modern moral and faith development theory evolved from Enlightenment theories of how people perceive and know their worlds. This study begins with “breaking open,” to use a eucharistic metaphor, the view of only one common “valid” and “validated” knowledge so that we can admit normative positions and knowledges from Others, in this case fNRM, communities. I recognize that every view is, at best, partial and that no view is complete. Likewise, this suggested “opening” offers a point of entry into a larger polyvocal, multilingual conversation regarding not only inclusivity, but recognition of “difference” in the enterprise of Be-ing human.

The ‘what’s at stake’ question here is, after all, “How do we re-cognize Others and allow us all full recognition at the human table?” The irony of this study’s stakeholder question is that people who inhabit the fundamentalist orientation are not particularly eager to admit my “Otherness” to their human table, but, be that as it may, it is hardly egalitarian to declare them non-Knowers and call it a day. My personal and practical theological sensibilities cannot allow me to be excited about

the potential of moral and faith development theories in multicultural real world settings, without first examining those theories for their participation in equal opportunities for diverse populations and for real, democratic, egalitarian communication. Thus, admitting people who inhabit the fundamentalist orientation to the category of validated Knowers is a genuine first step toward admitting culturalized, gendered Otherness to the category of “Knowing” humanity.

A genuine first step considers the distinctions in peoples based upon the consequences of enacted imperialisms, exclusions and oppressions. As stated earlier, who a person **is** and where a person is **located** affect how that person can know and how, of if, she can be known as a Knower. Enacted oppressions, imperialisms and exclusions serve to mark Knowers from non-Knowers. Epistemological elitism defines people in real ways, and in equally real ways, both limits what some persons will and can know and delimits what can and cannot be admitted to the construction of knowledge.

Feminist theorists have helped us connect ontology and epistemology and to understand that they are in no sense separate or separable either from one another or from the sociomoral discussion to which they give rise. Therefore, we are cautioned to remember:

“In feminist philosophy there is a constant awareness of history, process and change. Indeed, one might venture to declare that a thoughtful historicism pervades these philosophical approaches: a realization that there are no timeless truths, and that the alleged truths by which philosophers have been living and conducting their enquiries have the form they do at least in part because of the circumstances of their articulation. To understand something about these circumstances is neither to yield to the temptations of relativism, nor simply to explain the circumstances themselves away. Rather, it is to see with growing clarity just how deeply rooted are the structures that have created oppression” (Code, Mullett, and Overall, 1988).

Modern epistemology is an offspring of the Western philosophical tradition, owing its proliferation to its anchoring force --- objectivism. Objectivism is the idea that reason tells us the way that things really are in themselves; that rationality and proper categorization are essential to the acquisition of knowledge; that truth is the result of measured, methodical and rational processes. An extension of the modern quest for scientific truth, the modernist approach dominates the natural sciences and, to a lesser extent, the social sciences.

The modern, objective, and autonomous Knower apprehends concepts from objective reality, reconstructs them, and then applies universal principles of reasoning to determine outcomes of truth, beauty, and justice. Further, modern epistemology asserts that observable reality is apprehended by individuals in same way, yielding the same result in every case. Humanity, then, proceeds along the same epistemological course, a journey that also embraces a teleology of ever greater acquisition of knowledge and truth in the form of positivism. Modernists argue that power and ideology factors are not a part of objective reality, for neither power nor ideology alters the intrinsic nature of things in and of themselves, nor can they alter what is immediately observable in objective reality.

In the course of human events, it became readily observable that some persons and populations failed to engage the sequence of engaging reason, appealing to objective reality, and determining outcomes similar to logical positivists. In other words, it became obvious that not everyone participated in the one validated and agreed-upon way of knowledge construction. The philosophical project of modernity began to incorporate the notion that there were no shortcomings in its own rational

interpretation of reality, it was a failing of those populations to engage the principles of reason. It set up hierarchies, structural boundaries that eventually led to defining who could and could not be validated as Knowers.

Shelia Landers Macrine (1999), a “critical” pedagogue and English professor at St. Joseph’s University, fashions a critique of contemporary literacy teaching models within the discourse on cultural capital and hegemony. Certain literacy models, she contends, respond from a dualistic, established-by-edict agenda in which they serve only one population. That one population is the very one that holds the “dominant cultural capital.” When students enter literacy training programs, they also enter a culture of key social and linguistic cues, which happen to match the activities and normative discourse used in the literacy classroom. Students from outside the culture with the “dominant cultural capital,” then, learn very quickly that they must choose between “failing” the dominant expectations or learn and then appropriate the dominant social messages. The consequences of the second choice, though “outsiders” learn the use the dominant social messages, is the internalization of self-doubt and self-hatred.

From the literature on cultural capital, two points directly relate to the binary logic, the enacted dualisms, present in a modern epistemological dualism of “either/or.” First, the underlying suggestion implied in either/or dualisms is that one of these choices and thus, only one public common knowledge is valid. Consequently, the only public “valid” knowledge was one that correlated with the social knowledge of the hegemonic class, in this case, those who can demonstrate the features of validated Knowers who are also those who own the cultural capital and

protect the hegemonic system. Therefore, outsiders and those who fail to access or understand the implicit epistemic clues, find themselves in an either/or position in relation to the one valid Truth – as such, these outsider/Other persons cannot locate support or validation of their own knowledge, social experience, or cultural experience. So these cultural dualisms and binary oppositions do more than locate Knowers in relation to the hegemonic paradigm, they mark Knowers from non-Knowers, insiders from Others. The logical positivist paradigm of modernity had its way of marking Knowers, structuring hierarchies, and enacting certain imperialisms.

Cognitive-structural theories embraced this logical positivist paradigm of modernity. Jean Piaget, in his elaboration of genetic epistemology, developed a perspective of the cognitive construction of ways of knowing. He challenged the idea that the mind was static and immutable; he attempted to define the process of knowledge acquisition. He determined that the mind constructs knowledge in stages of development in order to facilitate human adaptation, and, accordingly he viewed adaptation as an attempt to fit, survive, or prosper in a given environment. He described two processes that facilitate adaptation: assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation refers to the integration of new information into existing organizational patterns of knowledge. This interconnected system, characterized by cognitive operations and abilities, can be occasionally overwhelmed by incoming information that is not easily assimilated into the existing knowledge structures. This may create a cognitive dissonance, which can, in turn, lead to either a distortion or repression of the new information or a major change in the existing knowledge structures by a process called accommodation. Accommodation of a whole structure is much like

entering a new paradigm in which information is ordered more adequately and is more easily retrieved. This is the process of intelligence: the interactive process of assimilation and accommodation as the Knower strives for equilibrium. Periods of equilibrium exist when the system is functioning within the same consistent knowledge structures and, at that point, the system is understood as being in a stage. When information is easily assimilated, the knowledge structures, or stage, remain the same. When the system is overwhelmed, the knowledge structures may accommodate in such a way as to alter and advance the existing the stage of the Knower to a more adequate level for the new circumstances (Piaget, 1968).

Piaget described a system of invariant, incremental and universal stages through which the Knower progresses over time. Each stage, in Piaget's estimation, was generally consistent across domains of knowledge. Thus, moral development proceeded in the same way as did logico-mathematics and so forth. Piaget's stage theory accounted for the differences in brain organization at different points in human development. In theory, it also represented an account for sociocultural interaction in the development of cognitive processes (Piaget, 1968; Ginsburg, 1988). In practice, however, the underlying assumption remained the same as other epistemological projects of modernity – that given the same capacities for reason along with the same methods, knowledge was acquired by all humanity in exactly the same way. Therefore, in this survey of the history of modern epistemology, we must say that Piaget, too, proposed a theory of one valid, invariant, and irreversible progression toward cognitive maturity.

Piaget, and Kohlberg after him, developed modern epistemologically based theories that held that the more developed stages propelled Knowers into structured thinking that was more adequate and “more true” than the less developed ones. Further, both of these theorists attempted to account for the developmental interactionism between the individual and her sociocultural context, but failed to incorporate emotions, affect, or embodiment into their theories. The reasons for their exclusion of these very important dimensions of human experience is clear – they were participating and constructing theory in a milieu that privileged attaining that certain objectivity that would enable them to assert the validity of their claims (Fowler, 1981, 98-105). Both structural developmental theorists, therefore, envisioned the Knower as a singular self, autonomous, universal, disembodied and absolute. The converse of this assumption is that Knowers who failed to demonstrate these criteria in exactly a way that conformed to modern structural developmental theory, were designated non-Knowers, whose thinking was less structured and somehow “less true.”

Thus, the Kohlbergian Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) and its concomitant research paradigm is probably best suited for addressing certain types of questions for a middle class and likely male population in the United States. Even as Fowler tried to address the shortcomings of Piaget and Kohlberg by incorporating theories that include perspective taking and social awareness, the faith development theory also assumes Knowers develop along a prescribed, invariant sequence, disembodied, autonomous, universal and absolute. The faith development theory, too, is likely best

suited for addressing certain questions of a middle class and likely male population in the United States.

For the moment, I will return to the quote from Code and colleagues (1988) on the role of feminist philosophy in our 21st century understanding of modern epistemology. We are reminded that feminist philosophy provided:

... a thoughtful historicism ... a realization that there are no timeless truths, and that the alleged truths by which philosophers have been living and conducting their enquiries have the form they do at least in part because of the circumstances of their articulation. To understand something about these circumstances is neither to yield to the temptations of relativism, nor simply to explain the circumstances themselves away. Rather, it is to see with growing clarity just how deeply rooted are the structures that have created oppression” (Code, Mullett, and Overall, 1988).

It is necessary to consider the “circumstances of articulation” of the structural developmental model that gave rise to certain “deep rooted structures” of oppression. I begin with Kohlberg’s theory, interrogating the assumptions about the Knower in this structural-developmental theory known as cognitive moral development theory.

“Is moral goodness an external reality, a thing, with its own characteristics?” Is there some abstract or general and essentially human principle of sociomoral reasoning that forms the basis of moral action? If some abstract, general, or essentially human principle of moral reasoning forms the basis for moral action, then the test of the moral development theorist is to articulate the nature of the external and fixed reality that shapes humanity's moral decisions. This absolutist stance has found a home in the moral development debate. In the Kohlbergian “justice”-oriented position, for instance, rational objects deliberate and form consensus on the interpretation of reality. This rationalist, objective position maintains that universal

principles of truth, knowledge, beauty, and justice are external constructs, "out there," for persons engaged in rational negotiations to reconstruct and apprehend. The Kohlbergian stage sequences assess the extent to which individuals assess the absolute and invariant truth and knowledge and how well, once apprehended, this universal and absolute truth is manipulated by the moral Knower.

First, this method begs the question: who is the judge? The person who determines the absolute position assumes the role of judge, capable of naming the norms and pronouncing the right action, the act that constitutes moral goodness. Second, we are challenged to question the 1) location of the Knower, 2) the process of knowledge, and 3) the determination of truth in the process of making theory. In Kohlberg's elaboration, the moral Knower is singular, universal, and absolute. Justice moral reasoning argues that a justice oriented moral person singularly considers the "right" and then executes moral decisions as an individual, with the "right" solution unchanged by context, time, or social situations. She is located in a position to apprehend the "right," which implies access to a certain mainstream knowledge, social development in a situation in which no constraints are placed on free choice, and awareness of the "truth" that is the same for all moral Knowers.

Many theorists view the methodological challenge by Carol Gilligan (1982) as an alternative to Kohlberg's justice-focused Knower, declaring Gilligan's challenge the "care" perspective and a dialectical alternative to the "justice" perspective of Kohlberg. I have come to conclude that Gilligan's methodological challenge to Kohlberg occurred in the midst of a Kuhnian paradigm shift (Kuhn, 1974) in social science and the "relational" turn in psychology (Robb, 2006), such that the

perspective on theory and of Knowers became understood that the perspective, itself, was contexted and captive to a particular moment in time.

Critics of Gilligan's different "voice" in moral theory argued that environment constructs this moral subject. She is, they asserted, made, "constructed," and not present in an objective world. Modernity's reaction to this theory of the moral Knower with a "different voice" was that she was not valid and that Gilligan's theory could, and would, not be validated.

Again, the guiding questions are the following: 1) What is the location of the knower? 2) What is the process of knowledge? and 3) How is truth determined in the process of making theory? Here, morality isn't "out there" knowledge. Rather, its locus is constructed relative to the circumstances of the moral knower. Related to the other two questions, a peculiar phenomenon occurs to the Self which elaborated in *In a Different Voice* and the ideas of subjectivity present in Gilligan's subsequent research. Connected to this phenomenon is that psychologists, themselves, began to think and speak of selfhood in differing ways, as they increasingly included the idea that language is a primary meaning-making tool of human history and culture, and that mind and thought are fundamentally dialogical in nature. Consequently, the Self was believed, then, to be not singular but plural, and not derivatively social but intrinsically social and thus, relational. There is no "transcendental language of the self," said one thinker (Gergen, 1991, 95), there is always an implied "position" in every statement, a position that changes with respect to the (social) perspective. The decade of the 1980's witnessed the shift toward what is called a poststructural turn;

subjectivity, like identity itself, became, to some theorists, ever-changing, and always determined by the language and culture of the subject.

These changes, including that of the language of selfhood itself, which shifted toward “subjectivity,” began to take place around the 1982 appearance of *In a Different Voice*. In many ways, the work of Carol Gilligan reflects the tide of change between self and subjectivity, her research reflects nothing short of a "re-location" of the self of 1982 toward the female subjectivities she describes a decade later. With Gilligan, feminist historians and critics of science, most notably Donna Haraway (1991) and Sandra Harding (1986, 1987, 1998) charge that the former modern moral perspective is incomplete, biased, and exclusive of the experiences and perceptions of women. To enlarge this assertion, feminist theories called our attention to the exclusion of persons and populations who consider local, rather than objective, knowledge and relationships and/or forms of embodiment (enacted oppressions and imperialisms) in transacting moral choices. Most important for this discussion, however, is that this feminist perspective 1) pays attention to the changing locations of the researcher as well as the subject, 2) defines knowledge and truth as produced in connection with other people, 3) is dependent upon the perspective of the subjects of the study and 4) validated by the language the subject herself uses to describe herself and her life story.

The relational and embodied Knower, observable only in her web and location, is determined by her social perspective and connections with significant other persons. She is revealed in the language she uses and the communal allegiances she holds. This new paradigm of relational and embodied subjectivity displaces the

concern over the either/or of Enlightenment oppositional dualisms, the latter of which has the effect of reifying the poles of difference. Significant for this study, however, is that the new paradigm takes seriously the sociocultural context of relational subjects, connected to and webbed in the social circumstances in which they live.

In moral theory, this is a new paradigm, one that did not grow from the epistemological assumptions of modernity or stem from a structural developmental approach. The new paradigm is based on situated judgments, situated knowledges and situated truths (Hekman, 1995), admitting the possibility that different people know “truth” and “goodness” in different ways. Relational and embodied moral Knowers understand and ‘know’ their situated truths and situated norms, and when they do not, their sources of truth are not projected into the objective sphere. No longer “out there,” in an absolute or universal sense, nor “in here” in a sense that is relative to personal circumstance, the norms for moral goodness exist in the web of relationships in which moral Knowers find themselves.

Streib (2001) is attempting a similar reorientation to Fowler’s Faith Development Theory. Though he is critical of the modernist assumptions of structural developmental theory, he proposes modifications to, rather than a total restructuring of the theory and its invariant and irreversible six stages. He proposes a religious styles perspective, reminiscent of Noam’s (1990) descriptions of interpersonal themata and Day and Tappan’s (1996) plea for a narrative turn in theorizing the Self-Other interaction. Streib proposes five religious styles – subjective, instrumental-reciprocal, mutual, individuative-systemic, dialogical – that are best analogized as the cumulative deposition of layers rather than stair-stepping

stages. This allows for interpretation of the re-emergence of religious styles from childhood or adolescence that may appear in adult, though “heterodyned,” in Streib’s words, or integrated with adult stages (2001). Religious styles, though, do not proceed along an invariant and irreversible developmental sequence but are dynamic, fluid, and are completely driven by the Knower in her web of religio-cultural relationships. Streib claims that this reformulation of the FDT addresses the “fundamental problem of modernity” in the domain of religion and of cognitive development in general. The styles perspective reflects the paradigmatic shift from disconnected reason to “relational knowing, universality to bodily-being-in-the-world, objectivity to object relation and decentrated subjectivity to openness to the Other” (Streib, 2001, 155).

Interrogating Methodology

Danziger’s work views psychology as a special set of social activities intended to produce something that counts as psychological knowledge under certain historical circumstances. Tracing the history of psychological research methodology from the nineteenth century to the present, Danziger considers methodology to be a collection of agreed upon social and inquiry practices. His historical remembering involves 1) the development of the social structure of the relationship between researchers and their subjects, and 2) the role of methodology in the relationship between the social practice of research and the nature of the product that is the outcome of this practice (Danziger, 1990).

So, here again, research paradigms and philosophies come into play. Even more powerful than the notion that there are different paradigms with different

assumptions about the world and how it works (i.e., there is no one right way to do research) is how much our particular paradigms/assumptions influence the questions we ask, what we think is important to know, the evaluation methods we use, the data we collect and even the interpretations and conclusions we make. Equally valid are questions that go to the subjectivities of those people with whom we do research. How do we honor what they have to teach us? How do we best allow them to tell us, who do not know, what they do?

If we are unaware that research designs and their results are based on a paradigm, or set of assumptions about methodologies, it is more difficult to see the questions and issues that we are missing. Those questions and issues would come into focus only if we look at the people and their issues through the lens of another **theoria** (way of seeing).

Here begins a sociopolitical challenge to paradigmatic theories emerging from modernity. The “-logics” of modern science, specifically logical positivism and structural functionalism, when viewed as a constellation of practices, assume the “unmarked” position from which all Other is conceptualized and categorized. As this unmarked scientific position also assumes a nominalist role to all Others, its discourse and interpretations are problematic when placed into contexts of Otherness. By naming the scientific “unmarked” position the researcher attempts, through shifting discourses and practical positions, to explore the links between culture and cognition. There will be a certain discursive awkwardness: words are re-worked, invented and fashioned to reflect a reality from the position of Other rather than the universal “unmark-ed.” This study’s discourse and practical method reflect a “local science,” if

you will, constructed at the intersections of cognition, practical theology, and five fundamentalist NRM cultures.

Practical Theology

To understand something about these circumstances is neither to yield to the temptations of relativism, nor simply to explain the circumstances themselves away. Rather, it is to see with growing clarity just how deeply rooted are the structures (that have created the circumstances) (Code, Mullett, and Overall, 1988).

The Code et al. quotation above references a feminist method, in which an embodied researcher enters a living community and, honoring the subjectivities of all the study participants, emerges with interpretations consistent with its embedded narratives, challenges, and in the words of the culture. Fundamentalist NRMs create cultures that are decidedly countercultural, enabling an easier separation of the effects and contents of fundamentalist cognitive and affective organization from those of secular culture. The task at hand involves challenging the “logics” of modern scientific inquiry to suggest an accompanying practical theology that honors the persons who inhabit the cultures of fNRMs.

The practical theology employed in this study understands religious communities as carriers of practical reason, asking of each of them the normative and descriptive questions: Are these communities sanctioned by the ideals and norms of their respective traditions as carriers and implementers of religious knowledge? In what ways are these communities carriers of practical religious wisdom and what is it that this wisdom teaches? With Browning (1991), my conviction is that religious communities can and do constitute embodiments of practical theology and these

respective theologies participate in practical wisdom through their religious symbols, histories, narratives, and rituals (11).

Like Browning, I anticipate that communal practical theologies will come packaged in a narrative envelope, surrounded by the images of their religious worlds, and grounded in communal faith assumptions. Some of these practical theologies may be explicit and clearly articulated. Other pearls of practical wisdom are found embedded in symbol, story, and the lives of the individuals that participate in these religious communities (1996, 12). Still others may become evident in uncovering the cognitive features with which individual adherents negotiate social dilemmas (schemas) or the linguistic expressions in which they reveal their religious identities.

Therefore, practical theology, for the purposes of this study, is a process that engages the psychological, sociological, historical, and anthropological dynamics that inform the lived practices of religious knowledge in fundamentalist NRM communities. Individual expressed reasoning in sociomoral dilemmas and faith narratives are examples of such lived practices of religious knowledge, but are only the end-products of the production of knowledge and of faith and worldview formation in religious communities. This practical theology, then, provides the lens through which to analyze the complex faith and moral formation practices within fundamentalist NRM communities that will stand alongside the constructive “logics” of scientific developmental studies.

With Streib (2001), the study defines the fundamentalist orientation in the following ways:

1. infallibility and literal understanding of written texts;

2. literal understanding of some basic propositions, such as the Krishna wood and clay deities are in fact Krishna, divine creationism, the virgin birth of Jesus of Nazareth or the imminent return of Jesus Christ;
3. rejection of the results of modern science whenever they contradict these literal understandings; and
4. the claim that only people subscribing to these beliefs are truly religious.

Fundamentalism is, therefore, a response to (social) modernity, with each expression putting forth an alternative explanation of how the world “really” works. Fundamentalist groups forge their own “scientific” explanations, which are consistent with their literal understandings, and they employ contemporary means of communication, organizational strategies, and argumentation in so doing. Fundamentalism is, as Streib says, “modern anti-modernism” (2001, 238).

NRMs are religious groups of with origins or formal beginnings within the last 100 years, which display sectarian or separatist tendencies and that are not a part of an established faith tradition, denomination, or religious body. Dawson (1996) attributes the rise of NRMs to the decline to the ruling consensus of the Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish worldviews. NRMs, as a rule, sought to defy the modern Western practice of relegating religious life to the private sphere as their increasingly visibility and swelling ranks also challenge the traditional organization of families. Their continued presence, relative success and proliferation have commanded the attention of anthropologists, sociologists, historians, and evoked much public scrutiny.

Originally stigmatized as “cults,” NRM organizations’ tendency to portray an interest in the “other-worldly,” live in ways inconsistent with Western individualistic and materialistic norms, and to separate themselves from secular society, make them conspicuous. Visibility is also heightened when NRMs are placed squarely on our

television screens – the People’s Temple Jonestown massacre in 1978, the Branch Davidians of Waco in 1993, the Solar Temple mass murder/suicide in 1994 and the removal of over 400 young people from the Texas compound of the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in early 2008. This kind of visibility, however, leads to a popular feeling that NRMs are intrinsically dangerous for their adherents and for greater society. Yet, Dawson (1996) estimates that some 3,000 NRMs have emerged in the past few decades alone, which suggests that NRM membership is no more dangerous to their adherents or the general public than mainstream religious expression.

With Robbins and Anthony (1982, 283) this study defines NRMs as those religious groups with practices that tend toward sectarianism as follows:

1. authoritarian in their leadership;
2. communal and totalistic in their organization;
3. aggressive in their proselytizing; and
4. systematic in their programs of indoctrination.

Finally, the designation “new” refers, rather broadly to groups that are:

5. 100 years old or less and unfamiliar in the United States.

Some of the groups in this study originated from groups older than 100 years, but are included herein because of their separatist and/or sectarian practices as outlined above. In each case, the special features of the respective community, qualifying it for inclusion here, are discussed near the beginning of each chapter.

Two groups, Jehovah’s Witnesses and Seventh-day Adventists, claim origins from the ashes of the Great Disappointment, when Jesus did not return as predicted, in 1844. Nineteenth century rationalism also gave rise to movements seeking to

restore the character of the apostolic *ekklesia*, and two groups studied herein emerged from that impulse. Unity and restoration of the first century church is the driving force behind the rationally-driven churches of Christ, who were officially recognized as a group at the beginning of the twentieth century. Near the century's end, the restorationist impulse appeared again, this time with a charismatic flair, as the Third-Wave Restoration Charismatic mega-churches claimed themselves the recipient of restored spiritual gifts otherwise long forgotten by the faithful. The fifth group, the Hare Krishnas, enjoy a uniquely loving relationship with Krishna, the supreme personality of Godhead, who they say is the same God as Jehovah and Allah in other traditions. Bengali Vaisnavism existed in various forms in modern India, but not until a geriatric Swami connected with some hippie-types in New York City in the 1960s, did people in the United States begin to hear "Hare Krishna!"

The practical theological task is to employ a "--logic" in understanding the "theo-logic" in these fNRMs. Here it is imperative to understand the work of the Divine in select local communities of resistance to modern, secular society. The constructive elements are grounded in the research design and generated alongside the participants in research. Antecedent to the revelation of these Divine-work-ing traditions is the assumption that each fNRM presents a unique culture that is generated and understood by its language, arts, gestures, stories and practices.

In employing the "logic" in understanding fNRMs, I have tried to apply the lessons learned from emerging methodologies of other marginalized communities. Most notable among these are feminist and Africentric methods.

Feminist theory has an associated praxis of research. That is to say, feminist research involves ways of “thinking” and “doing field work” that do not reflect a gender bias is a method of research in and of itself. Feminist researchers and practitioners (as well as many ethnic and cultural groups, including African Americans and Hispanics), have long been advocating for changes in research and evaluation based on two principles:

1. Because historically most hypothetico-deductive theories were constructed primarily from the data on white, middle-class males, the experiences of girls, women and minorities have been left out or ignored (Gilligan, 1984; Brown and Gilligan, 1990; Brown and Gilligan, 1992). Further, recent studies and theories argue that the experiences of women, under-represented groups, and those who simply think and live differently from a dominant norm do not necessarily fit with historical or developing theories; and
2. Conventional methodologies, such as the superiority of objective vs. subjective knowing, the distancing of the research/evaluator from participants, and the assumptions of value-free, unbiased research/evaluations, are, according to feminist social scientists, seriously flawed. Feminist research transcends dichotomies and insists on the scientific validity of the subjective (Rose, 1986, 72).

Although encompassing a widely diverse set of assumptions and techniques, feminist research methods have been described as “contextual, inclusive, experiential, involved, socially relevant, multi-methodological” but not necessarily replicable, because they are open to the environment and inclusive of emotions and events as experiences (Nielson, 1990, 6; from Reinharz, 1993).

Similar to feminist sociological research methods, an emerging Africentric social science research paradigm adds yet another way to view communities marginalized by modern science. Africentric research privileges historical and sociological analysis prior to the interpretivist or constructivist events. Further,

Africentric social science places the following principles at the center of its methodological practices:

1. transformation: the purpose of research is to develop knowledge toward empowering persons and researchers to participate in and engage their contexts more fully; and
2. cooperation: knowledge and its construction are mutual. Researcher/scholar is also activist/practitioner (Milam, 1992, 8).

Africentrist epistemological assumptions are implicated in the latter term activist participant. The underlying assumptions of “knowing” here refer to the “knowing-how,” where the researcher is required to “Be” (ontologically) competent in the existential practice of “Being” (Nobles, 1990). This requires the awareness of certain precepts. Those precepts include ideals such as interdependence, understood as “desired” location between research and subject Knowers, and “correctness,” which is determined by relational harmony and balance toward experiential egalitarianism. Finally, this epistemological praxis assumes collectivism, in which a sense that any one individual effort is a reflection of communal knowledge (Nobles, 1990). Therefore, feminist and Africentric research methods admit multiple ways of knowing.

The practical theological method begins, as all good research does, with quantitative and qualitative elements. In the quantitative arena are found the Defining Issues Test (DIT-2), a neo-Kohlbergian recognition measure along with Fowler’s Faith Development Interview. These models, measures and methods will be discussed in Chapter 2. I “inherited” the use of the FDI with the “Deconverts” project, but I chose to use the DIT-2 alongside the FDI for several reasons.

First, James Rest, the developer of the DIT and his colleagues at the University of Minnesota Center for Ethical Development, disagree with Kohlberg's use of "hard" stages, or structures of thinking. The short story here is that hard stages imply a rigid form, where individuals advance a staircase of development, if you will, without ever going back to earlier modes of thinking and without ever mixing forms of thought. Data from the DIT-2 allow the researcher to assess the different types of thinking individuals use in the course of making moral judgments. DIT research has suggested that one individual may use varying types of thinking for varying contexts (Rest et al., 1999) and another idea emerging from the DIT research, schema theory, more adequately describes this phenomenon. Therefore, the DIT-2 was my measure of choice for gaining a snapshot on different kinds of thinking employed in moral judgments.

One qualitative element of this study includes participant observation within each fNRM. From studying within these communities, "hanging out with group adherents," literally --dinner, shopping, meeting the group authorities --and interviews with a few key informants, I was privileged to view many people in their webs of connection. No longer disembodied, members of these five communities were genuinely engaged in their respective community's production of religious truth and knowledge. I participated in liturgies and ceremonies, ordinances and festivals because they are the primary producers of religious and moral "truth." Prior to interpretation, I conducted literature reviews to gain a sense of the history, theology, and sociology of each fNRM, consistent with Africentric research methodology that

asserts that historical and sociological research must precede the interpretive or constructive effort. With the literature in my head and the communal practices in my heart and body, I faithfully attempted to reconstruct an ethnography of each community, each one illuminating an outside as well as an inside view of the group, while doing so honestly and while honoring these people who shared with me.

Another piece of the qualitative analysis involves a turn toward feminist research methodologies and a return to the narratives captured in the faith development interviews and in its accompanying life tapestry exercise. These narratives are read with an eye toward understanding each subject in her or his own terms, own voice and from own context. Those narrative structures are placed into conversation with the ethnographic piece of this puzzle to advance the narrative along toward greater understanding of how faith and moral meaning-making takes place in these cultures.

Finally, all four pieces are placed into conversation. The final chapter of this study brings together the results of all 20 subjects, though the partial narratives of only half of them are found in these pages. In summary, this practical theological project involves: quantitative measures in the DIT-2 and Faith Development Interviews, qualitative research with a participant-observation, ethnography, and narrative, content analysis of some of the Faith Development Interview material.

With two narrative sequences of each community, these become mini-case studies, from which I extract the lessons learned about how that community makes meaning in matters of sociomorality and faith. Each case study will ultimately address the guiding questions of this study: Can this be viewed and articulated in a

more egalitarian and socially/historically constructed way? How do the quantitative indicators stack up against the qualitative issues? Are there any “unmarked” issues of power, politics, or paradigmatic influences at work here? Is it possible to name them and prevent their influence in these results and interpretations?

Details of the quantitative measures, the DIT-2 and the Faith Development Interview, with their models, neo-Kohlbergian theory and Fowler’s Faith Development Theory, begin in Chapter 2.

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Chapter 2: Models and Measures of Morality and Faith

Introduction

My practical theological method begins with quantitative and qualitative elements. In the quantitative arena are found the Defining Issues Test (DIT)-2, a neo-Kohlbergian recognition measure along with Fowler's Faith Development Interview (FDI). Along with these quantitative measures, two qualitative research pieces will be added: ethnography of each community and narrative analyses of the faith development interviews. This triangulating method is designed to achieve multiple perspectives on the Otherness of fNRM communities. It creates multiple discourses from four perspectives, so that the researcher generates a conversation about moral and faith development in these five communities. Again, this practical theological project involves the following:

<u>Quantitative</u>	<u>Qualitative</u>
DIT-2	Lit Review and Ethnography
Classic FDI scores	Narrative Analysis of FDI
Synthesis	

This discussion of the quantitative measures begins, as I did with my epistemological review, with an overview Lawrence Kohlberg's model of cognitive moral development, which influenced the work of the two theories at the base of this study. From there, I will take up the model of one of a Kohlberg protégé, James Rest, who developed the Defining Issues Test (DIT) and its accompanying theory. Second, Kohlberg's contemporary, James Fowler, who developed Faith Development Theory

(FDT) and its accompanying measure, the Faith Development Interview (FDI) will be brought into the conversation later in this chapter.

Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)

Lawrence Kohlberg pioneered the fields of moral psychology and moral education through his ground-breaking, and later controversial, cognitive developmental theory and research. Kohlberg's work grew out of a lifelong commitment to address social injustice, and he constructed his project to be politically as well as personally meaningful. Kohlberg's dedication to social justice, and what eventually he called "just community," may have been a product of his exposure to Nazism as an eighteen-year-old serving as a United States Merchant Marine. His theory, according to a Kohlberg biographer-apologist, Don Reed, "was a deliberate response to the injustices he had encountered before college in the 1940s." (Reed, 1997, 10).

Kohlberg read Kant as an undergraduate at Hutchins College at the University of Chicago. As a graduate student, he formulated his theory of moral development, drawing from psychologists already committed to Kantian formalism in ethics. Reed suggests that "Kohlberg's capacity to Kantian formalism" (1997, 12), offered the lens for, and the foundation beneath, Kohlberg's focus on moral reasoning and judgment. In his doctoral dissertation for the University of Chicago, completed in 1958, Kohlberg essentially formulated his theory of an invariant sequence of six cross-culturally universal developmental stages of moral reasoning. This model tracks the progression of moral development from less adequate to more adequate reasoning with the highest reasoning being that marked by universal moral principles (Reed,

1997, 12). Although Kohlberg was heavily influenced by Jean Piaget's research on child development and played a major role in advancing Piaget's (1965) genetic epistemological paradigm, Kohlberg's work was also influenced by philosophical traditions from Plato to John Rawls and sociologists Emile Durkheim and, later in his work, George Herbert Meade. Kohlberg's theory of moral development elaborated a strength in Piaget's work, detailing a sociomoral interactionist view of human functioning. Over three decades, Kohlberg explicitly connected social development and with the basic processes involved in physical cognitions (Kohlberg, 1981). He proffered a tradition of "progressivism," which is the notion of the individual's interaction with society and a cognitive-developmental psychology (Hayes, 1994).

Brief Introduction to this Model

Explicit or implied in the Kohlbergian theory are five themes that also became important to Rest and to Fowler in their work. These themes will be developed, with their relevance for moral and faith development, in the pages that follow. At this point however, these themes are simply listed here along with a brief explanation:

Theme 1: Individuals are believed to participate in their own development, negotiating maturational, social and physical factors, trying to attain some sort of equilibrium between the forces of assimilation and accommodation. In 21st century terms, this is a self-constructive view; Kohlberg understood development as an activity of self-construction, driven by meaning making from life experience (Hayes, 1994).

Theme 2: Cognition is the ordering of basic mental structures. As Kohlberg (1969) explained, "cognition (as most clearly reflected in thinking) means putting

things together or relating events, and this relating is an active connecting process” (349). Underlying this theme is less of an emphasis on the content of what a person knows, but an interest on how an individual orders her experience (form of cognition). Kohlberg’s theory and thus, the Moral Judgment Interview, prioritize the process by which individuals arrive at their beliefs (Hayes, 1994).

Theme 3: Development is the qualitative reorganization of meaning, and this restructuring of experience informs the notion of cognitive stages. Kohlberg used the word “stage” to suggest qualitative differences in the individual’s modes of thinking or of solving the same problem at different ages of the lifespan. Development, then, is movement toward greater ease in adaptation, differentiation, and integration of distinct modes of thought in invariant and hierarchical developmental sequence (Kohlberg, 1969). Individuals prefer solutions to problems at the highest levels available to them. This is the foundational and driving force underlying movement from one stage to one that is more adequate.

Theme 4: Role, or perspective taking, underlies sociomoral development. By role taking, Kohlberg meant “the tendency to react to the Other as someone like the self and the tendency to react to the self’s behavior in the role of the Other” (Kohlberg, 1969, 368). When cognitive conflict arises in perspective taking and disequilibrium occurs, the platform is set for movement to a more adequate stage of reasoning. When cognitive conflict occurs, “a sense of contradiction and discrepancy at one’s own stage” facilitates cognitive reorganization at the next stage” (Kohlberg, 1969, 403).

Theme 5: The form of cognitive developmental moral reasoning could be assessed in the Moral Judgment Interview. The results of this measure yield a reflection of an individual's stage, moral orientation and type.

Kohlberg's Moral Judgment Interview (MJI)

Originally developed by Kohlberg, the Moral Judgment Interview (MJI) is a production task in that the respondent is asked to produce responses *de novo*. It assesses Kohlberg's stages (1 to 5), four moral orientations (normative, fairness, utilitarianism and perfectionism) and two moral types (heteronomous and autonomous). The MJI involves an individual interview of 30 to 60 minutes in which a series of three hypothetical moral dilemmas are presented. Responses to these dilemmas are scored according to Colby and Kohlberg's 977-page Scoring Manual (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987), by a trained judge who matches the individual's verbal responses to examples set forth in a scoring guide.

The MJI is appropriate for children aged 5 and up, adolescents and adults. A written format is also available and can be used by individuals who possess at least an 8th grade reading level.

James R. Rest (1941-1999)

James Rest is best known as the founder of the Center for Ethical Development at the University of Minnesota and for developing what came to be known as the Minnesota approach to morality research. This approach emphasized both a focus on moral development theory in the Kohlbergian tradition and an empirical base of inquiry into these issues. Rest's work was typically associated with the Defining Issues Test (DIT) (Thoma & Bebeau, 2008).

Rest's Early Research and Implications for Moral Judgment Research

In the work of Rest, “practical ramifications of Kohlberg’s project became more clear” (Reed, 1992, 12). Rest's 1973 dissertation, from which emerged the Defining Issues Test (DIT), sought to provide evidence for the hierarchical nature of moral judgment within Kohlberg's stage theory. Rest constructed two measures of moral judgment, composed of a comprehension task and a preference task. The comprehension task consisted of asking participants to recapitulate and evaluate each of the prototypic reasoning statements generated by Kohlberg's stages. Participants were then asked to rate each statement according to the strength of its containing reasoning. Rest then compared his responses to the comprehension and preference measures to those typical of the production responses of Kohlberg’s Moral Judgment Interview (MJI). Rest concluded that respondents reacted to statements in a hierarchical and ordered learning pattern. Further, he noted that:

1. If respondents comprehended statements at one particular stage, they comprehended all same-stage items as well as the statements from the previous stages;
2. Statements reflecting a higher stage than that of participants' predominant functioning appeared increasingly incomprehensible to them;
3. Participants presented statements that were higher than their spontaneous modal stage were able to comprehend and produce spontaneously some amount at the comprehended stage;
4. Participants preferred to make judgments at the highest stage they could comprehend; and,
5. With regard to the preference data, they preferred the stage statements in hierarchical order and found the highest comprehended stage statements most compelling and convincing (Narvaez & Bock, 2002, 310).

From the above, Rest concluded that the tasks of preference and comprehension as well as spontaneous production were hierarchically ordered. The first sign of "trying on" a new stage is the individual's preference for it. With

practice, one becomes more facile with the cognitive field, making way for the individual's better comprehension of the contents of that field. Finally, spontaneous production of statements representative of that stage indicates that a subject is capable of making full use of the cognitive elements of the stage.

The Defining Issues Test (DIT)

Kohlberg's theories were at once a psycho-developmental stage theory, that is, a psychological theory of how people advance over time, and a philosophical theory arguing for the modes of thought that propel toward ever more sociomoral sophistication. Though the model inspired by the Defining Issues Test (DIT) psychological research is not explicitly philosophical, I will try to approach it as a philosophical theory as well as one strongly validated by psychological research.

The DIT emerged from Rest's work in Kohlbergian thought and originated as a cognitive developmental tool to measure the shift from conventional to postconventional moral reasoning (Narvaez, Bock, Walker, 2002). It has been called 'Neo-Kohlbergian' by its developers and constituents based at the University of Minnesota (Rest et al., 1999), and, similar to and reflective of the work by Kohlberg and his stages of moral development, it emphasizes cognition, personal construction, developmental theory and postconventional thought as "higher" moral thinking. Over the years, even some of its original constituents based at the University of Minnesota have shifted their thinking about the DIT. The measure itself has generated two sets of theories about moral development and moral reasoning which will be detailed at some length below.

First, like Kohlberg's theories of development in sociomoral reasoning, the neo-Kohlbergian view emphasizes cognition. That this neo-Kohlbergian measure involves complex cognitive processes and epistemological antecedents cannot be denied. Yet, its neo-Kohlbergian construction is also sensitive to culture and social context, in ways that will soon become apparent.

Second, the DIT highlights the personal construction of basic epistemological categories, such as rights, duty, justice, social order and reciprocity. This emphasis does not deny the epistemological power of sociocultural backgrounds or that cultural ideologies place upon individuals. Thus, the DIT's model of personal construction takes into account social group experience, and group derived sociomoral mores as practices of a culture. The DIT, then, emphasizes the individual's attempt to make sense of his/her own social experience (Rest et al., 1999b, 204).

Third, the DIT assumes change over time in terms of development. This means that change in the DIT scores, its creators and proponents believe, depict moral growth development as well as cognitive advance in its philosophical, normative-ethical sense.

Finally, the theory behind the DIT maintains that the cognitive advance of adolescents to adults represents a shift consistent with Kohlberg's notions of conventional to postconventional reasoning. This shift roughly correlates to the type of thinking one employs in the shift toward thinking through moral obligations based on shared ideals that are reciprocal, open for debate, and consistent with the experience of the community (Rest et al., 1999b). Most importantly, the models

behind the DIT hold that this shift from conventional to postconventional thinking is the final goal in moral judgment reasoning.

Neo-Kohlbergian Stage Development: The Minnesota Model

Moral development, as argued by Rest et al. (1986) comprises four essential and interacting components: moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and character. First articulated by Rest (1983) and his colleagues at the University of Minnesota (Rest, Bebeau, & Volker, 1986; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999), the Four Component Model is grounded in a review of moral psychological research. The model was intended to synthesize moral psychology by incorporating disparate contributions from various traditions. The Four Component Model was viewed as a modality to 1) advocate a broader conception of moral functioning, 2) provide an analytical tool for looking at various interpretive issues, such as the relationship between cognition, affect and behavior, and 3) offer a framework for the implementation and assessment of moral interventions (Walker, 2002). This model dispels a previous notion that moral functioning is the product of a three part classification into cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains. It has some deep resonances with moral philosophers' attempts to define characteristics essential for morally strong personalities and societies (Bok, 1976). Bebeau (2002), in fact, asserts that the FCM "extends substantially philosophers' conceptions of ethical sensitivity and ethical implementation" (283).

One way the DIT attends to a view of identifying the processing that informs moral development is through the Four Component Model. This model maintains that each of its components involves a different kind of interaction of cognition and

affect. The FCM identifies at least four integrated abilities as antecedent conditions for effective sociomoral decision making:

Moral sensitivity includes how a given situation is interpreted as well as how (well) the given perceiver role-takes¹ and empathizes with those affected by the actions of the moral agent. Moral sensitivity involves the ability to identify a moral issue and to interpret the reactions and feelings of other people. This involves the moral agent's awareness of alternative courses of action, of thinking through cause-and-effect consequence events and how these events could affect all concerned parties. As such, ethical sensitivity involves role- (or perspective) taking skills, an epistemological action, and empathy, which is often its behavioral complement. Ethical sensitivity includes the ability to envision things from the other's perspective, whether 'other' is other individuals or groups. This component includes understanding the epistemological abstract perspectives of legal, institutional and national groups and allegiances (Bebeau, 2002). Defined in this way, moral sensitivity involves both a cognitive-epistemological process and a behavioral-psychological response.

Moral judgment, the second step of the Four Component Model, is a psycho-philosophical construct that articulates the process by which individuals determine that one course of action in a particular situation is morally right and another course of action is morally wrong (Rest et al. 1997, 5). Moral judgment, i.e., determining which alternative is justified, involves a complex of cognitive processes, including

¹ For the purposes of this study, I will use the term "role taking" or "perspective taking" to denote a philosophical term, implying a cognitive, epistemological, construct that is prior to the behavioral-psychological response/action of empathy. Though role-taking and empathy are often performed hand-in-hand, as we examine the cognitive nature of moral thinking, it may be that the two are not necessarily intertwined and thus, there is a need to consider the two separately.

perceiving an issue as a moral one, understanding it, and apprehending some resolution. Moral judgment includes knowing what the moral issues are, how conflicts are to be resolved, and why one selects one course of action over another. Moral judgment involves the use and facile manipulation of abstract principles that guide decision-making.

Moral motivation, the third of this FCM, involves the qualitative degree to which the moral agent feels compelled to act (in her moral view) morally over all other values. This component includes accommodations for the fact that individuals have concerns that may not be compatible with their own moral choices. Established relationships, career pressures, and various personal commitments can complicate making moral choices and could potentially be inconsistent with personal futures or family development. Moral motivation is the bridge between knowing the right thing to do and acting upon it. That is to say that what must take place under the rubric of moral motivation is the individual's self-awareness and *knowing* that one is responsible for action and mustering the personal commitment to do so. Moral motivation is compromised when the moral agent places personal interests such as achievement, self-actualization, or concerns for the group as values more highly regarded than moral concern (Bebeau, 2002).

Psychologically, people differ in how deeply moral notions penetrate their self-understanding (Blasi, 1985), and in the kinds of moral concerns that become interpreted into self-understanding and self-awareness. Identify formation is closely related to the ability to know how to act on a given moral concern. Forsythe and colleagues (2002), looking at West Point cadets in various stages of the educational

process, reported that at least 30% of West Point graduates had not reached key transitions in identity formation and thus, could not work through a broad, internalized understanding of codes of ethics or a commitment to professional standards. Other studies (Bebeau, 1994; Braxton & Baird, 2001) support the notion that healthy and more sophisticated identity formation enables individuals to better understand shared norms and expectations and their individual roles within those systems.

Moral character refers to the implementation of skills and strategies that support the moral choice. It is a multifaceted component, including self-regulation, ego strength, discipline and follow through on one's reflected convictions. (Rest et al., 1997). Associated character traits are courage, perseverance, self-control and integrity (Walker, 2002). A person may be ethically sensitive, make sound moral judgments, understand a personal imperative to act upon moral choices and may then wilt under pressure, or become distracted or weak-willed for one reason or another. In such cases, the moral failure follows from a breach in moral character the fourth element of the FCM. Moral character is inextricably linked to ethical implementation; competence in ethical implementation requires the strength of character to enact one's ideals, judgments and moral choices. This requires the skills of working around obstacles and through distractions. It requires, therefore, a certain amount of ego strength and discipline.

The DIT is a test of moral judgment, the second element of the Four Component Model. The DIT and, more recently, the DIT-2 have been used for over twenty-five years and have proven reliable and valid measure in the measurement of

moral development. They have been implemented in research spanning the discipline of sociomoral and professional development, from looking at teacher education, to dental practice sensitivities, to “searching for the ethical journalist”(Coleman & Wilkins, 2002). The Four Component Model addresses what the Minnesota-based team believes were limitations of Kohlberg’s single-variable, moral judgment theory in favor of one that provides a more balanced and comprehensive account of the moral decision making process (Walker, 2004).

DIT researchers, over the years, have noted that studies reporting or noting change in stage scores may mask other kinds of cognitive sophistication (Bebeau, 2002). The most obvious effect masked by looking only at the stage-type score is the acquisition of new thinking and a view of the kinds of new thinking that support the score. Also masked is the subject’s ability to make distinctions among competing arguments, as the DIT statement ratings and rankings data are not clearly illuminated by the by the P-score or N2 index alone. Finally, as the postconventional score reflects only Stages 5 and 6 thinking employed on the test, it cannot capture the decreased use of the more simplistic thinking at stages 2 or 3 (Bebeau, 2002). The salient point here is that the DIT is capable of capturing multiple ways of thinking, important for this study as it is placed alongside the FDI.

Schema Theory and the Minnesota Model

If indices measuring postconventional thinking alone fail to capture the many types of thinking used in transacting moral judgments, of what value is the DIT-2? Rest and colleagues disagree with Kohlberg’s hard stages (1999a). Hard stages imply a “rigid” form, where individuals advance a staircase of development, if you will,

without ever going back to earlier modes of thinking and without ever mixing forms of thought. Postconventional-score only data also misses the different types of thinking individuals use in the course of making moral judgments. DIT research has suggested that one individual may use varying types of thinking for varying contexts (Rest et al., 1999a) and another model, schema theory, more adequately describes this phenomenon.

“Schema” refers to a general knowledge structure in the mind, in Piagetian fashion, formed by repeated experience, and evoked by stimuli in the environment. Therefore, stimulus phenomena are encoded as a schema (Rest, 1999). The Minnesota team revised and reformulated Kohlberg’s (1984) theory into one using three schemas instead of six stages to describe developmental change. At the same time, Rest et al. (1999b, 16) set out to describe the cognitive structures of moral judgment in terms of information processing phenomena. This newer way of speaking of moral judgment as schemas involves something of a merger of the traditions of researching moral judgment as stage phenomena, as did Piaget (1965), Kohlberg (1984) and earlier Rest studies, with the research tradition of information processing (e.g. Rummellhart, 1980).

Schema theorists argue that the functions of schemas are fundamental to the way that people make sense of information, that schemas guide attention to new information and offer templates for obtaining further information. Schemas also give structure or meaning to experience by enabling the perceiver in her cataloguing of interrelating parts and by filling in information where sections are missing.

The recognition task of the DIT is a device for activating moral schemas (Narvaez & Mitchell, 2), providing fragments of lines of reasoning that balance just enough to activate a schema with giving the participant enough information to search the contents of her long-term memory. In theory, as a participant encounters an item that makes sense to a particular schema, it activates that schema and the participant gives that item a high rating and ranks it high in importance. The converse is also true – if a participant encounters an items that does not register with any schema in long-term memory, the item receives a lower rating and is likely not ranked in importance. Thus, the DIT seeks to address both “bottom up” processing as well as “top down” processing.

The following summarizes use of schemas in the sociomoral domain and how they match to research in moral judgment:

1. Schemas provide a cognitive structure for experience. When a new experience is encountered, it is matched against a schema in the long-term memory of the brain, thereby activating a schema in the memory of the perceiver (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999).
2. Pre-existing schemas determine what information will either be retrieved from or encoded into memory. The perceiver’s interpretation determines which schema will be activated or retrieved. Subjects asked to recall presenting dilemma particulars sometimes distorted the story with arguments not presented in the story (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999). Narvaez & Mitchell (1999) record the following example of an argument distortion: “Tom”, a person at neo-Kohlbergian Stage 4, stated, “what had been keeping him (the dilemma subject) tossing and turning for the last two weeks ... was his feeling of responsibility to the business” (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999, 3). Of course, what had actually been presented to “Tom” did not refer to any feelings of responsibility at all.
3. Schemas facilitate processing time, speed of information flow and speed of problem solving. Schemas are an efficient means for transferring information across information processing systems. Therefore, sociomoral schemas significantly increase the speed of evaluation and facilitate making moral judgments (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999).
4. Schemas enable the sociomoral perceiver to fill in data missing from an input stimulus configuration. If the perceiver is given incomplete

5. Schemas provide bases for solving problems. As schemas provide an interpretation of events in the world, the interpretation suggests courses of action and lines of decision making for solving problems. Research with the DIT concludes that subjects who function with stage 2 and stage 3 schemas have a more difficult time making decisions than those using the stage 5 and stage 6 schemas (Rest et al., 1999a).
6. Schemas provide a basis for evaluating experience. People with more highly developed schemas make more confident and extreme evaluations. Groups of people with different schemas that are highly developed, tend to polarize on ideological and public policy issues (Rest et al., 1999a). Simply stated, schemas drive judgments about events and experience.
7. Schemas provide a basis for anticipating and predicting likely outcomes of future events, setting goals, making plans, and for developing behavioral rules for dealing with goals plans, etc. Schemas offer the sociomoral perceiver a way to predict courses of social action (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999).

The Three Predominant Schemas and Their Epistemological Features

Research with the DIT documents that individuals change over time with regard to their preferred use of three schemas: Personal Interest (S23), Maintaining Norms (S4), and Postconventional (S56). S23, derived from Kohlberg's Stages 2 and 3, is the Personal Interest Schema and assumes a "prior to society," or pre-societal perspective. This schema is activated by a desire to organize the issues presented in the DIT as if there were only "micro-moral" relationships at stake.

Examples of micro-moral concerns are being kind and courteous to those with whom one regularly interacts and generally acting in a caring and empathic way toward people in one's everyday life. This Personal Interest Schema considers what each individual stakeholder has to gain or to lose. The S23 schema does not account for society as a whole. Indeed, in Kohlbergian theory, the stage 2 or stage 3 individual

has yet to take account for the social groups, institutions, and interrelations of persons and the larger world. Consequently, the S23 schema does not consider issues with regard to society-wide cooperation and does not think through issues at a macro level of shared cooperation between groups, institutions, societies, etc. (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999, 4).

Macro-morality is manifested in the behavior and attitudes on individuals as it is manifested in the larger world through the webs of relationships as a function of rules, roles and institutions. Macro-morality is lived out through the individual's relationship with society and participation in the public sphere. In macro-morality, what the individual regards as praiseworthy is characterized in terms of impartiality and acting on principle, rather than resting decisions on partisanship, tribalism, family ties or favoritism. Macro-moral issues are most apparent in public policy leanings and service/political activities. (Rest et al., 1999a).

The Maintaining Norms schema, S4, corresponds to Kohlberg's Stage 4, the "Law and Order" stage. This schema represents attaining a socio-centric perspective, where one must consider not only the macro-moral issues of taking perspective of people who are not family, kin, or likely acquaintances, but the larger issues of society, groups, institutions and their relationships with individuals and one another. Activating questions in this schema are the following: How are people going to cooperate with one another? How does one organize cooperation on a society-wide basis? What are the existing rules and the rules at work here? This schema answers such questions by identifying the established practice and following through on how established order is best maintained (Rest et al. 1999, 4).

As individuals move beyond adolescence and into adulthood, the discovery of society and its web of roles and institutions lead one to seek, in theory, the structure of the Maintaining Norms schema. The schema does not specify which particular roles and rules should guide the individual; rather, it points to the moral necessity of maintaining the norms.

Since the individual that uses this schema is acutely aware that cooperation is necessary, the motivating idea is that norms and rules avoid conflict, disagreement and facilitate working together. Within this worldview, norms, therefore, provide stability, predictability, safety, and coordination (Rest et al., 1999a). Related to this need to maintain norms are the following:

1. The need to establish a society-wide system of cooperation. Since people must “get along” across familial, city, state and societal lines, something must establish cooperation among people who do not know each other on a face-to-face basis. What usually is established, in the mind of the individual using this schema, is the idea that formal law stabilizes expectations among people who do not know one another and to not defer to formal law invites societies and groups to chaos and confusion.
2. Laws are publicly set, are knowable to everyone and apply to everyone equally. The formal laws to which the individual using the Maintaining Norms schema holds can be understood in the sense of civil, municipal law or in terms of religious codes or creeds (Rest et al., 1999a, 306). Whether the “formal law” is civil, cooperative or religious, it is considered binding for and to everyone and everyone is equally protected by it.
3. Partial reciprocity. As the last statement above suggests, the individual inhabiting this schema maintains that laws establish reciprocity and reversibility among all participants and across the society. This orientation is only partial, however, because the person using this schema may acknowledge that obeying the law might not benefit all societal participants in an equitable way. That “some people must cut their losses”, the S4 person believes, is necessary to achieve the best configuration of society-wide cooperation. Related to this way of thinking is the notion of duty. According to the Norms orientation, doing one’s duty according to one’s station and one’s role

4. Duty orientation. The Norms schema is “duty oriented” and authoritarian – authoritarian here meaning the individual does not question the power of authorities and defers to them. This orientation defers to authority out of respect for the social system and formal “laws” are connected to “order” as well as duty. Without the connective tissue of law and order, society would be in anarchy, the S4 believes, and anarchy is something all responsible people wish to prevent. This schema commits the “naturalistic fallacy”, by inferring that what “is”, that is, the norms or her mindset, also “ought” to be, as in normative for everyone and therefore binding upon everyone (Rest et al., 1999a).

Understanding the features of this scheme helps illuminate why conventional thinkers maintain a sense of sociomoral certainty about the necessity to maintain the social order and uphold the formal law however it may be construed. This certainty can often fuel the rather special zeal that is often the hallmark of conventional thought (Rest et al., 1999a, 306). Problematic about S4 thinking, however, is that basic human rights and civil liberties can be curtailed in deference to maintaining the social order and upholding its rules, norms and laws.

Postconventional schemas, corresponding to Kohlberg’s stages 5 and 6 or S56, represents the shift from conventional to postconventional thought is the hallmark of moral development. Postconventional thought is ideal based, non-dogmatic, and subjective; it is open to experience but must withstand tests of logical coherence. Ideals are open to debate, interpretation, and practice. Social norms are seen as just that, norms, deviation has the potential for good when laws are unjust or biased in favor of one group or people or a particular institution. Kohlberg’s stages 5 and 6 characterize this schema, although Rest’s schema is more broadly defined and does not attempt to describe universal ideals.

Rest et al. (1999a) propose four elements essential to the makeup of the postconventional schema. They include 1) understanding/identifying the moral purpose behind norms and codes, 2) postconventionality as an appeal to an ideal, 3) sharable ideals that must be present in postconventional thinking and 4) full reciprocity (308).

When a person is processing information at the postconventional level, the person transacts moral choices understanding that laws, social roles and codes are social arrangements that can be set up in a variety of ways, renegotiated and re-verified given new circumstances and social arrangements. They are also fully aware of traditions, laws and religious codes that prescribe some and proscribe other behaviors. In the postconventional thinker's mind, the fact that these de facto norms exist is not, in and of itself, a reason to follow or subscribe to them. Simply stated, the postconventional thinker looks to the moral purpose behind the norms and obligations rather than, as the Maintaining Norms thinker does, looking to the norms and obligations themselves (Rest et al., 1999a).

The positive, constructive features of postconventional thinking include the ability to envision creative and (shared) idealized avenues where humans can interrelate or some healthier ideals for the organization of society. Moral philosophy is filled with ideals for such organizing society, such as guaranteeing basic human rights, protections or wages for everyone, engendering caring and intimacy among all people, assuring fair and equal treatment for all and the like (Rest et al., 1999a).

In order to be postconventional, ideals as stated above must be sharable. That is, postconventional thinkers do not base their constructions on personal intuitions or

private thoughts. This is not to suggest that a postconventional thinker cannot or does not construct creative solutions or extract moral ideas that are dissimilar from the shared norms of a society, indeed, postconventional constructions may very well be inconsistent with some shared norms of a society. Here, however, the postconventional thinking must withstand the tests of logical consistency, appealing to the moral purpose behind the constructed solution or proposal, and be sharable with other individuals to where the action does not cost others. Sharability is tested by the ability to justify the solution to those to whom participation is anticipated, and justification must serve group goals, be consistent with principles and ideals, it furthers cooperation for the common good (Rest et al., 1999a). Additionally, postconventional thinking is not protected by an authority outside of the individual thinker – the individual's justifications are open to rational critique, are informed and challenged by new experiences and evidence.

Unlike the Maintaining Norms (S4) schema, the postconventional thinker holds onto full reciprocity, embracing a position of irony in that every individual is entitled to the same rights and responsibilities while accepting that laws themselves may be flawed and biased. Essential to the individual using the postconventional schema is that sociomoral obligations are based on 1) "shared ideals", 2) that these shared ideals are fully reciprocal and are open to debate and tests of logical and social consistency, 3) are based largely in the shared experience of the community (Rest et al., 1999a,309). Full reciprocity, for the postconventional thinker, suggests not only uniform application of social norms, but also that the social norms

themselves do not favor some members of a society at the expense of other members of the society.

"Full" reciprocity, to the postconventional thinker, carries with it a capacity for dealing with ambiguity --- awareness that moral behavior may entail acts that are unlawful because of flawed laws. The postconventional thinker, then, tries to balance the claim of "justice for all" by appealing to communal societal ideals and logical coherence (Rest et al.,1999a) certain authority to her- or him- self to logically and consistently adjudicate the competing claims of societal norms and "justice for all." In other words, the postconventional thinker, deferring to his or her epistemological authority to do so, attends to the logical coherence of both societal norms and societal ideals, checking for any inconsistencies, before making sociomoral decisions. By contrast, the individual inhabiting the Maintaining Norms (S5) schema will attempt to resolve justice claims by appealing to established practice and deferring to existing authorities.

What we can infer from Rest's dissertation research as it relates to schema theory is that preference and recognition are the beginnings of understanding of a new modal type. Spontaneous production of statements indicative of a new schema, type, or stage is only possible once an individual's thinking is consolidated and well-practiced at that level. In theory, Rest was able to capture moments when participants' sociomoral functioning were tacit, non-verbal and intuitive. This idea paves the way for the notion that schemas are hierarchically ordered, but also in flux, in communication with "neighboring" schemas over their developmental course.

DIT researchers report three moral phenomena, informed by schema theory, associated with how people transact moral decisions:

1. The schema types, Type 1-Type 7 are developmentally ordered, suggesting that S4, for instance, is more developmentally advanced than S23 and that S56 is more developmentally advanced than is S4.
2. That the low schema mix thinker, that is, the thinker who consolidates the use of schemas to just one, more easily processes information than those who use a mixture of the types (transitional thinkers).
3. Schemas guide different kinds of decisions such that, in response to the same DIT-2 statement string, consolidation on S4 may suggest strong citizenship and deference to authority where consolidation at S56 may suggest a capacity for creative moral protest and solution solving (Rest & Narvaez, 1999, 312).

From Stage to Schema

Schema theory and stage theory is more alike than not, though it may not be immediately apparent that this is the case. Both theories focus on general knowledge, the epistemological structures that are used to assimilate and structure new information. The emphasis in schema theory, however, is placed on how existing knowledge structures facilitate information processing. The model behind the DIT places little emphasis on the development of schemas (Rest et al., 1999a, 297).

Stage theory, by contrast, emphasizes development. Development in Kohlberg's view, takes place one "step" at a time, without skipping any steps and without any mixture of different steps in the process of moral reasoning. This position is substantiated by Colby et al. in longitudinal studies (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs & Lieberman, 1982). Classic Kohlbergians would look solely to the P-score of the DIT and/or the N2 score of the DIT-2. It is possible to look at a P score and gain the inference that a person may be in Stage 3, or transitioning from Stage 3 to Stage

4, but P or N2 scores alone can tell us little about how a person is processing the information presented on the DIT or DIT-2.

Rest, Thoma and Narvaez (1999) contend that social cognition data present a more concrete level of abstraction than that represented by Kohlberg's theory of "hard" stages. By example, a schema activated by the term "professor" evokes a host of mental images from the wealth of experiences a given individual may have had with "teachers", "researchers", "film characters", "Eddie Murphy in "The Absent Minded Professor"" or other variants of the word "professor." As such, this schema is (socio-culturally) experienced by the individual, and the individual is more aware of the schema's content than that of a "stage." The theory behind the DIT presumes that people make sense of these pre-existing schemas in terms of the three schemas, Personal Interest, Maintaining Norms, and Postconventional, and their mixtures noted above.

Schema theory, by contrast, captures a predominant pattern of thinking. It is very possible for a person who predominantly uses Maintaining Norms (S4) thinking to also use Postconventional (S56) and Personal Interest (S23) thinking in lesser and varying amounts. Furthermore, the stage scores of P and N2 cannot give a snapshot of "pure" schemas as they might "pure" stages because it is possible for two people with the same N2 scores to inhabit different predominant sociomoral schemas.

The shift from stage to schema positions us to look more closely at the content of moral thinking, to look at patterns of thinking demonstrated on the DIT-2 rather than attending solely to a P or N2 score, and to consider anew some interesting questions for moral philosophers and others working to understand moral judgment,

promoting sociomoral growth or teaching for social justice. In particular, we are better positioned to consider questions of poststructuralism and moral development, such as: if the Self is not singular and unitary, how does this impact moral developmental advancement? If the Self is, as poststructuralists would suggest, a collection of discursive practices, what does this say about moral development? A final question that schema theory will help tackle in the course of this study is about alterity, that is, does the position of Otherness or alterity, in a given society, alter one's advancement to more adequate modes of sociomoral thinking or enable one to use S56 than one who is more comfortable within the society? Is it possible that positions of alterity *can* be privileged positions in terms of constructing postconventional thinking? When conditions of alterity require (even force) a person to live with ambiguity, the irony of life, because, in living daily with the understanding that life isn't fair, is one more easily enabled to gain the ability to take authority unto oneself and not defer to established norms or to existing authorities?

DIT Structure

The DIT and DIT-2 utilize a recognition task for generating subjects' responses. The DIT is designed to access moral thinking and that subjects can recognize but not necessarily produce, by presenting set of responses for subjects to rate and rank in terms of their importance, moral acceptability, or sensibility.

The DIT-2, in use for nearly 10 years now, shortens the dilemmas from six to five, and updates the 1974 language of the DIT. It contains new dilemmas updated for the 21st century. It presents five dilemmas, each followed by a list of 12 points to consider for resolving the dilemma. According to its Minnesota developers, the

directions are clearer. It purges fewer subjects and is slightly more powerful on validity criteria than the original DIT (Rest et al., 1999a; Rest et al., 1999b).

The DIT-2 has several built-in reliability checks. One reliability test detects random responding by looking at the consistency between the rankings of items and the rating of items. It does so as it presents a set of 12 statements and asks respondents to select the most important item, second most important item, etc., thereby ranking a respondent's top four choices. Further, each selection is presented in terms of a five-point Likert scale format, rating each item from the greatest importance to no importance. If and when there is little or no consistency between ranking and rating, subjects are purged. DIT research at Minnesota suggests that between 10-15 percent of tested participants fail this internal reliability check. Purging subjects, however, strengthens the overall trends in the data reports.

DIT-2 Administration

The DIT-2 was administered successfully to 20 subjects in this study. The DIT-2 was presented to subjects just after the Faith Development Interview. Some completed the instrument during the same sittings as the interview. Others completed the test at another time and mailed the scantron to the researcher.

DIT-2 Scoring

All 20 DIT-2 scantrons were sent to the University of Minnesota Center for Ethical Development for scoring. Minnesota returned score reports in SPSS format, which included the calculated P- and N2 scores, schema scores, stage scores, an antisocial score, and humanitarian score and the raw rating and ranking data.

Items are rated and ranked for importance by the subject. Each point represents a different type of moral thinking or, following schema theory, activates a different schema. The most widely used scores on the DIT-2 are the P-score and/or the N2 scores. The P-score is reported from 0-95 and represents the percentage of postconventional thinking preferred by the subject. The N2 score is reported from 0-99 and is often correlated with the respondent's likelihood to act on their convictions, as it is a new developmental index.

The N2 score of the DIT-2 is the new developmental index to replace the P index of the DIT1 (Rest, 1999). The N2 score is a hybrid index using both rating and ranking data (Rest et al., 1997) and as such, it is possible to isolate the impact of particular elements and activating statements. The N2 index is calculated from the ratings and rankings profile. Designed to represent the participant's developmental level, the mathematical story of the N2 index is that it optimizes trends on seven validity criteria (Rest, et al., 1997). What the N2 index does not do is define the extent of types of thinking.

Schemas scores help define the extent to which a respondent uses various types of thinking. Schema predominance is determined by the rating, not the ranking data. Items collectively designated as S23 are averaged on their ratings, as are the S4 items and the S56 items.

Types of thinkers are classified in terms of two features: 1) the predominant schema type (S23, S4, S56) and 2) the extent of schema mix. Relative to schema mix, people with high scores in one schema are considered to be "consolidated" in

that one schema, while those of more equal ratings of the three are termed “transitional.”

DIT-2 Validity

Construct validity studies on the DIT demonstrate how the measure is effective for moral judgment research in several ways. Those construct validity studies reveal the following trends:

1. A natural differentiation within groups in terms of their performance in moral judgment;
2. Correlations between moral judgment (determining which act is justified) and moral comprehension (understanding, empathizing and taking perspective);
3. Change as a function of enriching or educating experiences or longitudinal change as a function of age, and related to that;
4. Sensitivity of sociomoral education interventions; and,
5. Links of moral judgment with behavior and attitudes, particularly with regard to public policy issues (Rest et al. 1997, 14).

Fowler’s Faith Development Theory

Faith, according to Fowler (1981), involves the human dimensions of knowing, valuing, be-coming and acting in the making and maintaining of human meaning in relation to an “ultimate environment.” Following Paul Tillich, Fowler grounds his definition of faith on the “god values” in our lives that ground our beings or that concern us “ultimately.” When we honestly name the objects of our true devotion, there we locate what is our “ultimate concern” or our center of value. An ultimate concern may be found in family, materiality, or in institutional or religious forms (Fowler, 1981, 4). Faith refers to a person’s ultimate place of trust and commitment. It is an ultimate mode of “being-in-relation” that draws out our deepest loyalties, commitments, risks, hopes and loves.

Fowler (1981) advanced the notion that belief systems that are of our ultimate concern may be expressed verbally or mediated by other systems. One individual may express their faith in literal and anthropomorphic ways while another may understand faith as a system that is deeply symbolic and abstract.

Fowler (2001) argues that Faith development theory had its roots in praxis. It grew out of linkages between H. Richard Niebuhr's dynamic conception of faith and the psychosocial conception of the self from Erik Erikson's ego psychology. It incorporates adaptations of Kohlberg and Piaget's constructive developmental account of stage-driven transformations in moral reasoning and cognition. Through faith development theory, Fowler's hope was to operationalize a more systematic view of faith from a constructive-developmental perspective. Fowler followed the challenges of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg to value, not just the contents of ideas and thoughts, but also the fundamental patterns of the operation of thinking.

Selfhood, in faith development theory, includes what Fowler describes as "a triadic structure" that is "the self, the primal and significant others in the self's relational matrix and the Ultimate Other, or the centers of value and power" (2001, 163). Faith development theory, asserts Fowler, allows for study of the self as a process of self-aware construction of the triadic relationship and its change over time. Countering claims that faith development theory does not include a theory of the self, Fowler argues that the structural aspects that constitute the matrix of faith embrace a theory of the self as well as a self-in-narrative. The theory of the self in Fowler's stages is, however, one that evolves over time as meaning is constructed and in the matrix of relationships and meanings involved in faith (2001, 164).

Faith development theory posits that there are six stages of faith, in which a stage is, as Kohlberg described it, a reorganization of meaning and thus, a restructuring of experience.

Stage 0 - "Primal or Undifferentiated" faith (birth to 2 years), is characterized by an early learning of the safety of the home and maternal environment, in which the emergent strength of faith is the development of basic trust;

Stage 1 – "Intuitive-Projective" faith (typically ages of three to seven), is characterized by the psyche's unprotected exposure to its unconscious operations, in which the emergent strength of faith is the birth of the imagination;

Stage 2 – "Mythic-Literal" faith (found mostly in school children), stage two persons have a strong belief in the justice and reciprocity of the universe, and their deities are almost always articulated in anthropomorphic terms. Meaning making is both carried and "trapped" in the narrative. The emerging capacity here is the emergence of drama, story, and myth in giving coherence to experience;

Stage 3 - "Synthetic-Conventional" faith (arising in adolescence) is marked by the intense conformity of adolescent years as the individual's experience widens beyond the family. The emergent capacity here is the development of a personal myth --- the myth of one's own becoming in identity and faith;

Stage 4 – "Individuative-Reflective" faith (usually mid-twenties to late thirties) constitutes a struggle to become an adult and to establish identity. Subjectivity and outlook are differentiated from those of others. The individual takes personal responsibility for his or her own ideas, values, commitments and beliefs. The new capacity here is the capacity for critical reflection;

Stage 5 – "Conjunctive" faith (mid-life) involves a reclaiming and reworking of the individual's past. Stage five persons acknowledge paradox, ambiguity and transcendence and an interest in relating reality behind the symbols of inherited systems. The new strength of this stage is the ability to participate in meaning systems while recognizing that they are partial, relative and incomplete; and

Stage 6 – "Universalizing" faith (extremely rare) is characterized by mutual, reciprocating, openness to life and its complexity. Some might call this stage, elevation, in a Hindu context, enlightenment in Buddhist communities, or "radical monotheism" in the Judeo-Christian world. Stage six persons are the actualizers of the spirit of inclusive and fulfilled human community. (Fowler, 1981, 119-211).

The faith development theory is concerned with the form of meaning making and religious expression, more so than the contents of faith. Individuals may hold

similar beliefs but may find expression in differing ways. They may be expressed or mediated in or by symbols, or logically, and formally. Consequently, this is a theory that weaves several theories into its perspective of the structural development of faith. The seven developmental aspects of faith that comprise the Fowler's stages of faith are as follows:

Form of Logic (Aspect A). Following Piaget's cognitive operations model, this aspect refers to the rules that are characteristic to decision-making about issues of faith and meaning (Hill & Hood, 1999, 164). It seeks to capture characteristic patterns of cognitive operations that participants use in thinking about their worlds. While this aspect is based on Piaget's theory of logic development, it is limited to the generalized features of this development (Fowler et al., 2004, 23). From the standpoint of development, a participant theoretically develops from a "pre-logical" view of the world, through a more concrete view and eventually to a point of abstract constructions and comprehension (Parker, 2006, 338).

Perspective Taking (Aspect B). This aspect, which captures Selman's work, refers to the participant's capacity for seeing herself or himself from another's perspective, from the standpoint of an interpersonal other, or from a "third party" other. The idea here is to determine how participants construct the self, the other and the relational dynamic of self/other (Fowler et al., 2004, 24). The faith development interview, which shall be discussed later, attempts to "hear" how a person gives image to the interiority of others. Also considered is how the person presently feels vis a vis personal interest states. Theoretically, a participant grows from a one

dimensional, egocentric position, through simple one on one perspective taking, to the ability to see the world and events from multiple perspectives.

Form of Moral Judgment (Aspect C.) Incorporating the work of Kohlberg into Faith Development Theory, this aspect refers to one's ability to decide which courses of action are morally right and which ones are morally wrong. This aspect looks at patterns of a person's thinking on issues of moral significance. This includes a consideration of what individuals consider to be a moral dilemma as well as how a person believes she or he would enact being moral (Fowler et al., 2004, 24). Based on Kohlberg's stages of growth in moral judgment, the participants are rated on their position on a scale of moral judgment started with the preconventional, me/my orientation, to a conventional orientation where norms and rules predominate, to postconventional reasoning based on principled justice.

Bounds of Social Awareness (Aspect D.) This aspect considers how the participant makes use of diverse social experiences in order to construct meaning (Hill & Hood, 1999, 164). This aspect considers how inclusively or exclusively one draws one's social boundaries. Fowler et al. (2004) state that this aspect is decidedly multi-dimensional. First and most important is the mode of a person's group identification, as here the task is to determine how the participant understands the groups to which she or he claims allegiance. Secondly, it considers how the participant relates to the groups to which she or he belongs, and finally, it considers the issue of inclusivity. Theoretically, participants move from claiming allegiance to groups of similar others to ever more increasing inclusivity.

Locus of Authority (Aspect E). This aspect involves an articulation of the participant's source of guidance and/or approval (Hill & Hood, 1999, 164). Fowler et al. (2004) describes this aspect as comprising three factors: how authorities are determined, how participants understand their relationships with their chosen authorities and whether a person relates to an internal or an external authority (25). This aspect documents the movement from a more external authority to a more internal locus of authority for decisions and assessments (Parker, 2006, 338).

Form of World Coherence (Aspect F). This aspect is concerned with the participant's consciousness of his or her own subjectivity and the internal consistency of her or his assumptions (Hill & Hood, 1999, 164). Rating self-reflection and conscious of one's processes, this aspect describes how participants construct the object world, including the sense of ultimacy (Fowler et al., 2004, 25). It gives answers to such questions as "what things make sense?" and to matters of cosmology both tacit and explicit. This aspect charts tacitly held ways of making meaning to more conscious and readily articulated means of so doing (Parker, 2006, 338).

Symbolic function (Aspect G). This aspect considers the depth and significance of the participant's self-defined core images (Hill & Hood, 1999,164). This structure of this aspect considers how symbols are apprehended, perceived and negotiated. It also gives articulation to how participants locate their "center of value and images of power" (Fowler et al. 2004, 25). Progression here is from one-dimensional and literal symbols to conscious symbols and demythologizing symbolic content, opening them up to multiple meanings.

Fowler (2004) asserts that faith development theory originated as “the kind of practical theology that attends to and expresses the human experiences of growth and awakening of faith” (408). Of the contributions of the theory, along with faith development research, the following are most notable to Fowler:

First, these faith stages yield, as he says, “a phenomenological account of what faith does with a conceptual model of what faith is” (412). Faith development theory suggests the implications of faith for meaning making, for orienting life and its purposes with a deeper, perhaps, source of life and illumining faith’s forms, expressions and ordering. FDT, he states further, has offered a characterization of faith without becoming overly simplistic, superficial, or dissolving the “penumbra of mystery” (412).

Second, faith development theory and research have extended the structural development legacies of Piaget and Kohlberg. To the predominantly cognitive theories, FDT adds, in Fowler’s words, “a richer range of dimensions of constructive knowing that honors imagination, emotion and a moral sense” (412). (To this point, I will return shortly.) Additionally, in Fowler’s assessment, FDT allows a specific role for social perspective taking as described by Selman (1980) and Erikson’s psychosocial formation. The weaving of seven aspects into FDT attempts to capture a snapshot of operations of mind, imagination, will and emotion in the personal construction of faith.

It is precisely the second point, of the efficacy of structural development theories, that has been both a strength, as stated by Fowler above, and weakness of faith development theory. Jardine and Viljoen (1992) add that an important feature of

Fowler's theory is the use of seven aspects of faith and the structuralist development model to separate faith content, such as belief and values, from the psychological features of faith within the personality. Thus, faith development theory's contribution to psychological theory is its attention to the structures that undergird the thinking, feeling and social processes that lend themselves to one's apprehending or relating to the substance of faith.

Structural developmental models assert that gradual and maturational differentiation of biological, behavioral and cognitive structures precipitate qualitative changes in a person's thought processes. Over time, those qualitative changes elicit a new organization of thought patterns, which, in turn, are manifested in an individual's thinking differently at advancing stages of development.

Fowler (1981) mentions his own reservations with the structural developmental approach, claiming, "from the beginning I knew that I could not follow Piaget and Kohlberg in identifying the structural features of faith with the formal, logical structures of reason Piaget had identified" (272). Of particular concern to him was the separation of cognition from affection.

Yet, the inclusion of cognitive structuralist features figure prominently in Fowler's model, the aspects that correlate to 'Form of Logic' and 'Form of Moral Judgment.' Critics of faith development theory have argued that, despite his concerns of so doing, Fowler overstresses the rational aspects of faith. The overly and overtly rational faith structures are most easily seen in the fourth stage (Individuative-Reflective Faith), where, in theory, the individual acquires the capacity for formal operations (Jardine & Viljoen, 1992, 79). Smith (1983) further contends that the way

that Fowler combines Piaget's theory of cognitive development in the 'Form of Logic' aspect with the systems approach makes it difficult to determine what can or cannot be empirically validated. Here, the concern is that Stages 1-3 of the 'Form of Logic' aspect correlate to Piaget's preoperational, concrete operational, and early formal operations stages with the systems theory piece being introduced at Stages 4-6 as dichotomizing, dialectical and synthetic thought (Smith, 1983, 224).

Citing recent discussions in developmental psychology, Streib (2005) maintains that accounting for diversity among aspect scores more precisely would achieve better adequacy and consistency, especially at higher stages. The 'Form of Logic' aspect, which references Piagetian theorizing, "needs to include a revision", says Streib, "especially at the level of post-formal operations" (Streib, 2005, 103). Further, he argues, with respect to 'Perspective Taking', Selman (1980) has himself revised his work and the FDT should revise accordingly (Selman & Schultz, 1988; Selman, Watts & Shultz, 1997). Again, in Streib's assessment, 'Form of Moral Judgment' should be revised to include the neo-Kohlbergian notions from the work of Rest, Narvaez and Bebeau (1999).

Other critiques of structural developmental components in faith development theory include the suggestion, validated by empirical research, that development may not proceed in coherent and invariant series of stages, that there may be integration rather than a sequence of abandonment and acquisition (Clore & Fitzgerald, 2002). Streib's work with fundamentalist personality types also suggests a return to earlier developmental achievements (Streib, 2001) and possibly multiple paths of

development (Streib, 2003). This question will be developed further in the section on the Faith Development Interview (FDI) below.

Another criticism of Fowler's model centers on his lack of inclusion of a theory of ego or personality development. Without an integrating theory of personality development, Jardine and Viljoen (1992) contend, the empirical evidence documents faith, not in terms of the unfolding of personality, as the theory suggests, but in terms of advancement in cognitive development (80). Using evidence gathered from Meyers-Briggs personality data, they further speculate that the faith stage theory, along with other cognitive structuralist theories, favor abstract thinking with a rational focus (82).

Fowler's Faith Development Interview (FDI)

The Faith Developmental Interview (FDI) consists of a series of questions that can be grouped into four categories: life review, relationships, values, commitments, and religion. A two-hour interview, that is audiotaped, results in 30 to 50 pages of interview text, filled with statements on belief, judgments, convictions and personal narrative. The interview texts are then coded by designating each passage (as much as possible) an appropriate aspect from the seven aspects listed above. Thus, responses are theoretically assumed to display the structure of faith as a coherent whole, comprised of seven interwoven aspects. The individual aspects form the basis for stage assignments as each aspect is scored separately with the results collated to form an overall stage score.

Fowler's sample, from which the FDI emerged, included 359 predominately white men and women. Of these participants, nearly half were Christian Protestant,

slightly more than one-third were Catholic, and the remained self-identified as Jewish or “Other” in their responses (Hill & Hood, 1994).

FDI Structure

The Faith Development Interview guide, from which all interviews were generated, is attached in Appendix 2.

FDI Administration

The FDI is a semi-directive interview and the Faith Development Interview guide (found in Appendix 2) provided a rough guide for all twenty interviews of this study. All interviews were audiotaped and then transcribed by one of four transcribers. The collected interview resulted in between 40-50 pages of text.

FDI Scoring

Scoring of the faith development interviews followed the details contained in the *Manual for Faith Development Research* (Fowler, Streib & Keller, 2004), with scoring done by an individual trained in these interviews, who also assisted in the development of the 1993 revision of the same of the original 1986 version. The expert returned the interviews, coded by their respective aspect, along with a score sheet listing the faith development aspect scores, the continuous scores and stage score. These scores are reported in the “Results” section of Chapter 8.

Streib’s (2001,2003) research with participants from fundamentalist faith traditions documents a shortcoming of the structural-developmental theory to adequately describe what he found to be individual fundamentalist thought revivals.

If FDI scoring procedures remain unmodified, Streib argues, cognitive structural theories of development with their structural, hierarchical, sequential and irreversible logic “cannot provide us with an explanatory framework for understanding fundamentalism” (205, 114). He thus proposes a revised strategy for faith development research that occurs in three steps: structure (as classically described by the FDT and FDI), content and narrativity.

Streib (2005) proposes a methodology that considers critiques of structural development theories in general and FDT in particular. Focusing his attention to structural diversity, content-specificity and the narrativity of faith elements, Streib argues for their inclusion alongside “classical” faith development research design.

Since in “classical” faith development research each aspect is scored as part of the basis for an overall stage assignment, no further evaluative measures are employed using the individual aspects. Finding this disregard “problematic” for accounting for the diversity of faith structures, Streib (2005) suggests that keeping aspects (and scores) separate would allow researchers to consider various religious styles or differences in developmental niveaus (102). For instance, it may be worthy of note for research purposes if an individual displays a “worldly” perspective in aspects such as “perspective taking” or “locus of authority” but assumes a more existential or explicitly religious focus in “form of world coherence” or “symbolic function”. Streib notes that aspect-specific coding and scoring may be particularly relevant for research with fundamentalist individuals, as is the current study, especially as it is hypothesized that the fundamentalist orientation is an earlier

religious stage or a return to “earlier styles that co-exist with later developmental achievements” (102-3).

In traditional faith development research, the researcher codes particular structures in the interview text to begin to construct an overall stage score in faith development. Though FDT claims to incorporate more affective, behavioral and emotional factors minimalized by Piaget, the practice of classical faith development research marginalizes content, function, emotion and life history (Streib, 2005, 104).

FDI Validity

Snarey’s 1991 study of 60 predominantly nontheistic current or former members of an Israeli Kibbutz yielded several important findings related to the validity of Fowler’s structural developmental stage theory and assessment procedure. Employing a construct validity test, Snarey measured the degree to which the model empirically satisfied the theory’s general theoretical assumptions and claims (285).

He also noted that faith stage scores were positively correlated to moral and ego development scores. This added support to Fowler’s contention that ego and moral development were necessary for faith development, though faith development could not be reducible to either moral or ego development (297-8). Using four analyses to test the claim that each stage in the model represents a structural whole, the study also offered support for this element of the faith development theory (289).

Another finding that Snarey (1991) notes is a positive correlation between faith stages scores and variables such as level of education and social class. This may suggest that certain biases toward intellectualism or to middle class sensibilities are built into the faith development framework (Hill & Hood, 1994, 165).

Narrative Analysis with Faith Development Interviews (FDI)

With a hope of capturing Fowler's "self-in-narrative" and taking seriously Streib's concerns about only "scoring" the structural elements of the Faith Development Interview, narrative analysis offers another perspective on each of the study subjects.

Narratives have formal properties and each narrative has a function. A fully developed narrative ideally contains six common elements: an abstract (summary of the substance of the narrative), orientation (time, place, situation, participants), complicating action (sequence of events), evaluation (significance and meaning of the action, attitude of the narrator), resolution (what finally happened) and coda (returns to the perspective of the present) (Labov, 1982). Attending to the structure of a narrative in this way reveals the means by which the teller-subject constructs stories from primary experiences, interprets their significance, and evaluates them in light of the present (Reissman, 1983, 19).

Narrativization illustrates not only past actions but also constructs meaning, making it particularly useful with faith development theory. The Labovian structures thesis suggests that teller-subjects state, in their evaluation clauses, how they wish the narrative to be understood and prove the narrative's intended meaning (Labov, 1982).

Using the Labovian structures outlined above, Attanucci (1991) shows how multiple interpretations of the same teacher/parent related moral dilemma are revealed. She nicely described how the Labovian categories frame a subject's story from primary experience to significance, while teasing out embedded actions and values in that primary story (Attanucci, 1991). Attanucci used narrative analysis of

real-life dilemmas and determined a parallel between ‘classic’ Labovian narrative structure and the types of narrative told in less structured interviews. Acknowledging that ‘telling’ is always an unfolding process between interviewer and participant, narratives with fewer questions reveal more in the participant’s forms and terms (Attanucci, 1991, 318). Reading narratives in the participant’s style and forms allows us to better understand subjectivity captured in racialized, ethnic and gendered forms. It also allows the researcher to better understand participant’s meaning making in their respective social worlds.

The FDI’s life tapestry exercise, while more of a semi-structured “guided” interview than that used by Attanucci, offers two loosely structured narrative spaces, around Aspect B (relationships) and Aspect D (social awareness). Indeed, while scoring a coded interview, according to the 2004 Manual for Faith Development Research, pages of interview text are left unscored because they fail to contain answers to specific answers keyed to the aspect questions. From the otherwise “overlooked” pages of text and in structurally scored narrations of religious experience and sociomoral dilemmas, I will be constructing a sense of the subjectivities of many of the study participants, using a practical theological re-scripting as suggested by Cartledge (2007).

Cartledge (2007) has modeled what he calls a “practical theological” re-scripting of religious experiences. In understanding such accounts, as are many that will be shared here, the practical theological task is to take consider the implicit as well as the explicit theological content, how these experiences are articulated and,

knowing more than just a little about our subjects' theological context, advance the narratives forward to uncover new meaning.

To the following accounts of religious experiences and moral dilemmas, several interpretive frameworks may or may be brought to bear, depending on the subject's narration. The first framework will be philosophical, inspired by Caroline Franks Davis' *The Evidential Force of Religious Experience*. Franks Davis observes that elements of the 'non-cognitive' and the 'cognitive' fuse together in religious experience. The 'non-cognitive' elements assume that there is such thing as naked experience, devoid of any interpretive content, where interpretive frameworks appear to be "tacked on" to the end of the narrative segment. 'Cognitive' elements, by contrast, assumes a critical realist position in relating the narrative, and understands experience as being mediated between models and metaphors, which are themselves cognitive functions. The cognitively derived models and metaphors are "reality depicting," that is, over time they are grounded in communal narratives and histories (Cartledge, 2007, 25; Franks Davis, 1989, 13). There are, then, reciprocal and facilitating relationships between concepts, beliefs, events, reflection, creative imagination and other cognitive and affective factors (Franks Davis, 147). For religious experience, Franks Davis offers the following interrelated categories:

1. Interpretive experiences are those that are viewed or spoken about from within a prior religious interpretive framework.
2. Quasi-sensory experiences are ones in which the presenting element is a physical sensation, or associated with one or more of the senses, e.g. visions, voices, sounds or tastes.
3. Revelatory experiences, those in which the individual acquires new convictions, inspiration, enlightenment or flashes of insight.
4. Regenerative experiences are those that a person's faith is renewed experiences improved spiritual health.

5. Numinous experiences are those in which the individual experiences profound “creature-consciousness,” the “speck in the universe” feeling connected with feelings of awe and/or dread, viewing the *numen* as transcendent.
6. Mystical experiences are those that provide a sense of having apprehended an ultimate reality, but an awareness of freedom with the limitations of time, space and the Self; may accompany a sense of oneness, bliss or serenity. (Cartledge, 2007, 26; Franks Davis, 1989, 33-65).

Following Cartledge and Franks Davis, our first task in considering an account of a religious experience or a moral dilemma is to look for clues to suggest the experience as some relationship with an interpretive framework (Cartledge, 27). We will then proceed through the Franks Davis typologies to attempt to match the experience with a typology.

Our second lens, helpful to use after the Franks Davis typologies, is the anthropological, dynamic ritual theory of Victor Turner outlined in his *The Ritual Process*. Turner views societal groups moving between the fixed structures of “normal routine” and spheres of action that can be categorized as “liminal” or “betwixt and between” (1969, 94). Liminal spaces, the in between spaces, allow for something else to occur. In the juxtaposition of the “normal” and the “in between,” individuals alter structures from the past, negotiate new identities, fuse fragmented selves, and mend broken relationships. Ritual is one of the spheres of action that can provide individuals with liminal spaces and “in-between” moments by which to negotiate new selves, relationships, and so forth.

When the subject is “liminal”, she is in a phase in which the subject passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the previous or the coming state. Ambiguity in these liminal phases has the effect of prolonging

development and hindering the negotiation of new identities, relationships and, in short, “moving on.” In this regard, ritual can facilitate the construction of new selves and relationships by providing the epistemic spaces for open, emotional, experiential, liminality to developmentally advance.

Our third lens will offer a sociological view. If dynamic ritual theory gives us a way to understand how a subject is negotiating new constructions of self and others, what is the impact of the new social arrangement that arises subsequent to liminality? What are the elements of the social context in which a narrative of religious experience or moral dilemma is related?

Finally, this practical theological re-scripting would not serve our purposes if we failed to consider the experiential and cultural constructions related to our “ultimate concern,” in Tillich’s word, to the oral and performative dimensions of the God-speak we call theology. With what we have come to know about the religious context in which these subjects are constructing themselves and their thinking about life, what can we say about how they have come to understand life in *ekklesia* and sociomoral issues?

In short, this practical theological re-scripting is an attempt to take seriously the subjectivity of the participants of this study and, through their narratives, better understand their personal constructions of faith and moral development.

The sociological and historical profiles of the five fundamentalist New Religious Movements begin with the next chapter. Chapter 8 reports results and conclusions.

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Chapter 3: Hare Krishna (Gaudiya Vaisnava) Communities, a.k.a. ISKCON

International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Lessons Learned: The Ritual Modeling of “Right” Relationships

Properly speaking, a "Vaisnava" is one who pays homage to "Vishnu", which means, "The Immanent Principle which pervades and permeates the universe". "Vishnu" is the "Indwelling Spirit", the Preservative Principle of Cosmic Creation. It underlies all things in existence and directs the operations of the world of action. ... So, all those who believe in the Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omnipotent Being, in Whom, by Whom, and for Whom is all creation, all come under the denomination of this comprehensive term and Vaisnavism accommodates them all, assigning to them their proper places in the gradual evolution of the soul ... What philosophy, what religion will not accept the fundamental principles which alone can solve the great problems of life and death? - Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, spiritual mentor of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Introduction

Atlantans who frequent the Midtown or Little Five Points area have, most likely, encountered ochre-clad men or sari clad women, dancing, singing or chanting the “Hare Krishna” mantra. Perhaps they have seen the annual *Rathi Yatra* parades in June, when clay deities of Lord *Jagannatha* (Krishna) are carried, by chariot (*yath*), parading through the streets (*yatra* or pilgrimage) with devotees vying to pull or touch the *yath*. Many times, these individuals solicit donations in exchange for a volume of teachings on a Hindu text, some incense or a food item, or a song or two. These individuals are part of the *Vaisnava* sect of the *Gaudiya Meth*, but prefer to be known simply as Hare Krishna, the name of the (*Vaisnava*) Lord .

Gaudiya Vaisnavism, or Hare Krishna, communities prove to be a most interesting and rich ground for the study of fundamentalist New Religious Movements (fNRMs). It took place in two communities in the Southeast, in Atlanta

(New Panihati) and in Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka). Participant observation in both communities was extensive. In my role as researcher and participant observer, along with the narrative I've constructed here, I sought to take seriously where Krishna devotees are and the unique worldview they express and articulate. During this time, I participated in the Hare Krishna lifestyle and practices. On several occasions, I participated in *Bhakti Vriksa* (neophyte instruction) programs, a major avenue for proselytizing in the North Carolina temple not practiced in Atlanta, and some members of the community referred to me as "*Bhakta* Andrea," a term reserved for an "inquirer." This study, however, crosses the lines of psychological, sociological, anthropological (ethnographic), and theological analyses. In so doing, I try to offer a "thick description" (Geertz, 1975) of the devotees and the Hare Krishna movement in the context in which they are found.

I met regularly with the presiding guru, participated in Sunday Program of *arotik*, lecture and feast (*prasādam*), morning prayer (*mangala arotik*), and scripture beginning at 4:30 AM. I also assisted in the day-to-day duties of devotees who live in the temple *ashramas*, such as preparation of devotee breakfasts, washing dishes and other non-initiated persons' work dozens of times during festivals and for everyday purposes. I also attended the major Vaisnava the festivals of *Panihati* (held only at the New *Panihati Mandir* in Atlanta), *Janmastami* (the birthday of Krishna) and of *Radhastami* (the birthday of Krishna's consort, Radha).



Photos 1 & 2: Left --Andrea offering obeisances to the guru at his Vyasa Puja (birthday celebration), New Goloka (NC) and -- Right -- Standing beside the Radha Krishna deities at celebration reading of the Bhagavad-gita, on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday in Atlanta (making Gandhi-King connections)

Overview of this Community

Hare Krishna, formally known as Gaudiya Vaisnavism, originated in present day Bengal, following a charismatic “reform” of sorts of 16th century Hinduism by Caitanya (1486-1534). As the introductory quote indicates, participants of Vaisnavism worship Vishnu, especially in the form of its seventh avatar or incarnation, Krishna. (Rama, the name of the sixth incarnation of Vishnu, is also named in the great mantra, *mahamantra*, recited by Hare Krishnas: “Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare. Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare.”) Because the lifestyle of Gaudiya Vaisnavas requires the daily recitation of 16 rounds of 108 *mahamantra*, daily life is shaped and marked by chanting the holy names of Krishna. “Hare Krishna” is ever on the tongue of the Vaisnava and, when I asked by which name, Vaisnava or Hare Krishna, they preferred, all answered “Hare Krishna!” Consistently, I was told that saying the holy names was good for their devotional life and good for all who had the opportunity if only to hear the holy names recited.

The philosophical and scriptural basis for Hare Krishna beliefs are found in the *Bhagavad-gita*, the *Bhagavad Purana* (also known as the *Srimad Bhavatam*, named for *Sri Bhagavan*, also a name of Krishna) and, to a lesser extent, other Puranic scriptures and the *Isha Upanishad*. Hare Krishnas in the West who have returned to India and elsewhere around the world remain united under the organizational umbrella of the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), which maintains its own publishing house where its own and unique interpretations of these scriptures are published and disseminated.

A central feature of Hare Krishna worship is the ecstatic devotion to Krishna known as *bhakti*. Devotion to clay statues of Krishna is believed to be one and the same as devotion to the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent Being, creator of the universe, and the all-attractive lover of the world. With Krishna, his divine consort, Radha, is also worshipped, through the chanting of the holy names, through song, through body movement and always, with extreme devotion. Still, Vaisnavism is considered a monotheistic religion, with the personal God, Krishna, making Himself available to humanity in many different forms. Many times I have been told, “Radha is Krishna,” and Hare Krishna literature points to Krishna as the same One who is also known as Jehovah or Allah in other traditions.

Hare Krishnas maintain that in order to maintain a lifestyle that is conducive to the spiritual virtues of compassion, truthfulness, cleanliness and austerity, and to master the mind and the material senses, they must follow these Four Regulatory Principles:

1. No eating meat, fish or eggs.
2. No gambling.

3. No sex for any purpose other than producing God-conscious children.
4. No intoxication of any kind, including tobacco, coffee, and tea; fermented products such as cider, all vinegars, and soy sauce.

ISKCON was founded in 1966 by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, and maintains that it is the authentic branch of devotional faith to the personal God. Through disciplic succession known as *parampara*, this tradition originated with Krishna, was re-ignited by Caitanya (who is himself worshipped as a deity on the altar at every Hare Krishna temple and is deified in a near life-size form in the Atlanta temple) to A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada through his Calcutta (Kolkatta) based Gaudiya Math teacher and spiritual master, Siddantha Saraswati Thakur.

Srila Prabhupada “Swami-ji” or simply “Prabhupada” wrote more than 60 volumes, including his translations of the texts considered normative for the Krishna lifestyle and movement: *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (1972), the multivolume *Srimad Bhagavatam* (1972-1977), and the *Caitanya-caritamta* (1974-75).

By 1975, ISKCON had established 30 communities and preaching centers in the US and six in Canada, with centers in Europe, Africa, Australia, and Latin America. The Atlanta temple, *New Panihati Dham*, claims its start from a 1970 meeting of Prabhupada disciples in a house at the corner of Emory and Oxford roads. Later that year, Srila Prabhupada dedicated the first Atlanta Temple in midtown. By 1983, the US and Canadian centers numbered 50 (Rochford, 1985, 277); the North Carolina farm community, *New Goloka*, also studied herein, began in 1986. In 2006, ISKCON boasted 44 communities in North America, with membership at near 50,000 (Rochford, 2007,14).

Why this is a “Fundamentalist” New Religious Movement (fNRM)

“We are not new age --- new age is “you get to do your own thing” --- that’s not what Krishna consciousness is all about. We follow the scriptures. We only do what is in the scriptures. In the beginning of one’s life in (Krishna) consciousness, you need a spiritual master, an elevated personality who has read the scriptures, all of them, to help you along with what is right and what is not. But no, since we are so closely bound to spiritual master and scripture, we are not new age.” (a 29 year old devotee living in the Atlanta temple)

By outlining why Hare Krishna is not a new age religion, this devotee highlighted especially those features that characterize Hare Krishnas as an fNRM. A strict belief in authoritative sacred texts of the Vedic, especially Bengali traditions, Hare Krishna teachings often reject modern modes of interpretation. Hare Krishnas adhere to a strict interpretation of the *Bhagavad-gita*, or Song of God, as revealed to their prophet, or as they say, “founder-*acarya*,” A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. The Word of God as told by Prabhupada in *The Bhagavad-gita As It Is* is authoritative and normative for all behavior, attitudes and rites in ISKCON. The scriptures as interpreted by Prabhupada are, as one devotee told me, “binding onto everyone” and, as such, are believed to be universal for, not only everyone within the movement, but the unfortunate “karmies” who have not yet encountered the *Puranic* scriptures. The external authority of Srila Prabhupada, though he, in ISKCON words “left his body (died) in 1977” exerts such a profound influence of Hare Krishna devotees that it affects ISKCON’s worldview and the epistemology of the devotees who live within it.

Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada considered the *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and the *Bhagavad-gita* the scriptural foundation of ISKCON. Gopiparanadhana Dasa, a

Prabhupada biographer, argues that the latter “created ISKCON primarily for making the theology of the *Gita* and the *Bhagavatam* universally accessible,” directing his disciples to give priority to the work of distributing these scriptures in their respective communities throughout the world (Gopiparanadhana dasa, 2001). For the most part, Prabhupada intended the narratives in the texts of the Vaisnava tradition to be presented as a “literal, albeit very ancient, history” (Gopiparanadhana dasa, 2001). Though they speak of a different world from a different time, Prabhupada was convinced of their ongoing relevance for the contemporary world, and especially for the Western material world. Through the medium of ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada created a readership and an audience for these ancient texts. Within just a few years, thousands of ISKCON disciples became daily readers of the *Bhagavatam*, as it is read and studied as a part of the morning spiritual discipline in every ISKCON temple throughout the world. Thousands more people have taken the *Bhagavad-gita* into their homes, by purchasing a book at an airport, a festival or an event where Hare Krishnas distributed these texts. Short books, cookbooks, tracts, brochures, and pamphlets are also distributed by Hare Krishnas, with the scriptural basis for all these writings, no matter how popularly framed, being the *Srimad Bhagavatam* or the *Bhagavad-gita*.

Hare Krishnas also meet the definition of NRM because they are authoritarian in their leadership, with the power for ritual practice, asset distribution, and matters of theological significance resting with the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON. This group is also communalistic and totalistic in its orientation, though with the passage of time and the aging of Prabhupada’s original disciples, these factors are

becoming less a focus for ISKCON organization. Hare Krishnas are aggressive in their proselytizing, book, and *prasadam* (sanctified food) distribution, assuring that Prabhupada's message is well distributed throughout the Western world. They are systematic in their programs of indoctrination, so the neophyte devotees become thoroughly incorporated into its unique worldview, ascetic lifestyle, and ideology (Robbins and Anthony (1982, 283).

History

ISKCON's founding in the 1960s places among the younger of the NRMs studied herein. Reminiscent of Poling and Kenney's (1986) outline of the history of ISKCON, I'll present the history of ISKCON in four periods: Early Foundations (1923-1966), the Beginning Period (1966-1967), and the post-Founder-*Acarya* Years (1977-present). I will also situate the time of the founding of the two communities studied and profiled herein.

Early Foundations (1923-1966)

A.C. Bhaktivedantedanta Swami Prabhupada, hailed as the Founder-Acarya of ISKCON, was born Abhay Charan De in Calcutta, now Kolkatta, India in 1896. He was instructed into the Krishna faith (*Gaudiya Meth*) as a young child; later he completed studies and graduated from Scottish Churches' College but opted to follow the nationalist injunctions as taught by Mohandas K. Gandhi to decline the degree. Says Swami Prabhupada's ISKCON biographer, "Abhay weighed the choices carefully and in 1920, after completing his fourth year of college and passing his examination, refused to accept his diploma. In this way, he registered his protest and signaled is response to Gandhi's call." (Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami, 1995, xiv-xv). By

1920, Swami Prabhupada had already encountered one of the significant spiritual figures in his life – Mohandas Gandhi – and Indian nationalism would figure heavily in the shape of what would become ISKCON. His high regard for Gandhi was based on the latter’s love for the *Bhagavad-gita* and his living the simple life of an Indian *sadhu* (saintly person), abstaining from intoxication, meat-eating, and illicit sex (though Gandhi’s personal philosophy was largely informed by Jainism).

During his college years, Abhay entered a marriage arranged by his father, and began his life as a householder or a *grihastha*. Traditional Hindu philosophy teaches that the adult life cycle is divided into four stages: *brahmacharya*, *grihastha*, *vanaprastha*, and *sannyasa*. These roughly parallel the stages of:

Brahmacharya --- young (-er) celibate student of philosophy/theology,

Grihastha --- young (-er) married life during child-bearing years,

Vanaprastha --- older married life, growing in love of God without procreation (or sexual activity, as sex outside of procreation is viewed always as illicit), and,

Sannyasa --- celibate and renounced of family relationships and other obligations viewed as “worldly.” Note that renouncing family ties is an “elevated” position in life compared to remaining a householder and living with while providing for wife and children.

During Abhay’s life as a *grihastha*, he and his wife had some number of children. Privileging the narrative of Swami Prabhupada after his initiation as a renounced *sannyasi*, Satsvaupa Dasa Goswami’s 1995 ISKCON biography does not mention the children born to his marriage. Palmer (1994), in her consideration of

women's roles in ISKCON, indicates that Abhay left behind a wife and two daughters when he took vows of *sunnyas*, a statement I have not seen corroborated in ISKCON literature. Rochford (1985) indicates that Abhay's children were adults at the point in his life when he took *sunnyas*, at which time he "retired from family life" (10).

After college, Abhay took a position in a pharmaceutical company, but his life apparently took a pivotal turn in 1923. That year he launched five pharmaceutical laboratories across India, going into business for himself. All eventually failed. Also in 1923, Abhay was initiated into the Gaudiya Math, a subset of Krishna followers, who trace their lineage to Krishna through Caitanya, the 15th century reformer and prophet, who, reviving devotional Hinduism, split from the tradition's orthodoxy. Abhay's initiating and spiritual master was Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, the *sannyasi* to whom the introductory quote of this chapter is attributed.

Between 1923 and 1953, Abhay devoted more and more time to religious activities. By 1953, he had abandoned all his business interests along with his family to pursue his religious mission. A Hare Krishna published biography of Abhay argues that "he was thinking that as a *grihastha*, he couldn't fully serve his spiritual master" (Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami, 1995, xx). Indeed, heeding the words of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura, to "preach Lord Caitanya's message throughout the whole world" (Satsvarupa Dasa Goswami, 1995, xiv), Abhay lived alone in temporary residences in Delhi and Vrndavana, editing a journal called *Back to Godhead* and peddling it on the streets for his religious mission work.

In 1959, Abhay formally took the vows of celibacy and world renunciation, *sannyasa*, took the name Bhaktivedanta Swami, and left behind the relational world

with its material trappings. Claiming the charge to take Vaisnavism to the West, Bhaktivedanta Swami was offered free, shipboard passage to the US in 1965. He arrived first in New York City and moved, after a short time, to Butler, Pennsylvania, carrying with him the worship of Krishna in Bengali Vaisnava fashion. He continued to write and edit his books, *Back to Godhead*, as he did in Calcutta, selling them on the street for his living expenses. In 1966, he moved back to New York and with generous assistance from some well-to-do types, was able to open a “temple” storefront on Second Avenue. By September, 1966, Bhaktivedanta Swami had initiated 11 American disciples into Gaudiya Vaisnavism. Bhaktivedanta Swami’s connection with the so-called hippies, the upper-middle class youth of New York, along with his temporal location in the 1960s counter-cultural revolution, may have provided the fodder for the fire that fanned the Hare Krishna explosion in the 1960s.

The Beginning Period (1966-67)

In 1966, Prabhupada moved into his “temple”, the storefront in New York’s Lower East Side. He quickly attracted the attention of young people in the area, to whom he lectured on the *Bhagavad-gita*, taught *kirtans* (congregational singing and chanting), and lived out his Bengali-based “swami-ji” lifestyle. During 1966, he initiated nineteen disciples, advancing the spiritual practices and assuring the spiritual succession of the movement, and legally registered ISKCON as a nonprofit, tax-exempt religious organization. Decades later, schism would break apart ISKCON, driven by the dualing interests in the perpetuation of Prabhupada’s mission --- spiritual succession and the continuation of the business of ISKCON. As Prabhupada

tended to both matters single-handedly in ISKCON's early years, there was little planning for, or anticipation of, what would become of the worldwide organization.

In 1967, ISKCON relocated to the emerging "hippie" community in the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco. There, Prabhupada initiated 150-200 disciples in his first two years (Rochford, 2007, 12). A communal, or *ashrama*, system began there as many of ISKCON's new recruits, as participants in the 1960s' youth counterculture, did not have permanent or stable residence (Rochford, 2007, 13) and took up residence in the temples or buildings around, near, and/or owned by the temples. This communal structure remains a hallmark of ISKCON to this day, even as ISKCON has become increasingly diversified by accommodating the spiritual needs of Indian Hindus living outside the temples and within households near these temples. For many Indian Hindus, ISKCON is the only source of their homeland or parents' spirituality and religious practices. To be clear, however, many or most of the ISKCON adherents who remain a part of its communal system and live in its *ashramas* are Western converts, who speak of Indian Hindus are being part of the more tangentially situated congregations within ISKCON.

Prabhupada died in 1977, shortly after he named a small body of his most trusted disciples to a Governing Body Commission to oversee the affairs of ISKCON. The vacuum created by Prabhupada's absence led to significant confusion in the movement. Was the Governing Body Commission responsible only for the business of ISKCON? Or were these men of the Governing Body Commission legitimate heirs to the disciplic succession, *parampara*, capable of initiating disciples and rendering decisions in the matters of doctrine and practice? The ISKCON Revival

Movement, a rival NRM that claims the authority of Srila Prabhupada but not the Governing Body Commission of ISKCON, began in 1977. ISKCON Revival stands as an almost parallel organization to ISKCON, headed by *rtvik*² *gurus* who initiate only in the name of Prabhupada, and who do not recognize the authority of ISKCON's governing body to carry on the founder-*acarya*'s mission. The ISKCON Revival magazine, called *Back to Prabhupada*, with the ISKCON magazine founded by Prabhupada called *Back to Godhead*, reflects a genuine schism in the community of initiated disciples of Prabhupada.

The post-Founder-*Acarya* Years (1977-present)

The “congregational” movement in ISKCON represents a newer ISKCON response to a number of contemporary pressures in this new movement. First, with the “graying” of the disciples initiated by Prabhupada in the 1970s, many have set up households outside the temples and integrated their Krishna conscious lifestyles into the contemporary fabric of the U.S. Many have completed graduate education and are university professors, teachers, physicians, social workers and other professionals. Urmilla, named by Susan Jean Palmer as “one of three “mothers” who have the authority to preach in public and lead *kirtans*” (Palmer, 1994, 41-2), and who was based in the Hillsborough temple during my data collection, recently completed an Ed.D. and teaches around the United States and in India. Several devotees based in Atlanta and in the Hillsborough temples are now university professors, with one having completed a book published on **Krishna Lila** (love of God). Consequently, each of these persons, and many more like them, have established households outside

² The *rtvik* or *ritvik* gurus maintain that no disciple of Prabhupada was qualified to handle the position of spiritual master and that those who led the movement were mere caretakers or placeholders until the arrival of another qualified “self-effulgent” *acarya*.

the temple *ashrama* communities, requiring some sort of updated response from the normative *ashrama* model of the 1970s and 1980s.

Second, ISKCON has become more diversified by accommodating the needs of Indian Hindu populations in the U.S. Many Hindu beliefs are not entirely consistent with Vaisavism, but Hare Krishna **mandirs** are, in many cases, the only source of Indian spirituality and philosophy for the millions of Indian immigrants and their families who now live in the U.S. I witnessed a particularly striking example of ISKCON's accommodation to other Hindu belief systems while attending a *Janmastami* (appearance or birthday of Krishna) event at the Hillsborough temple. Initiated ISKCON devotees are required to fast for the entire day of *Janmastami*, a practice which is believed to help devotees achieve spiritual clarity for the festive, though pensive, celebration of the life of Krishna. Shortly after midnight, ISKCON devotees gather on the temple grounds for a hearty and heavy *prasadam* meal to break the *Janmastami* fast.

Much to my surprise, however, food was set up, prepared and being served on the temple grounds after the 6 o'clock hour, even though the ritual breaking of the fast meal would not occur for several hours. I noticed almost all of the Western devotees, many of whom I "recognized" by their white (or black) skin, respected and observed the fast. The only people who seemed to be taking the available meal appeared Indian – mothers serving young children in their "dress" saris, Indian couples sitting together at the meal, families eating together at a single table – and all while *kirtans* and scripture reading were taking place inside the temple worship space. On this occasion, I most definitely observed more Indians who were **not**

observing ISKCON ritual than were, but who wished to mark *Janmastami* in an observing community. This practice suggests and speaks to the ISKCON accommodation to Indian spiritual needs but also to the ritual practice differences between Vaisnavism and mainline Hinduism. These ritual and practice differences suggest another reason for the growing “congregational” model of ISKCON.

Finally, and more practically, the “congregational” model has offered ISKCON an outlet to continue its growth. During the 1970s, the countercultural revolution provided a backdrop for ISKCON’s attractiveness, with ISKCON developing a model of recruiting young adults, 18-25 (Rochford, 1982) or 18-32 (Palmer, 1994) years of age for life as an austere and strictly observant *brahmachari*. After the death of Prabhupada and during the 1980 - 1990s this model no longer worked as well for ISKCON. It has since embraced the congregational model, offering the *mandir* community to Indian and South Asian householders as a way to experience the taste, scents, and sounds of their homeland. ISKCON’s proselytizing efforts shifted, therefore, from white, Western, and middle class youth in the 1970s to South Asian immigrant students and householders by the 1990s.

The language of the community reflects this shift in the ISKCON demographic. When devotees speak of one another, they will use the phrase “she’s a member of the congregation” to speak of a person who is of South Asian origin and worships with the community, without benefit of initiation into ISKCON. A woman of South Asian origin who has been initiated into ISKCON would be called “an Indian devotee or *brahmacarini*.”

By 2006, small, independent householder communities could be located around many ISKCON temples across North America. This number includes the newer Prabhupada Village in north, central, rural North Carolina, established in 2005.

Outside View

Sociological Context

Krishna Consciousness and ISKCON began in the milieu of the 1960s, providing answers and direction for many young people. Many would argue that the '60s counterculture helped prepare young people for a different worldview of the sort that encouraged Krishna Consciousness as an attractive lifestyle for the searchers and seekers of the sixties.

Roozen, McKinney and Carroll (1984) argue for four types of orientations or styles of institutional religious presence in U.S. culture. Of these four styles – activist, civic, sanctuary, and evangelistic – the sanctuary orientation most adequately describes the Hare Krishnas. The sanctuary orientation focuses on a world to come in a sense that priority is placed on life beyond this known temporal existence. This religious orientation provides its adherents with a sanctuary from which to withdraw or retreat from the secular world (Roozen et al., 1984, 35-6). This orientation privileges its own worldview, which is constructed against a backdrop of the “misguided” secular world. Issues of politics and economics, which are important to other styles of religious orientation, are not important to sanctuary-style religious movements. In fact, to Hare Krishnas, issues of politics, economics, and other concerns of the greater society are often regarded as suspect as they are polluted with

a host of karmic contaminants from secularity. To sum up, features of the sanctuary worldview that are important to Hare Krishnas, in particular are:

- (future) or other worldly in their outlook,
- a sense of withdrawal from the secular world into a community and totalizing worldview dominated by Krishna, and
- features a worldview constructed over and against that of a world viewed as polluted by *karma*³.

Indian philosophical systems teach a clear demarcation between the world of spirit and the world of matter. Krishna texts describe the world as “*maya*” or an illusion, where the world is a prison and an ocean of suffering. As such, this “material world’ is but a false home for the soul, which is really in temporary exile from God’s transcendental home. The soul is hungry for the knowledge necessary to advance itself out of the condition of suffering and must reject the world in order to liberate the soul from its prison (Gelberg, 1989, 166).

Unlike a pure sanctuary model proposed by Roozen and colleagues (1984), Hare Krishnas are decidedly evangelistic in their practices as well. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, as stated earlier, envisioned, and therefore fashioned, ISKCON as a movement to disseminate the ancient *Puranic* scriptures at the heart of the Caitanya movement. There are several forms of missionary activity that are central to ISKCON devotee practice – *nama-sankirtan*, or chanting the holy names (believed to

³ Karma, in this Hindu context, is understood as the law of morality such that actions bear a credit or debit and cumulative value on the scale of existence and over the course of many lifetimes (Daner, 1974, 114). The consequences of living for sense gratification are being cut off from participation in the love of God and, thus, denied liberation (*moksha*) from *samsara* or worldly despair. Contrary to Western popular cultural rhetoric, there is no such thing as “good” karma. The goal of Hare Krishna devotees is to live karma-free.

be liberative for all who hear them), the wide distribution of Prabhupada's books, to include the *Bhagavad-gita* and short texts from the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, and the distribution of *prasadam*, or sanctified food. The *Jagannatha Ratha-Yatra*, held in the city of Atlanta and in other major cities, is considered a premiere evangelistic event. The Sunday Feast is also a way for Krishna devotees to hold an "open house," invite outsiders into the temple and expose them to Krishna Consciousness and offer a slice of Puranic scriptures with more sanctified food. Even the recent opening of Govinda's, the Hare Krishna restaurant at the Atlanta temple, is considered a missionary (as well as fund raising) enterprise, as Vaisnava theology holds that people who consume a steady diet of sanctified food can expect a subtle and gradual purification of the soul from the material world (Gelberg, 1989, 149).

Exclusivity/Inclusivity. Early studies of Hare Krishna communities (Judah, 1974; Daner, 1974; Rochford, 1985) revealed that the structure of the movement in its earlier years made it difficult to impossible for outsiders to observe what was going on inside it. Outsiders were met with suspicion and were likely to receive less than welcoming treatment. As the movement reorganized in the years following Srila Prabhupada's death, less committed persons were welcomed into the communities, even if they were regarded as not being in good standing with ISKCON.

I experienced both the North Carolina and Atlanta communities as being rather inclusivist in their interactions with me. The North Carolina farm community, situated eight miles from Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina, did not see as many casual visitors as did Atlanta. It did, however, see its share of students and student groups because it is the base of an initiated *sannyasi*, His Holiness Bir

Krishna das Goswami, who lives on the grounds of the farm. On many occasions I took *darshan* with Gurudeva, His Holiness Bir Krishna Goswami, and he talked frequently of his interest in the sociology of ISKCON and his own hopes for engaging the world outside of ISKCON. He wrote the following to me, in a letter dated from February 1, 2004:

In the GBC of ISKCON, I represent the geographical areas covering the Southeast United States, from West Virginia through Texas, the countries of southeastern Europe, Finland, and the countries in the South Pacific. I travel extensively within my assigned areas. In each of these countries, ISKCON and Hare Krishna devotees are in different kinds of relationships with the “mainstream” cultures within these countries. Each relationship is very dependent upon the relationships ISKCON has, or doesn’t have, with the state and upon the political climate within each country. In Fiji, for instance, we are regarded with the same esteem as any other religious group represented in Fiji. In the US, however, our movement is regarded as a “cult,” where this word carries pejorative images to mainstream United States culture. This negative regard limits our ability to widely preach our philosophy of non-violence, tolerance, and the oneness of all religions to the people of the US and to engage scholars of religion and others in inter-religious dialogue. (His Holiness Bir Krishna das Goswami)

The Atlanta temple, situated just outside of the Little Five Points and Candler Park areas, encouraged neighboring householders and students from nearby universities to stop in for a meal, attend a festival or lecture, chat with a visiting *sannyasi* or *maharaja*. The Atlanta temple restaurant, Govinda’s, opened in March of 2008, serving lunchtime meals of *prasadam*, or food first offered to the deities. (Krishna devotees always consume food first presented to the deities, as they believe that a steady diet of this “grace” food increases Krishna Consciousness. Similarly, offering *prasadam* to people who aren’t devotees, or “karmies”, helps bring some Krishna Consciousness into their material lives.) In Atlanta, the former president is African American, and Western white and African American visitors to the Sunday lecture and *Prasad(-am)* feast were common. His Sunday lectures always seemed to

acknowledge the presence of movement outsiders in his listening audience, though others who may offer Sunday lectures may or may not have been as welcoming. Most Sunday lectures during his tenure incorporated instructions and teachings from the perspective of Christians or Muslims who might be unfamiliar with, but sympathetic to, Krishna consciousness. While these lectures often touched, even if only momentarily, on the four regulatory principles (especially forbidding meat-eating), frequently the temple president would say “if you can’t give up meat, then chant the divine names to purify yourself.”

Other sociological features of this NRM include: Intrinsic, Ascetic, Salvationistic, and Transformational orientations. In most cases, these orientations are a direct consequence of the mind/body split typical of Indian philosophies, so these “world of spirit” orientations are understood as standing against the consequences of life in the world of matter.

Intrinsic. Guided by the text from the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, devotees live to “constantly hear about, glorify, remember and worship the personality of Godhead with one-pointed attention” (*Bhagavatam*, Canto 1, 2.14), Krishna devotees maintain that the purpose of life is to offer loving devotion to Krishna. In contrast with the extrinsic orientation, that views a religious system as instrumental or utilitarian, the intrinsic orientation regards the religious system as an end in itself; the system is a *telos* of the purpose of life (Hunt & King, 1977). For Krishna devotees, *bhakti*, loving devotion to Krishna, is salvific and liberatory – an elevated soul by the end of life assures continual progression toward a final destination of a life with Krishna.

Ascetic. The *ashrama* lifestyle of many devotees, especially the younger unmarried members of ISKCON is consistent with what Max Weber calls “world-rejecting asceticism” (Weber, 1964, 169-170). Weber frames “world-rejecting asceticism” as an active opposite orientation to contemplation, as ascetics actively reject the world as contemplatives passively flee from it. The ascetic, says Weber, achieves a religious victory in that the battle with the world is psychologically felt and perceived as a repeated rejection of worldly temptations (Weber, 1964, 170). Indeed, Krishna Consciousness teaches that the pleasures of the world are suspect, soul-polluting and should be rejected. All the world belongs to Krishna, ISKCON teaches, so “one should therefore accept only those things necessary for oneself, which are set aside as one’s quota, and one should not accept other things” (Prabhupada, 1969, 17). The four-regulatory principles must be practiced along with a spiritual and emotional discipline, supported by physically marking the body as being “removed” from the world. Initiated males are required to shave their heads except for a small ponytail in the back. Women, especially younger unmarried women, are required to cover their heads, usually with the *pallu* fabric of the sari. In all, however, the lifestyle is marked by simplicity and austerity, especially to contrast with the opulence of contemporary and Western societies.

Salvationistic. On a popular Krishna Consciousness recording, Prabhupada’s voice ends an updated, upbeat version of the *maha-mantra*, saying “by chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, man will learn that he is not this body” (“Beyond Darkness,” 1994, cut 6). A central feature of the salvation, or liberation, from the miseries of material existence is to cut attachments with the body, placing faith in the

elevated “transcendental platform” where the mind contemplates Krishna and Krishna’s pastimes. Krishna Consciousness teaches that identification with the body and its senses leads to death with the body; a mind contemplating Krishna is constantly being purified and prepared for a higher existence.

With a philosophy that teaches that the mind should always remain on Krishna and away from the material, sense-gratifying world, the image of Krishna is immediate and personal, beautiful, playful and all-attractive. He is depicted in various paintings about the temples as a beautiful youth, skin tinged with blue, and thick black curly hair, always adorned with sweet smelling flowers. The deities of Krishna are always associated with his divine consort Radha, and together they are a most beautiful pair (*Bhagavatam*, Canto 10, on the imaged of Krishna and the Radha-Krishna deities). The sacred image, or the *arca-vigraha*, is not a representation of Krishna, but actually Krishna, as available to the material senses captive in the prison of the body. God has agreed to appear in clay form so that neophyte devotees, who have not yet learned to control their senses, may occupy their senses with Him. In this way, the senses are awakened to enjoy only Krishna --- through seeing no less than Krishna Himself, hearing the scriptures, chanting the Hare Krishna mantra out loud (as the Lord is believed to live in the sound), the scents of incense and flower offerings, and in the tastes of sanctified food. In other words, the senses are overwhelmed with Krishna to divert them from other types of sense gratification. Liberation from the material and sensible world is achieved, therefore, when the senses crave no other than Krishna.

Transformational. Krishna Consciousness is a constant endeavor to achieve elevation from the mundane senses and material world to a spiritual consciousness, where the mind is always on Krishna. Therefore, higher consciousness is Krishna-centered, not self-centered. It is also not family-centered, spouse-centered or job focused, etc., for relationships other than those involving the Lord are considered attachments to other people, position, money, power, and the like. Achieving this mindset involves an inner transformation. It is not intellectual nor does it require rational assent.

Hare Krishnas have constructed a host of elaborate and intricate rites and rituals, many of which are required to be performed daily by Krishna conscious individuals. Few secular, contemporary ideologies or religious systems demand as much ritual repetition as do the Hare Krishnas. Anthropologically, rituals function to construct the individual into a bona fide member of a group, through clearly articulating identities and drawing sharp lines around “who is in” and “who is out.” The strong correlation between the elaborate and heavy ritual requirements of the Krishna conscious lifestyle and its ability to be transformative for the individuals who live within its social world cannot be understated.

Social and Psychological Perspectives

Who are Krishna Devotees?

Conversion to NRMs such as Hare Krishnas, has taken a controversial tone, particularly in the 1980’s, as many people, including scholars of religion, argued the “brainwashing” was the predominant mode of initiation into what they regarded as cultic or “cult” settings. In contrast to this brainwashing argument, I follow the

research of J. Stillson Judah (1974), Francine Daner (1974), and E. Burke Rochford (1985, 2007) along with my own participant observations, that indicate that ISKCON devotees are actively constructing their lives, worldviews, and identities around and including Krishna conscious principles.

J. Stillson Judah (1974) conducted extensive fieldwork in ISKCON in California and India during the early 1970s, using questionnaires, interviews, and movement participation. He noted that the typical pre-convert was upper middle class, and more likely a “seeker,” in that only 6 percent of his respondents reported contact with ISKCON as their first religious movement. The majority of Judah’s sample reported having used drugs as well as practicing some form of religious discipline. Judah concluded that for these wandering youth, the Hare Krishna Movement provided a means for answering the questions pressing the youth of the time and for establishing community with other like-minded individuals. He determines that devotees’ search for meaning provided four elements:

1. They sought an authority to give them a satisfactory alternative way of life and a worldview when all other (external) authorities had failed them.
2. They searched after a suitable way to validate and sacralize their by means of personal experience, giving their *Weltanschauung* ultimate and absolute meaning.
3. They sought to establish a close fellowship with others who would have the same countercultural backgrounds as their own along with similar needs. They reinforced each other in a routinized (and ritualized) shared experience of this new reality.
4. The majority of his respondents, through their spiritual searching, had previously encountered Eastern religions, and had already begun to accept ideas such as reincarnation, *karma*, and other doctrines in common with Krishna Consciousness. (Judah, 1974, 161-3).

Daner’s (1974) study of the Hare Krishna movement offered a second glance of conversion to ISKCON from inside the movement, as she lived as a participant

observer, from March 1971 to June 1974, in ISKCON temples in Boston, New York, London and Amsterdam. Reporting from the expansion and legitimization period in ISKCON, and prior to its founder-**acarya**'s death in 1977, Daner raised two issues. She argued that "those young people who turn to ISKCON seek an ideology and life style which they believe the matrix society does not offer them" (12). Noting that the age of conversion to ISKCON was typically youth to young adult stages, following Erikson (1950) she identifies "the search for identity, for a definition of self, as the main concern of youth" (12). For the youth of the 1960s and 1970s, Daner argued, experimentation and personal consciousness appeared forefront in their quest for meaning and life experience. By contrast, then, the ISKCON temple provided a well defined structural and ideological situation into which the searching youth could insert themselves, as temple life and ISKCON ideology created "a social situation in which the realized their identities, thereby eliminating much of the ambiguity generated by modern society" (14). As a result, Daner argues, some members of the 1960s counterculture saw Krishna consciousness as a way to transform their own consciousness as well as the environment around them.

A second issue with regard to conversion, in Daner's view, utilizes Erving Goffman's (1961) sociological construct of "total institutions," that is, "a place of residence and work where a number of like-minded individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed formally administered round of life" (1961, xiii). Total institutions function as "forcing houses" for individuals, denying individual everyday presentation and performances of the self, with members' daily activities performed in the company of others, tightly

scheduled activities and rituals, and various activities serving the overall plan or mission of the institution.

Early ISKCON, as studied by Daner in the early 1970s, subscribed to the **ashrama** concept, in which individuals lived in temple dormitory like settings, participating in daily routines and spiritual duties on a strict schedule and in the company of others. The austere lifestyle, minimizing personal possessions, regulating clothing, diet and even hair styles supported a theology that denounced attachments to any other than God and especially to the polluted “material world.” To the young devotees Daner encountered, ISKCON provided a “total institution,” offering these devotees a well-defined structural and ideological situation in which to realize their identities (1976, 12). The temple and the **ashrama**, provide formal rites, positive identifications and models, and an ideology which many of the young youth of the 1970s found sorely lacking in larger society.

In present day ISKCON, the **ashrama** model exists alongside the congregational model, discussed above. While the congregational style tends to support the needs of older devotees living in surrounding communities, householders with young children, and Indian Hindus, not necessarily *Vaisnava*, I observed that the **ashrama** experience was the preferred choice of most of the younger and single initiated devotees. From my observations in the Atlanta and Hillsborough temples, devotees from around the world visit for a time and then move on to another **ashrama** situation. One *sannyasi* and Governing Body Commission member explained that he would like to think of the time young people spend living in the **ashrama** as something of a seminary experience, where young converts, likely people 18-25ish

years of age, learn the pillars of the tradition, read scripture, benefit from the formation of life so close to their beloved Krishna and then move into marriage and community life strengthened in Krishna consciousness.

Similar to Daner's impression of likely converts to *Vaisnavism*, Shinn (1983), drawing from interviews with devotees from 1980, observed that pre-converts tended to display a state of identity confusion, no doubt a function of their young age. Reminiscent of Judah's work, Shinn also observed that likely pre-converts were already familiar with Eastern thought and tended to be already practicing vegetarians as a result. Many or most of these pre-converts reported being disenchanted, in one way or another, with materialistic, capitalistic practices and the Western world surrounding them.

I found a similar dynamic -- an attraction to Eastern thought and a resistance to Western way of life -- when interviewing an older, male, Krishna devotee, who said:

“I pretty much agree with the Hare Krishna point of view as far as reincarnation and *karma* and things like that. Some confusing philosophy with both ... either I don't understand completely or I don't agree completely. For the most part I'm really at home here with this philosophy and this way of life. It has been a steady progression from the first time I heard it ... it is freedom to choose to be righteous. Why wouldn't anybody want to? – (Subject 263, Amrit (pseudonym), male devotee of ISKCON)

To this devotee, approaching his 60s, fine points of philosophy and theology were a bit confusing but, overall, the steady progression to a higher consciousness with a gradual renunciation of Western ways made Krishna consciousness irresistible for him.

Rochford (1985) studied, through participant observation and significant demographic data collection, devotees in the Los Angeles, Denver, Chicago, Port Royal, New York and Boston temples. Of 231 devotees surveyed from mostly California temples, he identified salient background factors and social categories typical to that mid-80's California devotee cohort. Compiling the results of his conversion demographic data, Rochford suggests the devotees who joined ISKCON tend to link "pre-movement cognitive operations and the movement's ideology with their ways of life." (68-70). Basically, pre-conversion accounts from devotees indicate a predisposition to the beliefs and values of ISKCON, more specifically, 1) to the movement's philosophy, 2) to social ties with other ISKCON members, 3) to an attraction to the person or to the writings of Srila Prabhupada, and 4) they shared a perception of their lives going badly and required a change of direction.

Rochford's (1985) fairly large and geographically diverse sample noted that devotees were mostly White, though 20 percent of the 213 were from outside of the United States. Seventy-eight percent of his cohort were not college graduates, but most devotees attended college for some time when they left to pursue the "spiritual life." The greater majority of Rochford's sample was from middle and upper middle class families, with fathers who tended to be employed in professional, executive, or administrative positions. This is particularly interesting in that these devotees, with backgrounds of relative material and economic stability, chose a Krishna conscious lifestyle of marked by renunciation and asceticism (Rochford, 1985, 51).

When an older devotee was interviewed about how he became a Hare Krishna, he related the story of becoming attracted to the Vaisnava philosophy by reading

Prabhupada's books. He simply called the phone number in the back of one of the books and asked, "How do you become a devotee?" The response on the other end of the phone was "just come down to the (local) temple." He then related a story about joining ISKCON and moving into the temple instead of returning to college after

Thanksgiving break:

So I go home for Thanksgiving and tell my mother, "I'm gonna be a religious monk." She did not accept it, she said, "are you crazy, no way you are going to back out of school, you're got to finish school --- I have spent all this money on that apartment. I said, "forget this, I am not going back, I'm going to be a Hare Krishna. I don't care what anybody says. I tried to tell my friends and nobody agreed with me. [Laughs.] The next day, I tell my brother, "alright, I'm going back, we are getting ready to leave." I tell my mother "bye, I'm going back to school." I told my brother to go to the college and get my things, I said, "I'm not going back to school." I said "take me to the temple and that's it." I said, "you do down there and you get my stuff and bring it back." He takes me to the temple on a Sunday and he dropped me off and I said goodbye. I go in and talk to someone and said, "well, I called someone on the phone and they said to come down, so here I am" ... I joined the temple; that was fall of 1974. (Subject 208, "Ravi," a male devotee in the Atlanta temple).

Many of Rochford's respondents, as did my interviewee above, indicated that they first encountered Krishna devotees at the educational institution they were attending. There was, however, a gender difference in the method of the first contact. Women often encountered another person, usually a woman, involved in ISKCON and reported attending the Sunday Feast or other temple activity with another woman for the first time. Men, on the other hand, typically reported a first encounter with Krishna devotees in a public place, such as an airport, festival, or in a public chanting (*sankirtan*) event. From his responses, Rochford noted, men were more likely to venture into a Krishna temple alone, much like the interviewee above, after having encountered a devotee(s) in a public setting (1985, 125).

Poling and Kenney (1986) found that, emotionally, many devotees reported problematic relationships with their fathers or other authority figures. Father absence in the family home was also frequently reported among devotees. The theology of ISKCON requires that devotees take shelter under Krishna and, by extension, a guru. This spiritual figure provides instruction, spiritual guidance, and, to varying degrees, emotional support. (I witnessed one *sannyasi* passing out vitamins during the cold and flu season, offering, in some ways, physical support as well.) The Poling and Kenney observations lead one to speculate that the *sannyasi* may offer another type of father figure to many devotees, especially those who join the movement in early adulthood.

Around the psychology of conversion, there are a number of interesting questions and patterns.

His Holiness Bir Krishna das Goswami mentioned his own anecdotal evidence for the four factors predict likely individual conversion to ISKCON: 1) people experiencing individual crises, 2) identity seeking people, 3) individuals actively rejecting the identities they've constructed for themselves, and 4) prior peer-group involvement in ISKCON.

Lansky and Phil (1976) administered the Rydell-Rosen Tolerance of Ambiguity instrument to 11 members of ISKCON, revealing that this sample was significantly less tolerant of ambiguity than members of the control groups. As the Hare Krishna temple provides well-defined structure, rituals, and ideologies, it creates a social situation in which young adults can realize their identities while eliminating some of the ambiguity in contemporary society (Daner, 1974,12). Erikson (1950)

names the identity vs. identity confusion dialectic as the most pressing psychosocial conflict of the young adults most likely to become Hare Krishna converts. The structured Krishna devotee lifestyle the temple setting and can support resolution of some of this conflict in providing trust, initiative, identity, and intimacy at a critical time in the lives of young adults.

William James, in *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1961) argues that conversion requires both a decision to convert and a conversion process, though neither need necessarily be a sudden process.

To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self, hither divided, and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior and happy ... whether or not we believe that a direct divine operation is needed to bring such a moral change about (1902, 160).

Advancing the separation of the *conversion decision* from the *conversion process* is Fowler's *Stages of Faith*. Though Fowler's work in *Stages* more accurately describes a conversion-deepening process, the six steps toward religious maturity work well for people born into a religious tradition, but is also "clearly consonant with the maturation process of new converts to groups like the Krishnas." (Shinn, 1989, 130)⁴.

⁴ While Shinn argues for looking at the conversion and maturation **process** through Fowler's six stage theory, he states that its reliance upon the Christian set of values limits its application to other faiths of the world, like ISKCON. For example, he argues, "Fowler's assumptions include a theistic divinity and love and justice as signs of the completely mature faith" (1989, 134n). Shinn questions if the **content** of the six stages of faith would be the same for mature disciples of other faiths. This is a question that I share, as FDI scoring, for example, suggests a "lower" score for the "concrete" practices of worshipping clay deities or the external locus of control such as reliance upon a teacher/guru. Faith in Krishna requires a worldview that maintains the necessity of worshipping and praying to clay deities, just as the beginning of genuine *bhakti*, love of God, requires a devotee to take shelter in a guru who is "ordained" by **parampara**, or disciplic succession.

Rochford (1985, 2007) witnessed the conversion-deepening process in the accounts of conversion recording at several points in time. He considers how devotees' accounts of conversion are constantly being "revised, redefined, and reconstructed to accord with their present experiences." (73). Over time, he argues, the "vocabulary of explanations" is consistently being expanded to align with the devotee's current worldview. Accounts are skillfully created and re-created as people have at their disposal and a growing facility with the official language of the religious system's rationale (73).

Fowler's work encourages us to consider these "expanding vocabularies" and this growing facility with the official rhetoric as expanding meaning making and maturing in the faith tradition. The individual's reconstruction of his or her personal conversion narrative likely repositions the self's meaning making enterprise along the aspects Fowler calls Form of World Coherence and Symbolic Function. This becomes a self-directed process of maturing within the worldview of the religious system. This suggests that conscious, cognitive factors drive, not only the conversion decision, but the process of conversion-deepening and maturation. At the same time that maturation in a faith system occurs, the self is taking account of the world outside the religious community, with all its forms of belief and unbelief and yet, comes to appreciate and mature in her faith without feeling any threat from the outside world. As such, a mature person becomes a living example of her or her own belief system (Shinn, 1989, 131).

Theological Context

The theological self perception of Krishna consciousness in the West is that it is a lone philosophy of enlightenment, set within a hostile environment alongside other religious groups that have adapted themselves to modernity. Krishna consciousness teaches that the modern world was founded on a principal of historical consciousness in which beings are thought to have evolved through history with the fittest surviving, and in which ideas, human societies, religions, and culture are described as developing from the simple to the complex. Consistent with a modern sense that humanity and societies evolved over time is a prevailing belief that consciousness, also, is evolving over time. Set against this Western ideology of modernism, Krishna consciousness thoroughly rejects the idea that societies, beings, and consciousness are evolving and thus, appear fundamentalist. Other features of fundamentalism that are present in ISKCON's theology are its literal interpretation of scripture and the absolute authority of its "bona fide" *gurus*.

The inerrancy of scripture. In Krishna consciousness, the Vedic scriptures are considered synonymous with knowledge. They contain all that is necessary to be happy, liberated and fulfilled as a human being – understanding of and unbridled devotion to Krishna. The aim of life is to love Krishna as perfectly as possible in a human body.

“Vedic knowledge is infallible because it comes down through the perfect disciplic succession of spiritual masters, beginning with the Lord Himself. Since he spoke the first word of Vedic knowledge, the source of this knowledge is

transcendental. The words spoken by the Lord ... are not delivered by any mundane person” (Prabhupada, 1969, 18).

Bhakti. The notion of *bhakti* is central to Krishna Consciousness. In fact, Krishna Consciousness explains itself as nothing other than the original and first consciousness of humanity – the awareness that each one of us is eternally related to God in Krishna. The soul is eternal; no new souls are made or destroyed. When a body dies, the soul is transmigrated into a new body and the cycle of life, death and transmigration is called *samsara*. With each new birth, the soul “forgets” its original relationship to God, and can begin to falsely identify with the body it is given instead of identifying with and loving the Giver of life. Liberation from the *samsara* cycle is achieved with elevating one’s consciousness in order to resume the eternal relationship with Krishna, achieve eternal knowledge, and bliss (Daner, 1974, 33). ***Bhakti***, then, is loving service to Krishna, the ultimate goal of all life, philosophy and of all religion. As one *sannyasi* said at a wedding to the non-Hare Krishna guests, “Krishna Consciousness is a postgraduate education in religion.”

To achieve the proper mindset of self-surrender and to prepare oneself to receive the fruits of Krishna-*prema* (love of God) which are mercy, humility, truthfulness, equal to all, faultlessness, magnanimous, mild-manner, and cleanliness, the a neophyte devotees is guided through the following instruction:

1. Recognizing Krishna as one’s only refuge.
2. Service to a spiritual master (*guru*).
3. Reading and listening to the *Bhagavad-gita* and the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, Krishna’s pastimes, and the writings of the guru.
4. *Sankirtana*, singing the names and praises of Krishna; this is the most powerful means of bringing about an attitude proper for bhakti and should be universally adopted in the present age.
5. Thinking constantly of the name, form and pastimes of Krishna.

6. Serving the feet (literally) of the deities, seeing, touching, and worshipping the deities.
7. Performing rite and ceremonies learned from the guru, such as putting Vaisnava signs on one's body with *Tilaka* (explained below), taking the remains of an offering to the deity as *prasada*, drinking water used to wash the deity, and so on.
8. Prostrating before the deity forms and the spiritual master (Daner, 1974, 35).

Prabhupada, continuing the Brahma-Madhva Gaudiya tradition of Caitanya's Bengali preacher, emphasized chanting, the "sound incarnation of the Lord," and devotional service, throughout his books, teachings and translations of *Srimad Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*. "Devotional service, beginning with the chanting of the holy name of the Lord, is the ultimate religious principle for the living entity in human society" (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 6.3.22).

Guru Worship Prabhupada, through the *Bhagavad-gita*, taught, "try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master" (*Bhagavad-gita* 4.34).

vande guroh sri-caranaravindam

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master"

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Krishna. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master. (-from the rite called the Sri Sri Gurvastaka or "guru puja" from the morning program, *mangala aroti*)

In the conclusion of the *Bhagavad-gita*, Sanjaya, who narrates a discourse between Krishna and Arjuna to the blind king Dhrtarastra, indicates that he heard this discussion – hundreds of miles away. The question of how he heard this conversation emerges, with the answer following that Sunjaya heard the words of the Lord "by mercy of his spiritual master Vyasa (*Bhagavad-gita* 18.75). Despite his

considerable distance from the Kuruksetra battlefield where Krishna spoke to Arjuna, Sanjaya experienced the conversation with the Lord. In Prabhupada's commentary on this *Gita* passage, he states, "when the spiritual master is bona fide, then one can hear *Bhagavad-gita* directly, as Arjuna heard it ... By the grace of Vyasa, Sanjaya's senses were purified, and he could see and hear Arjuna directly" (Prabhupada, 1991, 860-861). Prabhupada also argues that the ability to make the remote past present, to bridge space and time and hear Krishna is the mystery of "disciplic succession" (the uninterrupted chain of teachers who hand down the teaching initiated by Krishna). By the authority of the bona fide guru, devotees experience the instantiation of the original revelation (Deadwyler, 1989, 60).

"Prabhupada taught that we must understand spiritual science through a *guru*, a spiritual master, and revealed scriptures." Srila Prabhupada also taught unceasingly that his own ultimate qualification, and indeed the qualification of any bona fide *guru*, is to always faithfully repeat the teachings of Krishna as they are found in revealed scriptures" (Hridyananda das Goswami Acaryadeva, 2005).

Only the mediation of a bona fide spiritual master can purify the senses so that the devotee can see Krishna directly. If one does not come to the disciplic succession to take shelter at the "lotus feet" of the spiritual master, connection with Krishna is not possible. Yet, the direct perception of Krishna is also understood as a function of the quality of the relationship of the spiritual master and the disciple. By uttering Krishna's name or hearing his description, a devotee can "see" Krishna directly, but only when both the spiritual master and the devotee are qualified spiritually (Deadwyler, 59). Prabhupada also commented that "one can certainly see directly the presence of Lord Sri Krishna in the pages of the *Bhagavatam* if one hears it from ...

a spiritual master in disciplic succession. Simple hearing is not all: one must realize the text with proper attention. This is the process of receiving *Bhagavatam* (Prabhupada 1.1: 199).

Additionally, proper fidelity to the tradition brings about spiritual realization. In yet another example from the *Bhagavatam*, Prabhupada illustrates with the story of Brahma's enlightenment. Brahma (the first man) is lost and bewildered in the world and cannot understand his work, place or mission in the world. Upon meeting a bona fide spiritual master, he becomes initiated into *bhakti*. Brahma submits himself to his spiritual master and becomes purified, whereupon he comes face to face with the Lord Krishna (Deadwyler, 1989, 610).

Linear Temporality and Millenarianism. The temporal worldview of Krishna Consciousness is synchronic, with all classes of being existing eternally, and hierarchical, with Krishna as the supreme personality of Godhead and other beings ordered by the principle of *karma*. That is to say that beings are ordered in accordance with their spiritual progression, and past deeds and life challenges are ordered with *karma* becoming the ultimate justice principle. "Intelligent human beings must always remember that the soul obtains a human form after an evolution of many millions of years in the cycle of transmigration," Prabhupada taught (1969, 30).

The progression of time, however, has a linear, rather than cyclical, element. Life on earth is a divinely orchestrated process of historical development that culminates with a millennium of spiritual bliss. The present age, called *Kali-yuga*

(degraded age) has witnessed the presence of an incarnation of Krishna, who descended to earth to preach salvation and liberation in the current era.

Salvation History. Peculiar among Hindus is this millenarian view of Gaudiya Vaisnavism, seeing itself as the successor in a lineage from Caitanya who, as a *yuga-avatara*, a Krishna incarnation for the age, introduced our time, which is the final chapter of a vast, sacred history. In keeping with the frames of inside and outside here, an outside view of the life of Caitanya sounds like the following words from Diana Eck, “one of the most vigorous and vibrant periods of devotional piety on the Indian subcontinent began about five hundred years ago, when a new wave of this ancient *bhakti* tradition broke across north India as virtually a Protestant Reformation of the Hindu tradition” (Eck, 1979, 26). Indeed, Caitanya, the reformer or saint from outside view, is no less than an incarnation of Krishna within Krishna consciousness.

Given the *Gaudiya Vaisnava* concept of time, outlined earlier, we can say that the prevailing belief is that life on earth is a divinely orchestrated process. From time to time, God descends into humanity in varying forms, always appropriate for the needs of humanity at the time God descends. In the aspect of Narayana, for instance, God commands a sense of awe and majesty, and humanity responds to Narayana accordingly. In the aspect of Krishna, the Beautiful One, however, God invites intimacy and allows God to, not only pursue, but receive personal devotion. In the Krishna incarnation, God reveals the most intimate, fraternal, parental and conjugal exchanges of transcendental love developed without barrier, boundary or limitation. As Krishna, God sets aside all the trappings of Godhood to pursue the intensities of human relationship without constraint. (Deadwyler, 1989, 67).

With the advent of Caitanya, God descended into humanity in the current time frame, in order to establish the true path of religion (*Bhagavad-gita* 4.7-8). The current age, a period called *Kali-yuga* in Vaisnavism, is marked by extreme moral degradation. It is understood as a time where humanity trusts in itself and has turned away from God. Into this *Kali-yuga*, God has entered history as Caitanya, the avatar for the (degraded) age, to teach the *yuga-dharma* (age-teaching) for this moment in history. From Prabhupada's translation of the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, "in the Age of Kali, intelligent persons perform congregational chanting to worship [Lord Caitanya,] the incarnation of Godhead who constantly sings the names of Krishna. Although His complexion is not blackish, He is Krishna Himself. He is accompanied by His associates, servants, weapons, and confidential companions" (11.5.32). Interestingly enough, the "ages" become increasingly more amoral and degraded, but spiritual practice, on the other hand, becomes progressively easier. Caitanya's life of preaching and reforming Hinduism to include *bhakti* with devotional fervor, indeed, *prema bhakti*, in Caitanya's pure devotion is touted as the perfect *dharma* for this degraded age. His chanting 'Hare Krishna' and reforming a previously rite oriented tradition is understood as the basis for salvation, liberation, from the cycle of birth, disease, old age and death. As Prabhupada writes in the translation in the *Bhagavatam*:

... although Kali-yuga is full of faults, there is still one good quality about the age. It is that simply by chanting the Hare Krishna *maha-mantra* ... one can become free of material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom" (*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 12.3.51).

To make this view complete, the inside view also holds that the advent of Caitanya is also a development beyond the advent of Krishna. According to Deadwyler's read of the *Caitanya-caritamrta*⁵, Krishna, as Caitanya, took on the feelings and golden complexion of Radharini, Krishna's consort, the first among the cowherd girls of Vrindavana. In taking on the aspects of Radharini, Krishna assumed the highest manifestation of the feminine side of the truth and the embodiment of Krishna's transcendental energy as bliss. Therefore, all *bhakti* comes from Radha's energy and astounding love for Krishna. Krishna, as Caitanya, experiences devotee love for himself; he experiences the bliss of humans in the love of God (Deadwyler, 1989, 70).

Deity Worship. Related to the concept of *bhakti* is the worship, love and devotion to the temple deities. The Supreme Lord is present in every temple in deity form, where he is considered the proprietor of the temple. While every temple has deities, large or small, of Lords Jagannatha, Subadra, and Balarama; the Caitanya deities of Gaura and Nitai, and, of course, the Radha-Krishna deities. Every temple's Radha-Krishna deities are named, often in connection with the temple. The Hillsborough temple, New Goloka, houses deities named *Sri Sri Radha Golokananda*. The Atlanta temple's Radha-Krishna deities are named *Madan Mohan* (beautiful one). ISKCON devotees, who have been with the movement for many years and/or who have lived or visited many temples, often know about what temple one speaks when they hear the name of the deities.

⁵ The *Caitanya-caritamrtas*, written by Krishnadasa Kaviraja Goswami in the century, was translated by Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada and is billed by the official ISKCOM publisher as "the definitive history and biography of Sri Krishna Caitanya, the "Golden Avatar," the incarnation of Krishna in this age as the form of a devotee.

Krishna consciousness maintains that deities are not idols, but incarnations of the Lord in the material elements available to our fallen humanity. In the *Sri Isopanisad*, a collection of teachings taken from the *Yajur Veda*, Prabhupada explains:

The Lord can appear in the form of *arca-vigraha*, a Deity supposedly made of earth, stone or wood. Deity forms, although engraved from wood, stone or other matter, are not idols, as the iconoclasts contend. In our present state of imperfect material existence, we cannot see the Supreme Lord due to imperfect vision. Yet those devotees who want to see Him by means of material vision are favored by the Lord, who appears in a so-called material form to accept His devotees' service. One should not think that those devotees are worshiping an idol. They are factually worshiping the Lord, who has agreed to appear before them in an approachable way (1969, 39-40).

Prabhupada held that deity worship was good for every soul, but especially so for those souls entangled in material world complications, such a family life, careers outside of devotional service, or for neophyte devotees who were learning to become more Krishna conscious (Daner, 1974). Time spent with the Lord in deity form helps to purify souls so that they might better be equipped to make spiritual progress. As a 30-ish female devotee told me, "deity service helps you form a strong attachment for to Krishna that helps you end attachments to other sense gratifications. To service Krishna is to love Krishna."

Inside View: Ethnography

Central Rituals

"... well, I did everything, took a name, lived in the *ashrama* the whole nice ... but I would not chant... even as a kid I knew that that chanting stuff ... whew! That's how they get into your head!" (Subject 201, a female Hare Krishna, on the strength of the chanting ritual.)

Chanting involves the ritual singing of Krishna's holy names, such as “Hare,” “Krishna,” and “Rama,” most commonly in the form of the **maha mantra**, in an upbeat drum accompanied cadence known as the kirtan. The movement is sometimes referred to as the Brahma-Madhva -Gaudiya *sampradaya* tradition. Chanting is an essential part of, not only the practices of Hare Krishna, but the theology as well. Behind the belief in the power of the mantra is the belief that the literal “sound incarnation” of the mantra is no different from Krishna Himself. Therefore, the mantra is always spoken aloud, or better ALOUD! According to Gelberg, “As Krishna is the supreme object of the Vedas, His holy name contains all their knowledge, and thus to chant is to become enlightened with all spiritual wisdom... Chanting eradicates the reactions to past sins, cleanses the heart and mind of all material desires, and ultimately brings liberation and ecstatic love for Krishna” (Gelberg, 1989, 152-3).

Earlier, I related a story from Ravi (pseudonym), a 40-something male devotee who joined ISKCON and moved into the temple *ashrama* instead of returning to college after his Thanksgiving break. I return now to his story, as a way to introduce this discussion of life in the Hare Krishna *ashrama*, or, the daily routines of full-time Krishna devotees.

The routine is getting up at 4:30⁶ in the morning. This was the first time I’m hearing about the chanting, the eating, learning how to chant, when to eat. I couldn’t eat because I didn’t like vegetables. (Laughs.) I said, “man how am I going to do this?” I said, “I’ve got to do it because I was so attracted to it”. It was the most amazing thing -- Up to that point I could not stop drinking, could not stop eating, I was smoking cigarettes seriously. I couldn’t stop any of that stuff. I was addicted to women because women were coming from everywhere all of the time. But day one in the temple, and I had no more

⁶ Actually, the *mangala aroti* begins at 4:30 AM. If one cares to prepare for the day prior to going to the temple room for worship, it requires rising sometime before 4:30.

reservations. To this day that still amazes me that I actually did it (Ravi, a 40-something devotee in the Atlanta temple).

Krishna devotees immerse themselves in a sacred universe, informed by the *Bhagavad-gita* and the *Srimad Bhagavatam*, dotted with beings human, superhuman and divine. Through the daily communal readings and personal enactments, they imbibe its philosophical, theological and ethical precepts. Through personal enactment, they reject daily, the modern, Western world permeated with *karma* and existence in *Kali-yuga*, a degraded period of spiritual blindness, materialism, and sense gratification.

I will describe a typical day in the life of a Krishna devotee living in an *ashrama*, as I experienced it, with an eye on the performed enactments in their spiritual practices. The greatest attention is placed on the early morning rituals, when most of the corporate ritual activities take place.

I was given a guest room in the Hillsborough (NC) temple guest house around 8 pm the night before my big day in the Krishna temple. My room was a small one, perhaps 10X10, in a guest house with 4 to 5 small single rooms. Men's and women's bathrooms and showers were on the opposite side of the hall, though only women were living in the guest house. At the back of the house was a larger gathering hall, where many devotees, especially householders with smaller children, would take their meals in colder or rainy weather (otherwise, devotees took meals outside, where they are served, under the large shelter just in front of the temple dome). It was summer and, with rain being a rare occurrence, the gathering hall wasn't being used. That night I did discover that there was a large kitchen type sink in the gathering hall, used

to wash the stainless dishes, cups, and eating utensils that are among every devotee's possessions.

Back in my room, I settled in for the night. My bed was a twin sized, futon-like mattress that was lying atop a futon type frame that was very close to the floor. In one corner was an IKEA-looking ready-to-assemble wardrobe, where I hung my "karmie" clothes. As I was told, I found bed sheets, a blanket and a pillow inside the wardrobe. I tried to settle in to sleep, unaccustomed as I was, to going to bed before the sun had set, but realizing that I had to be awake, dressed, ritually prepared and in place in the temple room by 4:30 AM.

I found myself in the shower by 3:30 AM, never having fallen asleep for fear that I wouldn't wake in time. I deliberately tried to be in and out of the shower before the other women needed the shower. I dressed in a choli and sari and then did my best to apply the soft sandalwood-spicy scented clay from the Holy City of Vrindaban's Yamuna River known as *tilaka*. To prepare for worship, devotees ritually apply *tilaka* to twelve locations on the body: the forehead, belly, chest, throat, right and left abdomen, right and left arms and shoulders. With each application, the devotee recites praises to Lord Vishnu in different names: *om kesavaya namah*, (in the name of Kesavaya), *om narayanaya namah* (in the name of Narayanaya), etc., for each of the twelve locations. Finally, the Vishnu *tilak* is placed on the forehead on down the bridge of the nose, in the form of a 'V'. Marking the body with *tilak* in this way consecrates the body as a temple and, as one devotee told me, primes the senses for an experience with the Lord. This personal consecration ritual takes place in private, but is presumed before devotees go to the temple to meet the deities in the

morning. After (attempting) my *tilak* prayers and ritual, I walked down the hall, past the other women's rooms, found my shoes by the front door (shoes are never permitted inside the *ashrama* or temple and usually not even in devotees' homes) and walked across the grounds to the temple dome. It was 4:25 AM.



Photo 3: The New Goloka Temple

Once inside the temple (or the “temple room” in the case of the converted large house that is the Atlanta temple), I awaited the start of *mangala aroti* or colloquially, the “morning program.” I was surprised to see, already gathered there, on the men's side of the room, Indian men in their fresh *dhotis* (lower body cloths), Indian and Western *brahmacaris* (celibate men) and Western male devotee householders. Alongside a few of the men were small boys, 4-6 years in age. On the women's side of the room, there were mostly Western women, many of whom were carrying bundled up infants or leading toddlers by the hands. (Since Hare Krishnas do not condone sex outside of procreation, they also do not believe in birth control. Children significantly outnumbered the adults at *mangala aroti* on that, and likely every, morning.) I noticed that devotees who entered the temple behind me would

fall prostrate in front of a life-size clay image of Prabhupada, sitting in a *vyasasana*, the spiritual master's chair, and photographs of the presiding guru located just to the right of the deity stage. Within just a few moments, however, while the lights were still low in the temple, the curtains opened to the stage where the Radha-Krishna deities, known as Sri Sri Radha Golokananda in Hillsborough appeared. They were in their "night outfit," ready for their first appearance of the day⁷. Flowers around the deities were much more simple than I have observed during Sunday *aroti* or later in the morning during lecture, but the "night outfits" were just as elaborate and the stage was every bit as decorated as it was at other times. They were now ready to be worshipped by the devotees. Also available for worship are the other "smaller" deities: Gaura-Nitai (who represent Krishna as the 16th century Caitanya and his principle associate Natyananda) and Jagannatha, Balarama, and Subhadra (because Caitanya resided at Puri and regularly worshipped at the Jagannatha temple). In Hillsborough, these smaller deities⁸ are also located on the deity stage in front of the larger Radha-Krishna deities.

⁷ Earlier in the morning around 3 AM, as every morning, the deities had been "awakened" and offered sweets, such a *burfi* or cookies, and a drink of nectar by celibate "mothers" (*mater-jis*). Krishna is known to have a sweet tooth, I am told by devotees over and over again, but I haven't yet come across this in print in order to reference it. Every temple, however, serves sweets to the deities at 3AM.

⁸ I am calling the Gaura-Nitai "smaller" deities because they are, literally, smaller in size at the Hillsborough than are the Radha-Krishna deities. The more accurate term may well be "lesser" deities. I have also been told that, because Radha-Krishna deity worship should be exact, it is better to an uninitiated person to offer prayer to the Gaura-Nitai deities. Gaura-Nitai deities are known for their compassion and are much more tolerant of novice mistakes than are the Radha-Krishna deities.



Photo 4: Sri Sri Radha Golokanana (Representative Night Outfit)

Like the Sunday *aroti*, the *mangala aroti*, is actually two ancient and simultaneous rituals. The first is the highly stylized ceremony performed on the altar by the priest (*pujari*), who ritually offers the deities a succession of items including incense, water, and flowers. The second ritual is enacted as, women on one side of the room and men on the other side, the gathered assembly engages in lively congregational singing and dancing with the morning rite, and most devotees have it committed to memory. The rite consists of various Sanskrit hymns and mantras, that are sung in antiphonal style, with a lead singer intoning each line and a chorus responding in turn (Gelberg, 151).

During the *aroti*, devotees are dancing, swaying, singing, jumping in ecstasy. Theologically, devotees are dancing as they sing the *kirtan*, as dancing reflects the movement of the soul in response to God's goodness, greatness and mercy. This sacred dance is one of self-transcendence, where the shackles of earthly matter and a polluted world are shed. Devotees fling open their arms as if in a mid-air embrace of

Krishna, much like a child reaching for protective and loving embrace from the deity (Gelberg, 198, 151).

The first and longest of the hymns is beautiful to my non-Sanskrit understanding ears, and is a group of eight stanzas glorifying the spiritual master titled “Sri Sri Gurv-astaka,” lasting around 40 to 45 minutes. Written by the 17th century Gaudiya Vaisnava saint Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, the first verse, in transliterated Sanskrit is:

*samsara-davanala-lidha-loka-
tranaya karunya ghanaghanatvam
praptasya kalyana-gunarnavasya
vande guroh sri-caranaravindam*

Which means:

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.(Gelberg, 151).

After the “Sri Sri Gurvastaka”, there is a series of shorter prayers as the congregation remains standing. These prayers glorify Srila Prabhupada and the local successor, who is Hillsborough is His Holiness Bir Krishna Goswami. The ***Panca-tattva mahamantra*** follows, which is a verse that invokes all the names of Caitanya Mahaprabhu as well as his divine associates: (jaya!) Sri Krishna Caitanya Prabhu (Sri) Nityananda, (Sri)Advaita, (Sri) Gadadhara, and Srivasa Prabhu.

Still on their feet, the assembled devotees begin a series of the Hare Krishna ***mahamantra***. For the morning program, the ***kirtana*** begins with a slow tempo, and it may or may not be accompanied by the ***mrđanga*** drum. Devotees begin a slow two-

step as the tempo begins to increase and the dancing gets more intricate. Dancing and singing the *mahamantra* continue until the *pujaris* blow the conch at the altar, which signals the nearing end of the *aroti* rite.

Devotees then prostrate themselves before the deities as the devotee or the guru leading the *kirtan* (congregational singing) recites the standard concluding prayers, the "**Prema-dhvani**" (words of love) which include names of saints, gurus, divinities and holy places. After every name is called or place is named, devotees answer "jai!" for "all glories."

Jaya Om Vishnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacharya Asttotara Sata Sri Srimad

(Jai!)

Ananta Koti Vaisnava-vrinda Ki!

(Jai!)

Nama-acarya Srila Haridas Thakur Ki!

(Jai!)

Prem-se kaho Sri Krsna Caitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhar, Srivas, Adi Gaura Bhakta Vrinda Ki! (the *Panca-tattva*)

(Jai!)

Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, Gopa-gopinatha, Shyama-kund, Radha-kund, Giri-govardhana Ki! (all the names of Krishna)

(Jai!)

The glorification of the local deities: Sri Sri Radha Golokananda

Vrndavana-dham Ki! (holy place in India, where Krishna spent his childhood; the "holy Kingdom of Radha-Krishna, as there are reported to be over 5,000 temples there)

(Jai!)

Mayapur-dham Ki! (holy place in India on the banks of the Ganges, an ISKCON developed "city" of temples, *ashramas* and shrines, and site of a most magnificent ISKCON temple)

(Jai!)

Jagannath Puri Ki! (The **Jagannath** Temple in **Puri** is a dedicated to **Jagannath** (Krishna); city of Lord Caitanya.

(Jai!)

Ganga devi, Yamuna devi, Bhakta devi, Tulasi devi, Ki! (Mother of Krishna, Yamuna, and associates of Krishna)

(Jai!)

Brhad-mrdanga Ki! (the transcendental sound vibration, such as in chanting, believed to be the “sound incarnation”)

(Jai!)

Harinama Sankirtana Ki! (the preaching of ISKCON)

(Jai!)

Gaura-premanande (praised to and for Lord Caitanya)

(Hari-haribol!)

Finally, the prayers conclude with the following recited in English, “all glories to the assembled devotees!” as devotees respond, “Hare Krishna!” This is repeated three times. The curtains to the deity altar and stage are then closed. A subdued and seated singing of prayers honoring the man-lion, devil-destroying incarnation of Vishnu, Lord Nrsimhadeva, which begins “*Namaste Nrsimhadeva*” is sung, a practice believed to bring protection to devotees during the day.⁹ The aroti has concluded but the morning program has just begun!

Following *mangala aroti* is the morning *Tulasi Devi* worship. The temple *Tulasi Devi* is a plant, commonly called Holy Basil. Devotees consider *Tulasi Devi* to be a special devotee to Krishna, a spirit-soul now in the body of the plant, as, theologically, it is possible for a spirit-soul to be present in a plant, animal, or human

⁹ During my frequent trips between Atlanta and my hometown near Hillsborough (NC), I often had a passenger, 5 different people in all, who was a Hare Krishna and glad for a free ride between the two temples. In almost every instance, the devotees would ask to sing the prayers to the protector incarnation of Vishnu, Lord Nrsimhadeva, before we would depart. The almost always brought *prasad* “for the road” as well. Yum!

form. Each day, one of many *Tulasi* plants is placed in the temple for worship. It is believed that by offering obeisances to the plant, hosts of sinful activities can be eliminated, so touching her and loving her is most auspicious. Therefore, during *Tulasi Devi* worship, devotees will circumambulate, chanting and dance around *Tulasi Devi*, with their eyes fixed upon her. The female devotee who is in charge of caring for the (large number) of *Tulasi Devi* plants usually rings a bell during the *Tulasi* worship service. Following the *Tulasi* worship, devotees recite, in unison, the “ten offenses against the chanting of the Holy Names,” a set of spiritual rules to assure the proper execution and spiritual potency of the chanting of the Holy Names.

By 5:30 AM, the temple worship has physically settled down after the circumambulation and dancing around *Tulasi Devi* to begin *nama-japa*: individual, rapid, verbal recitation of the Hare Krishna mantra. Individuals chant at their own pace, some sit and chant, some pace and chant, some retreat to various corners about the temple while some will sit in front of the closed curtains of the deity stage. During this time, devotees are expected to complete 16 rounds of 108 mantras, that is, one mantra for every bead on the string of 108 beads called a *japa*, or prayer beads, for 16 times around the *japa* strand. A devotee who is well practiced in so doing can complete a round in just a few minutes – 16 rounds requires around 2 hours. This *nama-japa* phase of the morning spiritual observances takes place until 7:00 AM. Devotees who do not finish their “rounds,” will finishing doing so throughout the day, though finishing “rounds” in the morning is strongly encouraged.

While I only attended the 4:30 AM *mangala aroti* once, I was advised, on several occasions and in both temples, to be present to “greet the deities” at 7 AM,

even if I left worship shortly thereafter. Promptly at 7:00 AM hour, across all of ISKCON, devotees assemble to greet the deities, a magnificent moment in the morning spiritual observances, where the altar curtains are opened to reveal the “effulgent and magnificent Lord,” the Radha-Krishna deities dressed in their “day outfits,” now richly adorned by flowers and jeweled clothing and accessories, ready for adoration by the devotees. As Vaisnava theology maintains that these deities are not idols but, rather, incarnations of Krishna appearing in the material elements available to us here and now, devotees react accordingly to “seeing” Krishna. Devotees prostrate themselves as a tape-recorded song (my information is that every temple uses this recording) of the hymn describing the beautiful, transcendent form of Krishna, from the *Brahma-samhita*, fills the temple. The first line of the hymn is “*govindam adi-purusham tam aham bhajami ...*” The assembled devotees then rise and take, from a special bowl, three drops of “nectar from the feet” of the deities – a mixture of the substances used to bathe the deities combined with sweetened yogurt. These substances were used by the *pujaris* to “bathe” the deities behind the curtains while devotees’ performed *Tulasi* worship and *nama-japa* (Daner, 1974; Gelberg, 1989).



Photo 5: Sri Sri Radha Golokananda, (Representative Day Outfit)

Just after greeting the deities, it is typical to overhear devotees whispering to each other such things as “Isn’t Krishna beautiful today?”; “He is so beautiful in purple!”; “His mood today is simply splendid!!” My thoughts were that these comments tend to reflect a sense of an encounter with the Lord for the first time – it is “performed” as almost a breathless devotion and attraction to the One they call the Supreme Personality of God. Indeed, the marks of a pure devotee, as several people have told me, are that there is a spontaneous love for and adoration of God. In Krishna, love is intimate and personal, so it is not unusual for devotees to explain the deity’s mood on particular occasions. The goal of *bhakti*, after all, is eternal love for God. This love almost always finds voice in the devotees’ comments to each other when seeing the Lord for the first time in the mornings. After attending the morning deity greeting several times, devotees began to turn to me to ask, “what do you think of Krishna today?” where an anticipated response would be one to remark on His beauty, or powerful attractiveness or how I was moved to tears or with some other

emotive response. The time for such questions and comments usually marked the transition to the “worship of the guru (Prabhupada)” or “*guru-puja*.”

The “guru-puja” is a simple *aroti* performed to a clay, lifesized, image of Prabhupada, that sits upon his *vyasasana*. Devotees offer flowers and sing a kirtan (congregational hymn) of Bengali song by Narottama dasa Thakura, a 16th century saint, called “Sri Guru-vandana” or “prayer to the guru.” The English translation, translated by Prabhupada reads:

(1) The lotus feet of the spiritual master are the abode of pure devotional service. I bow down to those lotus feet with great care and attention. My dear brother (my dear mind)! It is through the grace of the spiritual master that we cross over this material existence and obtain Krishna.

(2) Make the teachings from the lotus mouth of the spiritual master one with your heart, and do not desire anything else. Attachment to the lotus feet of the spiritual master is the best means of spiritual advancement. By his mercy all desires for spiritual perfection are fulfilled.

(3) He who has given me the gift of transcendental vision is my lord, birth after birth. By his mercy divine knowledge is revealed within the heart, bestowing *prema-bhakti* and destroying ignorance. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.

(4) O spiritual master, ocean of mercy, and friend of the fallen souls, you are the teacher of everyone and the life of all people. O master! Be merciful unto me, and give me the shade of your lotus feet. May your glories now be proclaimed throughout the three worlds (Takkura, 1996).

Promptly at 7:30, devotees move into their gendered positions in the temple; women on one side and men on the other. When I did not realize the time had come for assembling in gendered spaces and was left unaware and sitting among the men, the presiding *guru* said, “there’s a nice spot for you over there,” as he motioned me toward the women’s corner.

Morning scripture study of the *Srimad Bhagavatam* is usually conducted by a senior member of the community. I have seen “*Bhagavatam* Class” conducted by a 30-something female devotee in Atlanta, but in Hillsborough, a more conservative community, the only women who will lead the class are a former temple president and one of the few women known in ISKCON to have the authority to “preach in public.” Class begins with a responsive singing of “Jaya Radha-Madhava,” a short poem describing Krishna’s loving-pastimes in the holy city of his youth, Vrindavan. The scripture to be studied is written in Sanskrit on a blackboard or whiteboard, and the leader pronounces each word and then recites the passage, line by line. Responsively, the class repeats the lines of scriptures over and over to the instructor’s satisfaction. The instructor reads Prabhupada’s English translation, followed by Prabhupada’s commentary on the verse. Then, lecture style, the instructor relates (usually) his own commentary, with illustrations and examples, revealing Prabhupada’s translations of these ancient Vedic scriptures relevant for the contemporary situation. The lecture is followed by a question and answer session, after which devotees offer obeisances to the instructor (especially if the instructor is a *guru*), the deities, and exit the temple to prepare for the communal breakfast *prasad*. Morning program concludes with the taking of *prasad* (literally meaning mercy of the Lord) as the presiding *guru* mingles with devotees. The meal is communal and family-like, with householders sitting with their families, and single women and men seated in separate sections. The *guru* is accessible and available for questions, problems, and of course, to greet and welcome visitors.

Challenges and Questions for this Community

A Slice of the Hare Krishna Moral Worldview

What follows below illustrates a teaching of A.C. Bhaktivedanta Prabhupada, with respect to “proper” (moral) action. This narrative is positioned around the central moral dilemma posed in the *Bhagavad-gita*. The *Gita*, the Song of the Lord, is the poetic, instructive recitation understood as the literal code of conduct in all matters, the guide to thinking and reasoning, and the blueprint for a life that leads “back to Godhead” or to life with Krishna.

Therein, Arjuna is called into engagement in a war and deliberates the classic concerns with war, when one is facing loved ones as enemy, with losing his life in battle. Arjuna befriends a stranger along the road to where the battle will be waged. Unbeknownst to him, the stranger he meets is none other than Krishna, the Supreme Personality of God. So what is Arjuna’s moral dilemma? He is asking: Should he go to war? What of the loved ones he leaves behind? What of the loved ones he might face in battle, or what if he must kill a “brother” turned enemy? What happens if he loses his life and loses it in war? Through the *Bhagavad-gita*, Krishna assures Arjuna that if he fights for Krishna’s sake, there would be no “entanglements” and no regrets. Engaging the world at war, or any world, for Krishna’s sake involves renouncing entanglements and attachments of all kinds – to property, to reputation, to family, to self as ego. Arjuna is, therefore, to renounce all things for Krishna to be free from all worry and anxiety, to be liberated from the concerns of bodily and material existence and to be freed of the sinful contaminants of the “material world.”

From the *Bhagavad-gita As It Is* (4.16), “even the intelligent are bewildered in determining what is action and what is inaction. Now I shall explain to you what action is, knowing which you shall be liberated from all sins.”

What is proper action? Srila Prabhupada lifts especially one verse from the *Gita* that he advances as fully encapsulating the moral quandary of determining the virtuous action. From the last verse of the eleventh chapter he writes, “my dear Arjuna, one who is engaged in my pure devotional service, free from the contamination of previous activities and free from mental speculation, who is friendly to every living entity, certainly comes to me.” (*Bhagavad-gita As It Is* 11:55). Krishna beckons to Arjuna to offer him pure devotional service, free from attachment to self, family, and possessions and, in turn, Krishna promises that “at the end, (he) will come back to me.” (*Bhagavad-gita As It Is* 18: 68-69). Herein, Krishna, through Prabhupada, explains the central concept of *bhakti*, or pure devotional service and love of God: to ward off material pollution of *karma* and to enable the soul to achieve the purity to return to Godhead, or Krishna. Pure, renounced devotional service to Krishna is the solution of every moral quandary. It guides relationships of devotees to one another, shapes their somewhat antagonistic view of the world outside of ISKCON, determines the nature of connections between husbands and wives, parents and children, women to men. Proper action, in all things, emanates away from attachments in a world filled with *karma* toward full, focused, and loving devotion of Krishna.

Engaging in service to Krishna and chanting the *maha mantra* (Hare Krishna, Hara Krishna, Krishna, Krishna, Hare Hare. Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama,

Hare Hare) affords everyone the ability to gain “causeless knowledge and detachment”. Causeless knowledge refers to opening the mind for ever greater detachment and devotional service, to an enlightenment that occurs without deliberation but is received as a gift from the gracious deity of Krishna. This gift of enlightenment occurs only after the individual becomes ever more attached to the Deity, the *guru*, and her or his devotional service duties while becoming more detached from the material world, family, and ego. Advancement in Krishna consciousness, or elevation into higher consciousness, requires a complete sacrifice of self for Krishna, who offers the self back in return, intimately loved, supported, and free to love Others openly and honestly.

Moral development in Krishna consciousness, according to Prabhupada’s *Gita* translation, is very much like a progression of steps, with each step higher than the one before. Vertical metaphors are very prominent in the Hindu worldview as they are in the Hindi language. Advancement and enlightenment are understood as consistent with “elevated” personalities; consciousness, as it progresses, grows “higher.” Maturity is understood in terms of deeper attachment to Krishna, the scriptures, the *guru*, and to devotional service. Pure devotion is detachment from the world of *karma*, and a life filled with Krishna conscious spiritual practices mark the higher, elevated, devotee.

How will does the Krishna conscious worldview stack up when measured with the DIT-2 and the Faith Development Interview? How does the Krishna conscious worldview sound in narrative? What do Hare Krishna communities have to teach us about moral and religious education?

Results of the studies in these two Hare Krishna communities are found in Chapter 8.

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Chapter 4: Jehovah's Witnesses

Lessons Learned: The Linguistic Construction of the Moral Agent Discursive Practices in Moral Education

“The Kingdom of God is the 1000-year judgment day during which mankind will be given the opportunity to be restored to life. A period of 100 years is given to each human being to prove some sort of advancement and compliance with righteousness before they can be judged and sentenced to death due to their own sins” Charles Taze Russell, on 2 Peter 3: 7-9; Isa 65:20; Jer 31: 29, 30.

Introduction

Virtually every person who lives in the United States can recall an experience, or two or three with Jehovah's Witnesses, their door-to-door preaching, their offers to study the Bible or their likely more visible tracts, the **Watchtower** and **Awake!** I can vividly recall my early exposure to Jehovah's Witnesses while growing up in North Carolina, through the grandmother of my maternal first cousins. I remember the restrictions placed on my cousins' recreation time and manner of dress, especially in the presence of their grandmother, a woman I thought, and possibly heard, the word “strange” applied to her demeanor. There were countless times when my own mother would purchase the **Watchtower** or **Awake!** from my cousins' grandmother, an act of support that I suspect my mother felt was expected of her, though she would almost always indicate, with a wave of her hand, or a gesture for my brother and me to board the car, that she did not care to talk about it. And I will never forget the admonishment I later received when, after one of Mom's nearly weekly tract purchases, I loudly declared, “you *never* read them!” Tact was not among my childhood virtues.

Though they were never talked about, the tracts were often lying about my childhood home. Their brightly colored covers invited the curious eyes of a child and

the intrigue and mystery around them heightened my curiosity. What was the big mystery, I thought, when those books were all about God? Still, the pall of “strangeness” fell over the magazines and the God depicted in them.

Later, as an early 20-something, a recent college graduate and living in my first apartment in Nashville, Tennessee, I recall being absolutely determined to convince a small group of Jehovah’s Witness that they were “wrong” about the imminent apocalypticism that they espoused. Having recently completed two whole undergraduate courses in Christian Bible exegesis, I was more than confident that I was prepared for the task. My efforts met with little success and a lot of frustration, on my part. To add to my young woman’s defeat, I had created a situation in which early Saturday morning visits from the Witnesses were a weekly occurrence along with, I quickly learned, a phone call if I failed to answer the door while pretending I was not home.

Again, the imprint of “difference” about the Jehovah’s Witnesses who frequented my first home was very evident. The small Witness group was racially integrated, a social phenomenon to which I had only been exposed while exploring the churches of Christ (discussed in Chapter 6) two summers earlier. The brightly colored tracts and one of the larger richly illustrated books included depictions of black people and white people, living, working, worshipping together. And part of the teaching they shared with me was, in the coming reign of God, the “lion will lie down with the lamb, and black and white will live together in harmony.” Having learned while in college that Martin Luther King called Sunday morning “the most

racially segregated hour in America,” echoed alongside my life experience up to that time, the Jehovah’s Witness vision was certainly different.

Jehovah’s Witnesses, or more correctly, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, communities prove to be a most interesting and rich ground for the study of fundamentalist New Religious Movements (fNRMs). This study took place in two communities in Atlanta, in the Dunwoody and Decatur Kingdom Halls and with a Jehovah’s Witness from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Participant observation in both Atlanta communities was extensive. My role as researcher and participant observer, along with the narrative I’ve constructed here, seeks to take seriously where Jehovah’s Witnesses are and the unique worldview they express and articulate. During the time I spent observing Jehovah’s Witnesses, I participated in Kingdom Hall meetings on Sunday mornings and home Bible studies in the evenings. On several occasions, I attended the Sunday morning public talks by one of the ranking elders in the community, talks that, like those in almost all local congregations, are the same every Sunday as those being spoken in every Kingdom Hall around the world. This study, however, crosses the lines of historical, sociological, theological, and anthropological (ethnographic) analyses. In so doing, I try to offer a “thick description” (Geertz, 1975) of the Witnesses in the rich context in which they are found.

Overview of this Community

Jehovah’s Witnesses are members of a religious group that maintains the end of the present world is close at hand, an ending in which a cosmic clash of good and evil will culminate in a millennium of peace and justice and justice on earth. The

group that became Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931 grew out of the Bible Student Movement founded in 1872 by Charles Taze Russell. They believe that Jehovah God is the creator and that His son, Jesus Christ, will reign over the new earth after Judgment Day. They took the name Jehovah's Witnesses to reflect what they believe to be their exclusive relationship with the Creator God, Jehovah, and their unique knowledge of His plans for the world.

The group is organized in a very strict hierarchical and patriarchal fashion. Jehovah God is always referred to in the masculine pronoun, their almost exclusively lay clergy and congregational leadership are always male, and they are "world-rejecting," believing it Jehovah's will they withdraw from the world. Consequently, Witnesses are also apolitical, ascetic, and resistant to modernity.

Teaching and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses are based on the Watch Tower Society's¹⁰ interpretation of the Bible. Known initially as Bible Students (Wah, 2001), then the International Bible Students (Lawson, 1995), the publishing house of group that became Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931 translated the Bible from original texts to produce their *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* in 1950.

The preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses includes the distribution of the **Watchtower** magazine, which has been published since 1879. The publication, formerly known as Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence, is published biweekly, alternately with its companion **Awake!** Both publications are 32 pages. The latter has a similar format as the former, but covers a wider range of topics. The Watchtower is the principle voice of doctrinal interpretation from the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. Studies of the doctrinal positions in the Watchtower

¹⁰ The corporate name of Jehovah's Witnesses.

remain an important feature of Sunday meeting and are foundational for other weekly Bible study programs.

The principal self-defining characteristics of Jehovah's Witnesses are: learning the official doctrines, showing willingness to proselytize actively, participating in all congregational meetings, and being baptized into the Watch Tower faith (Beckford, 1975, 70).

The five meetings baptized congregants should attend each week are as follows:

Public Talk: usually each Sunday, when an Elder (or sometimes a Ministerial Servant) will deliver a talk about a specific topic.

Watchtower Study: a lesson based on a study article in the current Watchtower; which follows the public talk.

Theocratic Ministry School: generally takes place during the evening on a weekday. Speakers practice giving talks and witnessing.

Service Meeting: usually after the Theocratic Ministry School. It includes training for various ministry activities. Sometimes, elders will address specific issues and concerns of the congregation.

Book Study: held sometime during the week where a portion of a Watchtower publication is studied in depth. These can take place in either the Kingdom Hall or in a congregant's home.

Jehovah's Witnesses are, according to sociologist of religion Rodney Stark, "the most rapidly growing religious movement in the Western world" (Stark and Iannaccone, 1997, 133). In the history of the movement that would become Jehovah's Witnesses, millions of people worldwide, across different races and ethnic groups, have joined the ranks of the new religious phenomenon. When Stark and Iannaccone published their study on the growth of Jehovah's Witnesses in 1997, they

wrote, “even as the Witnesses frequently appear on our doorsteps, they are conspicuously absent from our journals” (Stark and Iannaccone, 1997, 133), a trend that has largely continued in the 11 years since the paucity of Witness studies was first brought to the attention of social scientific researchers in religion.

Consequently, much of what is to be learned about Jehovah’s Witnesses comes from the official publications of the legal corporation, the Watch Tower Society. The organization maintains meticulous records of their official gatherings and literature distribution efforts. As one might deduce from their prolific proselytizing, Jehovah’s Witnesses are required to evangelize as either **publishers** or **pioneers**. A Witness in good standing is called a publisher, which reflects that individual’s commitment to the movement by distributing Jehovah’s Witness literature. The minimum number of hours a publisher in the U.S. must devote to missionary activities is 17 per month. Each publisher is also required to attend several meetings per week, many of which are to sharpen the skills to literature distribution. Publishers are required to keep careful records and to report each month on their evangelistic efforts to the congregational secretary. From these reports, the local congregation, or Kingdom Hall, is able to rate the commitment of each publisher as well as compile reports for sending to the Watch Tower headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. Members who fail to meet certain commitment standards can lose the respect of other members, be rebuked by the leadership or become disfellowshipped. (This study includes an interview with a disfellowshipped Jehovah’s Witness as one of its “deconverts.”)

Pioneers, a different type of classification in the Kingdom Hall, devote many more hours than publishers to missionary efforts, and they also serve as lay clergy. Pioneers are required to maintain even more elaborate records to reflect their more significant and specialized missionary activities.

With these statistics generated by the Brooklyn, Witnesses report their worldwide statistics, therefore, in terms of active members, their hours volunteered to Witnessing, and by the average weekly home Bible courses taught.

In 2007, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society reported the following data about their worldwide membership:

Total volunteer hours spent in public Bible Education Work: 1.4 billion
Average Weekly Home Bible Courses Taught: 6,561,426
Practicing Members: 6,957,852
Branch Offices: 113
Congregations: 101,376
(Source: Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 2008)

Watch Tower Society statistics indicate there were 37,243 congregations in the United States in 2007. There were nearly 1.1 million Witnesses in the U.S., a ratio of about 1 in 275, who logged over 546,631 hours in Bible Study.

Why this is a “Fundamentalist” New Religious Movement (fNRM)

In the strict sense of the term, the group that became Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1931 is not a “new” religious movement, as it stems from a mid-19th century group of followers of William Miller (1782-1849). After Miller’s disciple, Charles Taze Russell (1852-1916) began a Bible study group in 1872, he incorporated the Zion’s Watch Tower tract society shortly thereafter. The group began publishing the **Watchtower** in 1879, making this religious movement over 100 years of age in legal

and publishing terms. The content of the teaching and tracts, its sectarian orientation, systematic teaching techniques, along with the mission of the legal corporation, the Watch Tower Society, are reasons that Jehovah's Witnesses are included in this study.

New Religious Movements represent innovative religious responses to the situation of the modern world, despite their portrayal as being rooted in ancient traditions. Jehovah's Witnesses are the product of a response to 19th century Christian millenarianism, the belief that Christ will soon return to earth, transform it from its decayed condition and restore all things right again, and establish a 1,000-year reign of peace on earth before the Final Judgment. Millenarianism forms a core of the beliefs and theologies of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Like other NRMs, Witnesses are intensely countercultural. They present themselves as alternatives to mainstream religion, believing that mainstream religious expressions are demonic and corrupt. They are also opposed to secular culture, "following only Jehovah God" and, therefore, do not salute a flag, participate in military service, subscribe to national politics, and so forth.

NRMs tend to be founded by a charismatic church leader, who is sometimes also highly authoritarian. The Bible Students, the group founded by Charles Taze Russell, were, no doubt highly influenced by a dynamic and powerful preacher, who many also believed to be a prophet. The authoritarian label, however, likely belongs more to Russell's successor to the presidency of the Watch Tower Society, J.F. "Judge" Rutherford. Rutherford coalesced the group of Students from around the world into a very centralized and tightly controlled group under his commanding and

authoritarian leadership in the years surrounding World War II (Lawson, 1995). The unquestioned authority from which Rutherford led stemmed from his interpretation of the “higher powers” of Romans 13. The major premise of this interpretation is that Jesus Christ is actually the working at the head of the Society, through the medium of its earthly leaders, making it blasphemous to disagree with their directives (Beckford, 1975, 38).

Witnesses are a tightly organized group, led by the Governing Body of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Inc. As the official source of doctrine, the Society exerts great influence over members even at the personal level and requires great commitment from each and every member. The strict organization and firm boundaries around who is “in” and who is “out,” has the capacity to separate families, spouses, and children from one another. The same capacity of the Watch Tower message to transcend race, creed and nationality has the power to disrupt familial, social and ethnic identities. As such, the Witnesses maintain that they are a “family,” therefore, setting themselves up as something of a substitute for family for those the world would “dispossess.” As described in one of its publications, Witnesses are “drawn together by worship of the true God, by faith in Jesus Christ, and by love for one another, they truly make up a united human family” (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, 1989, 305).

In summary, then, Jehovah’s Witnesses fit the criteria for fundamentalist New Religious movement (fNRM). They are among the fastest growing religious groups in the world, addressing needs many people find unaddressed in mainstream religious communities.

History

The group called Bible Students, now Jehovah's Witnesses, Charles Taze Russell formed in 1872, share a history with the group now known as Seventh Day Adventists, the group studied in Chapter 5. Russell, along with Advent Christian James Wadell, were "remnants" of the Great Disappointment, October 22, 1844, the date that Baptist preacher William Miller had set for the Second Coming of Christ (Lawson, 1995). Beginning in 1869, at the age of 17, Russell had adopted the doctrine of conditionalism¹¹ or annihilationism from Methodist George Storrs, a former Millerite. From another Millerite, Nelson H. Barbour, Russell drew his biblical chronology, his understanding of interpreting prophetic time, and his historicist interpretation of the book of the Revelation to John (Lawson, 1995; Penton, 1985; Beckford, 1975).

In 1872, at the age of 20, Russell formed a group of like-minded students to study the Bible from his unique point of view. Two years later, the group was officially chartered in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, and adopted the corporate name of "Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society." As a pre-millennialist convinced of the imminence of God's Kingdom, Russell found followers in groups of Bible students across many states during his extensive preaching and lecture tours. The publication of the seven-volume set of *Studies in the Scriptures* propelled Russell and the Bible students into international visibility. The group opened branch offices in various cities of Europe, Asia, and Africa. In 1909, Russell chartered the New York Pulpit

¹¹ The doctrine that the souls of the righteous do not become immortal until the resurrection at the Second Coming of Christ (per readings of 1 Cor, 53,54, and Gen. 1, 21, 14). Evil doers are destroyed body and soul. God, therefore, is completely responsive to the actions, righteous or evil, of humanity.

Association, with offices in Brooklyn, and established the Watch Tower headquarters there.

Also in 1909, a group of Russell's followers seceded from the group, charging that Russell taught his own interpretations to be of equal authority with the Bible itself. Then, in 1913, Russell's wife agitated matters further when she sued for divorce, alleging Russell's "conceit, egotism, domination and improper conduct in relation to other women" (Metzger, 1953, 65, 66; Stroup, 1945, 9-11).

Russell's work in translating Watch Tower, Bible-based literature into various European languages began just after his European tour in 1891. Distribution of materials in French began in 1891, German in 1897, Italian in 1903 and into Spanish in 1929. Bible groups emerged amongst local citizens in various countries, spreading Russell's biblical interpretations and forming the basis for local congregations across the world. Accordingly, the Watch Tower Society opened its first European branch office in London in 1900, to provide administrative coordination of the preaching and evangelistic effort (Wah, 2001).

Russell died in 1916, leaving behind a host of teachings and doctrinal statements of faith, several of which would factor heavily into the history of the group of International Bible Students. First, Russell's *Studies in the Scriptures*, initially published in 1891 (reprinted 1910), makes the claim "that the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 ... just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed (Russell, 1910, vol. III, 228). Following Russell's death, his successor, J.F. "Judge" Rutherford amended that statement, so that the 1923 edition of *Studies* read "that the

deliverance of the saints must take place *very soon after* 1914 is manifest ... Just how long after 1914 Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed” (Russell, 1924, vol. III, 228). Thus, a major pillar of the beliefs of the International Bible Students is that 1914 marked the end of the last days of human rule over the earth and that Jehovah’s Kingdom will appear shortly to destroy human government and rule the earth.

Other fundamental beliefs as taught by Russell are that 1) Jehovah is God Almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, 2) Jehovah is a loving God whose name is to be sanctified, and 3) Jehovah God will shortly establish rule over the earth, at which time Jesus Christ will reign over a paradise for 1000 years (Wah, 2001). Russell’s belief that secular governments would soon be destroyed led to his assertion that his followers should keep themselves separate from the world (Penton, 1985). This meant denying any and all involvement in political aspects of the world (Lawson, 1995). Russell further interpreted the “higher powers” of Romans 13.1 to mean secular government, so that he contended that God had temporarily granted human rule through secular government until Christ returns to set up Jehovah’s Kingdom. In the meantime, therefore, civil authorities were to be obeyed, except in the instance their aims conflicted with those of Jehovah (Penton, 1985; Wah, 2001).

Russell lived through the year 1914, the year he anticipated Christ’s return, and his apolitical apocalypticism increased sharply by the eve of World War I (Wah, 2001). Russell ardently believed and taught that the nations involved in war were demonically controlled, as were mainline churches that actively solicited young men for military service. The Bible Students and Russell, who held that they were to

separate themselves from the “the work of Satan,” quickly experienced a backlash from the world at war, which was also at war with them. When Bible Students were conscripted, they would not serve because the Watch Tower Society preached and published opposition to war. Mainstream churches published hate literature against the Bible Students, accusing them of sedition, and stirring up problems for Bible Student conscientious objectors (Penton, 1985). Some students were imprisoned in the United States, Canada, Britain, Germany and Austro-Hungary; still others were executed by the Axis powers. Once the U.S. entered the war, Bible Students were “arrested, mobbed, tarred and feathered, castrated, raped, and murdered” (Penton, 1985, 41) and “few escaped threats to their persons with clubs, knives, guns, or fists; and many had boiling water, offal, or stones thrown at them. Others have had dogs turned on them ...” (ibid, 41). Eight of the Watch Tower directors, including Rutherford, now president of the Society, were arrested on charges of sedition in 1918, and subsequently sentenced to 10 to 20 years in prison (Wah, 2001).

Those that remained of the governing body of the Watch Tower Society attempted to accommodate the culture of war, particularly in the United States. Bible Students were asked to participate in a national day of prayer to be an equally visible display of national support, and the Society encouraged the same to buy war bonds. Shortly thereafter, Watch Tower board members, including Rutherford, were released from prison, after having served nine months. Once released, their first collective action was to repudiate the accommodationist position of the remaining body (Penton, 1985, 410). Rutherford acted swiftly to restore the culture of political withdrawal within the Society, calling the powers of politics, commerce and religion “the three

chief instruments of the Devil” (Penton, 1985, 70; Lawson, 1995). Later, in 1929, Rutherford altered Russell’s more tolerant and accommodating stance on cooperation with secular government, interpreting the “higher powers” of Romans 13.1, not as “secular government” (Russell) but as “Jehovah God and Jesus Christ.” Thus, governments had no basis of authority over the Bible Students, only Jehovah God and Christ Jesus could compel Witness individuals to act in any way. Accordingly, tensions between Bible Students and civil authorities escalated (Lawson, 1995).

Also in 1929, Rutherford condemned any and all attempts to find God outside the Bible, reversing yet another teaching and theory of Russell’s. Russell had constructed an elaborate explanation for determine the time when Jesus would return to earth. Argued in Russell’s third volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, titled “Thy Kingdom Come,” he wrote that certain measurements of the Great Pyramid of Egypt revealed, in code, the entire history of the human race and certain calculations within this history could predict the date of Jesus’ return. Rutherford’s condemnation of this theory resulted in some more ardent Russell supporters leaving the movement (Metzger, 1953). Determined to move the remaining body forward with these tweaks to doctrine in place, Rutherford led the effort to change the name from “International Bible Students” to “Jehovah’s Witnesses” in 1931.

Both Russell and Rutherford earned reputations for being sympathetic to Jews and to Zionist causes, based on the movement’s belief that Jews would return to the Holy Land before the end of the world (Lawson, 1995). During the years leading up to World War II, their public preaching of the Jews’ role in salvation history made the Witnesses, once again, targets of hostility and abuse in various parts of the world.

The French Catholic clergy made several attempts at breaking up meetings and suspending other public activities of the Witnesses (Wah, 2001) and by 1939, just after the beginning of World War II, the organization Watch Tower Society was banned in France. Also in 1939, other European powers, fearing foreign influence, targeted Witnesses as “communists, spies, fascists, anti-Semitic or American” (Wah, 2001). Germany, under the Nazi regime, banned the organization and its printing and preaching work. Because of their politically neutral position, Hitler targeted Witnesses as detrimental to the State.

Rutherford and his deputies hastened to Germany shortly after Hitler’s declaration, determined to act through an emergency congress of Witnesses in Berlin. They prepared a “Declaration of Facts” for presentation at the congress. Lawson (1995) noted that delegates arriving at the congress were stunned to see their meeting site plastered with swastika flags and that the program Rutherford prepared included the singing of a hymn, set to the music of “Deutschland, Deutschland Uber Alles.” The “Declaration,” along with a letter to Hitler, “were nothing short of self-serving statements which attempted to ingratiate Jehovah’s Witnesses with the Nazis by criticizing Jews, Great Britain, the United States and the League of Nations, declaring that Witnesses and Nazis shared goals and ideology” (Penton, 1990, 37-38). Lawson (1995) argues how Rutherford and the Witness leaders were willing to compromise their political positions in order for their proselytizing, publishing, and preaching work to continue.

Hitler was not so easily swayed, stepping up the Nazi persecutions only two days after the congress. Rutherford, infuriated, recanted his “Declaration,”

determined to continue the preaching and publishing. The German Gestapo began to investigate the congregations of Witnesses. The publishing effort was forced underground. Witness meetings required the cloak of secrecy and were forced to be held in secret places. Ludwig Wurm, a member of the Nazi party, is reported to have heard Hitler say at a rally in Nuremberg, “this enemy of Great Germany, this brood of International Bible Students, will be exterminated in Germany” (*Awake!*, 8 January 1995, 12).

The persecution of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Germany was systematic and severe. When Witnesses refused to do military service upon the introduction of conscription in 1935, they risked losing their jobs, livelihoods, and even their children. A later law rendered refusal to do military service punishable by death. When children refused to give the Nazi salute, “Heil Hitler” or to salute the Swastika, children were separated from their Witness parents, a practice upheld by the state Guardianship Courts as necessary to assure that “the evil educational influence of the parents is eliminated and broken” (Wah, 2001, 583). By the end of World War II, half of the Witnesses in Germany were in concentration camps. One in four Witnesses lost their lives (Penton, 1985, 142). Despite all the persecution, however, the literature distribution continued, via materials moved into the country from Switzerland, as the literature carried with it a decisively critical tone.

Jehovah’s Witness literature, reflecting centralizing organizational and doctrinal changes taking place in the Watch Tower Society, began to call for Witnesses everywhere to refuse to salute flags, stand for national anthems, or accept military service. When this rule was practiced in the United States, a 1940 Supreme

Court decision required that Witnesses must salute the flag or face expulsion from public schools. The decision resulted in harassment of school children and a sharp increase in violence against Witness adults. The U.S. reversed its flag-saluting decision in 1943 (Beckford, 1975; Penton, 1985; Lawson, 1995).

With conscription introduced again in the U.S. in 1940, Witnesses refused to serve. Local draft boards denied their petitions for exceptions as ministers, though those who tried were usually “pioneers” who logged at least 150 hours per week in ministerial responsibilities. Despite the clear ruling by General Hershey that persons with 80 hours of ministerial service per month were eligible for exemptions, Lawson (1995) states, “it was in the classification of Jehovah’s Witnesses that local prejudice was most pronounced” (371). When offered an alternative assignment in the Civilian Public Service, Witnesses also refused, based on the Watch Tower rule that acceptance of such assignments were compromising one’s integrity with God, punishable by automatic dissociation from the Society (Lawson, 1995). Three of four draftees imprisoned for claiming conscientious objection were Witnesses. Boards of Parole refused to grant parole to Witnesses unless they vowed not to re-enter their preaching service with the Society. As most Witnesses refused to make such a promise, they served full sentences for refusing military service, which, on average was 30 months (Lawson, 1995).

The history of Jehovah’s Witnesses in their formative years includes threats and assaults from fascist, communist and democratic governments, opposition from mainstream religions, and attacks and prejudice from ordinary citizens. Despite the strife, they continued to share Bible study meetings and distribute literature. In the

worst of times, the Watch Tower Society and Jehovah's Witnesses demonstrated remarkable resilience, an incredible ability to adapt, and the capacity to grow their numbers.

It is of no surprise that the Jehovah's Witness movement changed significantly during the persecutions of the years of World Wars I and II. Rutherford had begun to consolidate his control and authority over the group in the 1920's (Stark, 1997) and the Watch Tower Society grew very centralized and authoritarian under his leadership during World War II (Lawson, 1995). The requirement of a strong international and supportive presence, coupled with the need for consistency, necessitated a stronger, leaner, "top down" organization, a style that seemed to suit Rutherford's personality and interests. More importantly, however, centralization facilitated the Society's ability for mass evangelism, giving the Board and its president the capacity to fashion communications, finance, and doctrine as well as evangelism. Prior to 1932, the men holding positions of responsibility for local congregations were elected to their posts by their various constituencies. As a result, the movement in its first four decades could be best described as a "tense" relationship between the officers of the Watch Tower Society and the local congregations. Rutherford pursued a policy of imposing increasingly more control over the local meetings and, after 1932, local leaders were placed in local congregations and in regional offices only after meeting approval by the officers of the Society. Other policy changes that were completed during this time period were:

1. The liturgical and doctrinal creativity or originality of local leaders was subjected to increasingly stringent constraints: conformity with the

2. The appointment of regional officers for supervising local congregations' activities yielded greater control by the "center" over dependent groups, and provided a way of policing for conformity.
3. All attempts by local leaders to ally respective congregations into "horizontal" or "federal" structures for expressive or instrumental purposes were thwarted and destroyed (Beckford, 1976).

Thus, local congregations became completely dependent upon the theocratic "center" of the movement for survival, in which the congregations' primary formal and charter goals were completely consistent with those of the Society. Congregations that failed to meet performance targets in magazine selling, door-to-door canvassing and conducting Bible studies were subject to reprimands and penalties, just as were individuals who failed to meet personal performance targets. That the Society's primary goal – "the production and reproduction of people who are dedicated to the task of disseminating the group's evangelical message through direct contact with the public" (Beckford, 1976, 173) – is quantifiable, facilitates central organizational control over Jehovah's Witness activity around the world.

Watch Tower Society organization has not changed significantly since Rutherford's era. In this religious society, like no other in the present study, organization directly impacts doctrine, theology and religious practices. The theocratic organizational model is itself the master narrative that undergirds the mission and beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses. The head of the theocracy is no other

that Jehovah God, who has instituted the Watch Tower Society as a haven for the faithful until Armageddon¹².

With a doctrine that proclaimed that Witnesses were to reclaim the world for Jehovah God, their persecutions and suffering during the early part of the 20th century were understood as part of the cosmic struggle between God and evil that, surely, was indicative that the end of the world was close at hand. Between the end of World War I and the end of World War II, Rutherford continued Russell's tradition of date-setting for "the end," first at 1920, then 1925, and finally at 1940 (Stark, 1997). By 1938, as the Watch Tower Society declared itself a "theocracy" under control of (only) Jehovah, the doctrine espousing the movement as "God's visible organization on earth" was fully developed, whereby Witnesses could assert the claim that only 144,000 Witnesses would survive the everlasting death following the First Judgment (Beckford, 1978).¹³

Outside View

Sociological Context

Roozen and colleagues (1984) have delineated four types of orientations or styles of institutional religious presence in U.S. culture. Of these four orientations, the sanctuary orientation best describes the Jehovah's Witnesses. Jehovah's

¹² Armageddon is the battle in which Christ will purge the earth of Satan's influence. This battle symbolizes and actualizes Jehovah's victory over evil. This doctrine plays an important role in the Watch Tower Society worldview, its doctrines, theology, and ideology.

¹³ The Rutherford led movement reworked the Bible Students' organization, policy and doctrine to the extent that there were significant numbers of defectors and schisms. Thus, Melton (1989) considered C.T. Russell as the founder of a number of religious movements, of which Jehovah's Witnesses is the largest. Further, the significant changes to doctrine and practice during the Rutherford era conflicted with the values of many of Russell's followers, who also left the Jehovah's Witnesses. According to Bergman, (1984, xvii), "many scholars now consider the Jehovah's Witnesses to be an offshoot of the original movement which Russell started."

Witnesses privilege their own worldview and the subculture in which they live, which is a safe haven from the “misguided” secular world in which Satan is active. (Roozen et al.,1984, 35-6). To Jehovah’s Witnesses, issues of politics, economics, and other civic concerns are inappropriate “false worship,” with a host of contaminants from secular society. Participation in greater society is the equivalent to, in one member’s words, “associating with Babylon the harlot, the mother of all disgusting things.” For their retreat from the world in general and nationalistic concerns in particular, they have endured many persecutions. To sum up, features of the sanctuary worldview important for Jehovah’s Witnesses in particular are:

- (future) or other worldly in their outlook, anticipating the return of Christ and establishment of Jehovah’s early kingdom;
- a requirement to “keep themselves separate from the world,” as the world is filled with demonic and Satanic influences (Penton, 1985); and,
- features a worldview constructed over and against that of a world viewed as “Babylon” --- misguided, sinful or corrupted by the social, economic and political situations of the contemporary world.

It might be tempting to use the evangelistic orientation, as described by Roozen and colleagues (1984), to describe Jehovah’s Witnesses. The evangelistic orientation also focuses on a future world and includes a communal retreat from the world of deteriorated traditional standards for personal morality. The evangelistic orientation, however, teaches participation in the greater world by sharing the group’s mission in order to elevate the personal standards of life and of morality. As such, the

evangelistic orientation's *raison d'être* is to introduce their social and spiritual views into the world around them and thus, transform it for the better. While Jehovah's Witnesses are decidedly evangelistic, their organization does not conform to the features of the evangelistic orientation. Theirs is not a mission to transform society, but one to build up the body of Witnesses as they await Christ's return.

Other sociological features of this NRM include: Resistant to Modernity, Exclusive, Intrinsic, Salvationistic and Transformational. In most cases, these features are a consequence of the sanctuary worldview, where devotees see their lives as caught up in the cosmic struggle of good versus evil.

Resistant to Modernity. Most individuals deal with the pitfalls of modern, secular society --- its frightening prospects, uncertainties, and ambiguities. The Watch Tower Society appeals to individuals who have difficulty with ambiguity in modern life, who would prefer to defer to authority and release the individual from what Berger calls "the terror of chaos" (Berger, 1977, 109). The centralized theocratic organization dictates the proper measures of the individual's time, activities, and relationships. For individuals who find modern life too frustrating or moving too quickly, the Watch Tower Society holds tremendous appeal.

Witnesses may resist modernity at a personal level, but the Watch Tower Society has a peculiar relationship with the modern world. As much as the millenarian focus of Jehovah's Witnesses make them a world-rejecting movement, they are also actively engaged in informing the world of Jesus' imminent return. As such, they have an awkward relationship with modernity, which places them in a liminal, in-between position to human societies, in which they are located on the

margins of the mainstream. In order to have their message heard, Witnesses need the outside world, because their mission is to operate as an international society to spread literature, tracts, and recruit new members (Holden, 2002). The tension created by hating the world while also needing and interacting within it leads to conflicting social relationships with interesting questions about moral and religious Knowers in these communities.

Exclusivity. The literature of the Watch Tower Society reveals the exclusivist orientation of the Jehovah's Witnesses. According to Watch Tower theology, people who do not know the truth of Jehovah's plan for humanity and that we are living in the end times are destined to make mistakes and fall prey to false religions, teachings, and doctrines. False religions, teachings and doctrines are products of the work of Satan. Only people living in the truth, that is, Jehovah's Witnesses, numbering only 144,000, will live in heaven with Jehovah after the First Judgment. There will also be people who will live in the new earth where Jesus Christ reigns, but to survive the battle of Armageddon or to be resurrected on Judgment Day, those people must have lived in the truth and according to the Witness lifestyle. To summarize, then, only Jehovah's Witnesses, who think and live the way they do, will live in heaven or the new earth after Armageddon.

Intrinsic. The Jehovah's Witnesses practice an intrinsic religion, that is, religion is an end in itself, with their desired goal being to survive the First Judgment at Armageddon. In contrast with the extrinsic orientation that views a religious system as instrumental or utilitarian, the intrinsic orientation regards the religious system as an end in itself; the system is a *telos* of the purpose of life (Hunt & King,

1977). For Witnesses, the goal of life is to survive or be resurrected at the First Judgment and the only way that happens is to be in relationship with Jehovah and to participate in Witnessing to His plan. Simply stated, the only way to survive or be resurrected at the First Judgment is to be a Jehovah's Witness.

Ascetic. The cultic lifestyle of many adherents, especially the more mature members of the Watch Tower Society, is consistent with what Max Weber calls "world-rejecting asceticism" (Weber, 1964, 169-170). Weber frames "world-rejecting asceticism" as an active opposite orientation to contemplation, as ascetics actively reject the world as contemplatives passively flee from it. The ascetic, says Weber, achieves a religious victory in that the battle with the world is psychologically felt and perceived as a repeated rejection of worldly temptations (Weber, 1964, 170).

The Witnesses world-rejecting stance, resistance to ecumenicalism and condemnation of homosexuality, abortion, freedom of sexual relationship between consenting adults, women achieving equal pay and employment as well as equal status in the family and marriage, constructs a distinct worldview. This worldview establishes the parameters for acceptable behavior, a mode of living for the end times. These parameters suggest that simple, clean, self-sacrificial, hierarchical, and patriarchal life presages the new order after Armageddon (Holden, 2002, 75).

Salvationistic. Salvation, for the Witness, is to survive the First Judgment to live on the new earth under the reign of Jesus Christ. The Jehovah's Witness is consumed with witnessing to Jehovah's plan for humanity, or, as they would say, the Truth. The Truth is the highest value of the Jehovah's Witness' life – over that of higher education, career, and the trivial pursuits of contemporary life. Sharing the

Truth with others is an urgent priority for the Witnesses, for others cannot enter the Truth if they do not hear, understand or learn the Truth. Their mission is to transform the world into a population prepared for judgment and the reign under Christ.

Transformational. Jehovah's Witnesses are engaged in a worldwide attempt to theologically transform every citizen of every country. Their exclusivist stance -- that only Jehovah's Witnesses, who live in the truth, will be welcomed in the reign of goodness and peace under Jesus Christ, propels them to share their unique knowledge of God's plan to all. To be clear, Jehovah's Witnesses are not set on changing the world. Their mission is to transform the minds, hearts, and lifestyles of those who live in a demonic world.

Theological Context

The name Jehovah, invoking God's personal name, marks "God's true church," as believed and practiced in Witness theology. Following Joel Elliott, a Jehovah's Witness scholar connected with the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, I will call attention to a Watch Tower publication, "*You Can Live Forever*," which highlights the significance of the name, Jehovah, to Witnesses.

God's people must treat (God's) name as holy and make it known throughout the earth ... There is only one people this is really following Jesus' example in this regard. Their main purpose in life is to serve God and bear witness to (God's) name, just as Jesus did. So they have taken the scriptural name "Jehovah's Witnesses" (*You Can Live Forever*, Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, 1982, 1990).

Separating the name "Jehovah" from "God" is equally unacceptable for Witnesses. Using the special name of God allows the speaker to enter a discursive universe whereby she or he becomes special by its use. So Witnesses teach that the

divine name possesses an almost mantric quality, and that frequent invocation of God's personal name is effective in warding off evil (*You Can Live Forever*, 96).

In their *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, the Watch Tower Society's project to produce its own translation completed in 1961, Witnesses restored the word "Jehovah" to the English text of the Hebrew Bible and also introduced it into their translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

"The greatest indignity that modern translators render to the Divine Author of the Holy Scriptures is the removal or the concealing of his peculiar personal name. Actually, (the) name occurs in the Hebrew text 6,828 times as (the Tetragrammaton) YHWH. By using the name "Jehovah," we have held closely to the original-language texts and have not followed the practice of substituting titles such as "Lord," "the Lord," "Adonai" or "God" for the divine name, the Tetragrammaton" (*New World Translation*, 1984, 1640).

Despite their claim to have "been most cautious about rendering the divine name" (*New World Translation*, (hereafter *NWT*) 1640-1), the translators place the name "Jehovah" 237 times in their Greek Bible. Further, the translators of the *NWT* argue that the Tetragrammaton in Hebrew characters (YHWH) was used in both the Hebrew text and the Greek *Septuagint*, making it clear that Jesus and his disciples would have used the divine name. They contend that when Jesus rose and accepted the book of Isaiah in the synagogue at Nazareth, he read 61.1,2 where the Tetragrammaton is used and pronounced the divine name. This act followed from his determination to make Jehovah's name known. Witnesses reason that Jesus and the early Christians knew and would have used God's unique name, "in spite of Jewish tradition at that time." Jesus would have "most surely" used the name because "he did not allow the traditions of men to overrule the law of God" (*Mankind's Search for God*, 258-9).

From the quote above from the *NWT*, we discern that, for Jehovah's Witnesses, the Bible is the literal word of God as authored by Jehovah God. It is all historically accurate, including the Genesis narratives, except for the recorded visions in the Books of Daniel and Revelation. From the *NWT*, 2 Peter 20, 21 reads "(20) for you know this first, that no prophecy of Scripture springs from any private interpretation. (21) For prophecy was at no time brought by (humanity's) will, but (humanity) spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit." Not only is the Bible the literal word of God, the Watch Tower Society contends, but it was spoken to the *NWT* translators, borne along by a spirit that was holy. The *NWT* Bible is the work of God's apostolic institution and interpretive agency on earth --- the Watch Tower Society. Related to this belief, the translators of the *NWT* remain anonymous as, by practice since 1942, all official Watch Tower publications are published anonymously. The head of the theocratic organization is Jehovah God and, therefore, no single (man) can lay claim to any authorship or any level of creativity involved in any communication or publication of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Only God can have a name: **Jehovah**. In addition, Witnesses understand the Bible as an organizational book and its meaning is not open to private interpretation.¹⁴ The responsibilities of the individual members are to accept, digest and proclaim the authoritative interpretation as taught to them from the apostolic institution.

The nature of Jesus is that of Jehovah God's son, firstborn of God and the appointed King of the earth. His reign will begin with the establishment of God's earthly paradise after the First Judgment and the slaughter of Satan, the demons and

¹⁴ "Thus the Bible is an organizational book and belongs to the Christian congregation as a body, not to individuals, regardless of how sincerely they may believe that they can interpret the Bible" (The *Watchtower*, Oct. 1, 1967, 587).

the doomed, evil souls at Armageddon. Jesus is the Christ, for Witnesses, a flesh and blood human being, a High Priest whose life ended when he was executed on a torture stake as ransom for the lives of righteous souls. “Jesus gave his soul, or life, so that (humanity) could be rescued from inherited sin and death” (*Watchtower*, Mar 15, 2003, 20).

Php 2: (8) More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake. (9) For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name (*NWT*).

Jesus is, therefore, exalted above all other as Christ to the glory of God the Father.

Life through knowing Jehovah God and Christ is a life in obedience to the will of Jehovah God. More than belief in Jesus is required; works must accompany belief. One must obey the commands of Jehovah God and do the work Jesus did in proclaiming the Kingdom and bearing witness to Jehovah’s name. To follow the work of Jesus Christ and proclaim Jehovah’s Kingdom, Witnesses are required to be either ‘Publishers’ or ‘Pioneers.’ Individual Publishers are encouraged to spend 10 hours a month in field ministry, but to be considered active and in good standing, they must record at least one hour per month. Regular Pioneers average 90 hours per month, Auxiliary Pioneers log 60 hours per month and Special Pioneers record 140 hours per month. There are **no** exceptions and Witness accountability standards are extremely rigorous.

Jehovah’s Witnesses believe in neither the Trinity of Christian orthodoxy or in the personhood of the Holy Spirit. Their reasoning is that neither doctrine is

scriptural and that they are, instead, products of papal councils operating from the corrupt forces in Christendom. They also maintain that neither doctrine is rational.

Witnesses teach that trust in Jehovah means trusting in those whom Jehovah trusts. Jehovah has arranged for “the faithful and discreet slave” to care for the earthly Kingdom interests (*The Watchtower*, March 1, 2003, 17). The “faithful and discreet slave” is none other than the Governing Body of Jehovah’s organization, who, through their literature and totalizing exegetical vision and interpretive framework, “provide clear and unambiguous guidelines for all relevant moral and religious issues” (Elliott, 1993). Witnesses lives are judged by their willing submission to the truth, as quantitatively measured by their mission work, which they believe is revealed in scripture through the apostolic aegis of the Governing Body. “By cooperating with the elder arrangement in the congregation, we also show that we trust in Jehovah” (*The Watchtower*, Mar. 1, 2003, 17).

Jehovah’s Witnesses have no creeds. They believe that the entire Bible, word for word, is the inspired Word of God and, rather than a creed derived from some pagan or human tradition, maintain that the Bible is sufficient for all of their beliefs. They see themselves as holding a monopoly, the single Truth, about God and the coming Kingdom and they are required to proselytize to save people from death at Armageddon. Watchtower teachings anchor this belief in theirs as a single Truth, as publications are filled with dates and “specificity,” such as 1513 B.C.E. as the year Jehovah gave the Israelites a code of laws, and March 31, 33 C.E. as the date of Jesus’ death (*The Watchtower*, Mar 1 and 15, 2003).

Witnesses believe in the fall of humanity, as recorded in Genesis, but they reject the doctrine of the immortal soul. They suggest that the reason people die is that our first parents rejected God's law, subsequently, human government has been corrupt or controlled by Satan since that time. Suffering typical to the human condition and theodicy are the result of Satan's power in the world that will soon be destroyed. They argue that existence of death can be expected for most human beings and that, through resurrection, people can be reunited with loved ones (*When Someone You Love Dies ...*, 30). They also believe that, since Pentecost, Jehovah has been preparing a body of 144,000 people (Rev. 14:3) to share heavenly life and leadership with God. The remainder will spend eternity here on earth in a paradise in which the lion shall lie down with the lamb. The righteous who are asleep in death will be raised from their graves on a great day of Judgment (Holden, 2002).

On a similar note, Witnesses renounce the conventional Christian doctrine of hell on the basis that it is not scripturally based and contrary to the loving nature of Jehovah (*Reasoning from the Scriptures*, 1989, 168-75). They believe that hell is the complete annihilation that Jesus will exact upon Satan, the demons and evil souls, from which there is no hope of resurrection. Short of being evil or connected to Satan, Jehovah God would not subject a soul to eternal torment. My conversation with a local elder, given the pseudonym "Paul," makes this point about a loving God:

I: What is God to you now?

P: God is Jehovah. I see Him as the one who really deserves for me to worship him. He deserves it! I have seen him as not just a creator, but a loving creator. I will see the love in his creation. The way that he designs things is spectacular. That place up in New York on Hudson River Valley, I think, "man, here is a God that didn't just make something for us to eat or to look at -- He made it beautiful!" It is so

desirable! I see Jehovah's nature and character coming out. He has a genuine desire to make humans happy. It still puzzles me because I can't understand why he would care so much for us humans. (Paul (pseudonym), 40-something Jehovah's Witness)

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Satan controls the world in which we live; 'Satan's World' is one of the theses of Jehovah's Witness discourse (Cronn-Mills, 1999). The subject, mentioned above, stated emphatically earlier in the interview that "evil is caused by man's imperfection, coupled with, you know, the influence of the wicked one." Consequently, Witnesses separate themselves from the world and take sanctuary in their Watch Tower institutions and social structures. They are to remain pure and adhere to a strict ascetic code. Among the Watch Tower doctrines that condemn impurity, however, the Witnesses refusal of blood transfusions is probably its best known. The Society teaches that blood transfusions are forbidden because blood is a source of life that is sacred to Jehovah. Genesis 9:4 and Leviticus 17: 11-12 are the scriptural references used by the Society to support the doctrine, but it is Acts 15: 28-9 that is most frequently quoted in Watch Tower literature:

(28) "For the holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, (29) to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!" (*NWT*).

Thus, blood transfusions are viewed as physically and morally unclean. Andrew Holden (2002) argues that Witness prohibitions against blood function in much the same way as Jewish dietary laws, confirming that sacrifice is part of the price of membership in the Witness identity and it reinforces internal cohesion by distinguishing between purity and pollution. Purity of the blood, therefore, becomes

a powerful symbol of allegiance to the precepts of the Watch Tower Society and Jehovah's people.

This survey of religious beliefs as taught and practiced by the Watch Tower Society is not intended to be comprehensive. It is, rather, an overview of some of the belief structures that significantly shape Jehovah's Witness worldview and contribute to their being such an interesting NRM. These beliefs referenced here are also those that tend to pose the greatest challenge to Jehovah's Witnesses from secular and conventional Christian environments alike.

Inside View: Ethnography

Participant observation allowed me, as the field researcher, to obtain an "insider" and intimate feel for the Jehovah's Witnesses social worlds and their practices of being who they are. It allowed me to take an empathic gaze at this NRM, and to try to understand the worldview Jehovah's Witnesses construct in their practice of faith, in the terms in which they are offered (Babbie, 1995), and in their natural context.

There are three main roles a participant observant can take. First is the complete participant role, where the researcher allows the subjects to observe the researcher as a participant, rather than a researcher. Second, the participant-as-observer role, is where the researcher makes it clear to the subjects, in the process of being a participant, that she is undertaking research. Finally, the observant-as-participant role is when the researcher identifies herself as a researcher and interacts with the participants in the social process, but makes no pretense of actively being a participant (Babbie, 1995). I had not decided which direction my participant

observation would take. Fortunately, I realized that field research design could be modified, as indicated, by the observations. Since I did not know how my presence as “outsider” would be received by the Jehovah’s Witness community, I was not able to make predictions about the extent of my participation. My decisions were to be honest, ask questions, and respond to any question, concern or feedback with sincerity and empathy.

This study took place at Kingdom Halls in the Dunwoody and Decatur congregations in the Atlanta area. My first contact with the community involved a phone conversation with the Jehovah’s Witness elder who answered the phone at the Dunwoody community on a Saturday afternoon. I related that I was studying New Religious Movements which required visits to the Kingdom Hall to learn more about Jehovah’s Witnesses. The elder seemed very understanding and interested in my wanting to visit the Kingdom Hall to observe the Sunday morning activities. He also mentioned that he would confer with some of the other elders to assure that my visiting would be no problem and took my contact information in case he encountered any difficulty with giving his “okay” for my visit. Armed with the instruction that he would call if there were a problem with my visit, he gave me directions to the Kingdom Hall. The following Sunday morning I checked my messages to gleefully note that the “stay away” call had not come.

I had no problem following the elder’s directions to the Dunwoody Kingdom Hall on that bright and sunny springtime morning. As I drove closer to the location, however, I was struck by the stark difference between what I had anticipated in the location of this community and what I actually saw in this community.

I will admit to driving over to the Kingdom Hall carrying a host of preconceived notions. Knowing a little about the Jehovah's Witness apocalyptic hope for a millennium of righteousness and justice, where black and white and yellow and brown would all be equal and live in paradise with God (that is what I remembered from some old *Watchtower* covers), I also recalled Max Weber's notion of the "theodicy of disprivilege," the sense that moral superiority is borne of suffering and disenfranchisement. In other words, I had a preconceived notion that the Jehovah's Witness movement, as a sectarian group, was the product of, in Weber's words, "socially disprivileged classes" (Weber, 1964, 112-115).

I decided that it was a very fortunate circumstance that brought me into Dunwoody, along a winding, almost country road, past private high schools, physician's offices and upscale shopping centers. I wound through communities of homes on which I could not possibly have placed a value, they were of such grand magnitude. I passed three different Starbucks outlets for the so-called Dunwoody "latte drinking crowd." Within a block of the last Starbucks shop, the fork in the road appeared that alerted me to slow down and look for the building. There, within "striking" distance of a large Catholic Church and parochial school, across the street, was a one-story red brick building, built along the same traditional, columned style as the nearby strip shopping center. I was actually in the parking lot before I noticed the sign, located on the building, just beside the door. The sign read simply "Kingdom Hall." Had I not had directions, I would never have found it; there was no external or street sign to mark this as a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses.

I parked the car and started toward the door. When I got to the door, I noticed another sign indicating the meeting times in this building. The morning 10 o'clock public talk, as it is called, was the first of three sets of public talks on Sundays. At noon, the public talk would be offered in Spanish, according to the outside sign, and at 2 pm, the public talk would be offered in Korean. Standing just outside the door, reading all the signs, already people were beginning to ask me, "is this your first time here?" I answered affirmatively and walked inside the building.

Inside the building, I quickly noticed the gathered humanity represented the kind of diversity that was only hinted at on the outside sign. I observed women in native African dress. I could discern dress that was West African and East African, but I do not know much more about native dress than to tell some differences between garb typical from the East and West sides of the continent. I overheard Southern accents, mixed with Midwestern non-accent, a British accent and a German accent all while standing in the entry corridor. I immediately remembered the Jehovah's Witnesses who frequented the doorstep of my first apartment – the mixture of white and black humanity in Nashville, Tennessee --- and decided I was not at all surprised by the diversity I saw within the group gathered here.

The entry hall to the building was a long hallway, flanked by what I thought appeared as if ticket counters at a museum or a theater. One side was open on my left while the right side remained closed. I noticed a number of women behind the counter and, upon further inspection, I noticed that they were distributing copies of *The Watchtower*, *Awake*, and several smaller Watchtower published books. I could see that just ahead, the carpeted hallway ended in a larger, open lecture hall area.

While I could not yet see the seating arrangement in the lecture hall, I could see the stage area, where a single lectern was sitting and a few men were setting up a sound system. I walked to the end of the hallway and observed the room, very much about a lecture hall or auditorium, with stadium seating much like a movie theater. There were still 15 minutes or so before the public talk was to begin, but people were filing into the seats. There were three sections of seats, one on the left, a center section, and one on the right, arranged in a semi-circle around the elevated stage. Each section contained 10 or so rows of seats, with six seats across the row in the right and left section of seats. The center section held rows of 15 seats across. I noticed that behind the lecture area on the right there appeared to be several smaller offices. I saw that a light was on in one of the offices, and stacks of papers on the desk inside. Behind the desk was a map and tool for, I was guessing, marking the territories of publishers and pioneers.

What I failed to notice was that the elder to whom I had spoken by phone the day before was following me, no doubt spotting me as a person unknown to him and from my looking at everything and everyone. He was a tall man, neatly dressed in dress slacks, a dress shirt and tie. He called me by name, introduced himself, and led me back into the entry hall, where a larger number of people than before were picking up their copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Again, I was struck by the diversity of the people who were gathered in this Dunwoody building on a Sunday morning. There were men dressed very casually and men in business suits. There were women dressed all across the spectrum from precisely tailored pantsuits to “dressy” dresses, to casual longer, flowing dresses and skirts. The elder led me to a tall, colorfully

dressed, 60-ish and beautiful, African American woman, who, to my surprise, was wearing what my mother would call a “church hat.” Indeed, this woman was wearing a southern Sunday morning “church hat” at this Kingdom Hall in Dunwoody. Who would have thought it?

The elder introduced Ms. Church Hat to me, indicating that he had asked her to “take care of me” during my time there, and with that being said, I concluded that I would be in the participant-as-observer role with this group. The elder introduced me to several other people, telling all of them that I was doing research on Jehovah’s Witnesses. There appeared to be no way of my simply mingling with this congregation on this Sunday morning.

Ms. Church Hat told me a little about herself; she was a retired school principal who lived in the area. She started walking over to the lecture hall area as I followed along, listening to her tell me about the people in the congregation. I saw couples sitting together with their children seated in the row in front of them; I saw groups of older women sitting together as were the (always exclusively male) elders who were pointed out by Ms. Church Hat. I saw young biracial couples sitting together – white men with Asian women, black men with white women, white men with black women --- the latter combination being one that I do not often see. An African American man stepped onto the stage and Ms. Church Hat indicated that he was a presiding elder from College Park and would be giving the public talk. We took seats toward the back of the center section and within just a minute or so, everyone took seats, filling the room nearly to capacity. Here and there, an empty seat could be spotted but, largely, most of the seats were occupied.

The presiding elder approached the lectern, opened a letter-sized portfolio and began to talk, reading from clearly displayed notes. From following Ms. Church Hat, I noticed that the title of the talk was printed in *The Watchtower* and understood that this would be the same talk delivered at every other Kingdom Hall all over the world. The title of the public talk was “Babylon’s Hour Come?” Honestly, I had not prepared myself appropriately for what was to come. I took thorough notes, but did not audiotape the talk. I cannot reproduce its content here, but this is some of what the public talk contained:

“Babylon the Great was a harlot and the mother of all disgusting things (Rev. 17:1 *NWT*) ... the disgusting things of earth, fits the description of an empire much like the United States in the current age, filled with the disgusting things of the earth. (Rev. 17:17 *NWT* “giving their kingdom to a wild beast until the words of God will have been accomplished”) Beasts depict the political word powers – she (the Harlot) rides the beasts.

(Rev. 18:9-19) She indulges in every type of excess known to mankind. The great Harlot is a worldwide spiritual entity, misled by powerful spiritistic practices. She is the enemy of true worship. (Rev. 17:4; 17:6) She indulges in unclean things, drunk with the blood of the Holy ones and the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. (Jer 3:8) “I gave ... full divorce to her (Israel).” That Harlot, drunk with the book of the holy one and the witnesses of Jesus is the Roman Catholic Church.

During Hitler’s rise to power, the Roman Catholic Church was complicit with Hitler’s chancellorship. Yes, in her was found the blood of prophets and of holy ones and of all those who have been slaughtered on the earth. She was complicit in the violence in India and the creation of Pakistan. She was complicit in Northern Ireland. She was complicit with Rwanda and with the genocide there. She is complicit in Iran and Iraq with the tensions between Sunni and Shi’a Muslims. It is time for the execution of organized religion throughout the earth. Jehovah will reduce her to a lifeless skeleton; she does not even get a decent burial.

Who is the wild beast? The wild beast is the United Nations, and giving the kingdom over to the wild beast is an expression of God’s judgment. Babylon’s hour has come, because it is God’s one thought for nations to band together to execute the great harlot that is organized religion. When the time comes, nations will strengthen the United Nations to take the action they must to execute false religion.

Jehovah’s Witnesses must act quickly not to be a part of the execution. The signs have been developing since 1914. Worse than World War II, the

great tribulation to come will be the greatest of all. There will be 1) great international wars, 2) food shortages, 3) pestilence, 4) “men” as lovers of themselves, with no love for goodness and puffed with pride, 5) social decay, 6) natural disasters.

There will be collective guilt, so Jehovah’s Witnesses must seek cities of refuge and love, during the time that God exercises His sovereignty. If you have not yet done so, take action now. Jehovah’s reign will live beyond the destruction of Babylon.

During the public talk, there is no interaction between the elder who is speaking and the audience. The elder simply stepped up to the lectern to speak and afterward, gathered his things to take his leave to go to another congregation. Another elder stepped forward and started a pre-recorded hymn. The audience sings congregationally along with the recording, again previously selected, from the hymnal, *Sing Praises to Jehovah*. Though I did not have a hymnal (everyone seemed to have their own), one was soon passed down the aisle to me. The hymnal, copyrighted 1984 by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, is a collection of 225 hymns, all taken from Biblical texts (from the *NWT*) and set to music. There were no instruments or song leaders, a matter that did not deter the congregation, as most people, young and old, seemed to know the texts. Flipping through the hymnal, I noticed that hymn 53 is titled “Theocracy’s Increase” based on Isaiah 9:6-7. We sang three hymns before the group settled down for the Bible study session that follows the public talk. Several people left after the public talk and before the Bible study began.

There were no prayers, no mystagogy, and no ritual. Elements of the public talk are certainly ritualized --- the strict use of the talk as prepared and given to the local elders, the reverence with which the songs were sung and the attention given the speaker, the neat and well-rehearsed transition between the public talk and the

Bible study. The style is comfortable and conversational, even as the talk is obviously heavily scripted.

As if on cue (and there very well could have been that my outsider eyes did not recognize), Bibles and *The Watchtower* emerged from purses and bags and were perched upon everyone's lap, eyeglasses and ink pens were recovered from their places of hiding during the public talk. It was clearly time to shift gears.

Another elder stepped to just in front of the stage, took down a microphone and kept it in his hand. He stood just in front of but below the elevated stage, so that he and the congregation were on the same level. Congregants opened their copies of the week's *The Watchtower* and prepared for him to begin. I opened my copy to the page and noticed a clear headline announcing the subject of the lesson. Underneath the headline was the biblical text on which the lesson is based. The biblical lesson was laid out in the magazine in much the same way as other textual study formats. There was something very similar to a homily executed in written form in the pages of the morning's Bible lesson. The elder leading the study read paragraphs of the text, then asked the questions corresponding to those paragraphs. A Bible study text as reproduced below, for example:

Try To See Others As Jehovah Sees Them

“Not the way man sees is the way God sees.” 1 Samuel 16:7

In the 11th century B.C.E, Jehovah sent the prophet Samuel on a secret mission. He commanded the prophet to go to the house of a man named Jesse and anoint one of Jesse's sons to be the future king of Israel. When Samuel caught sight of Jesse's first son Eliab, he felt sure that he had found the one whom God had chosen. But Jehovah said: “Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears

to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is” (1 Samuel 16:6,7). Samuel had failed to see Eliab as Jehovah saw him. (It later became apparent that handsome Eliab did not have the makings of a suitable king of Israel. When the Philistine giant Goliath challenged the Israelites in combat, Eliab, along with the other men of Israel, cowered in fear. – 1 Samuel 17:11, 28-30.

2 How easy it is for humans to err in their assessment of others! On the one hand, we may be taken in by individuals who are outwardly appealing but inwardly unscrupulous. On the other hand, we may be stern and unbending in our evaluation of sincere individuals whose personality traits annoy us.

Question 1: How did Jehovah’s view of Eliab differ from that of Samuel?
Answer: Samuel saw Eliab’s appearance and his height of stature and Jehovah saw his heart.

Question 2: What can we learn from this? Answer: We learn how easy it is for humans to err in their assessment of others. (The answers are literally recited from the text.)

3. Problems can arise when we are quick to judge others – even those we have known for years. Perhaps you have had a serious quarrel with a Christian who was once a close friend. Would you like to heal the breach? What will help you to accomplish this?

4 Why not take a good, long, positive look at your Christian brother or sister? And do this in the light of Jesus’ words: “No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him” (John 6:44). Then ask yourself: ‘Why did Jehovah draw this person to His Son? What desirable qualities does the individual possess? Have I been overlooking or undervaluing these traits? Why did we become friends in the first place? What drew me to this person?’ At first, you may find it difficult to think of good points, particularly if you have been nursing hurt feelings for some time. However, this is a vital step toward repairing the rift between the two of you. To illustrate how this might be done, let us look for positive characteristics in two men who are at times cast in a negative light. They are the prophet Jonah and the apostle Peter.

Question 3: If a problem arises between two Christians, what should each one be determined to do? Answer: Take a good, long, positive look at your Christian brother or sister.

Question 4: What questions should we ask ourselves when we have a serious disagreement with a fellow believer? Answer: Why did Jehovah draw this person to His Son? What desirable qualities does the individual

possess? Have I been overlooking or undervaluing these traits? Why did we become friends in the first place? What drew me to this person?

The Bible study unfolds similarly for the remainder of the hour. Curiously, during that time, I raised my hand to answer a question, just to see if I would be recognized. Ms. Church Hat, seated next to me, literally said, “only believers can answer the questions,” and looked at me as if to say “put your hand down.” After another few moments, I lowered my hand, reasonably satisfied that the elder would not have called on me to answer any questions. Surprisingly, however, the elder did recognize a child, an African American boy I guessed to be around 8 or 9 years old. When the boy answered the questions correctly, the entire group applauded. The elder asked him to stand and announced that he was the son of the smiling couple seated to the child’s left. The boy beamed with self-assurance and sat down. Others recognized to answer questions were adults and, one by one, each of them performed their answers flawlessly, never wavering from the text as indicated, and never asking any additional questions or offering extraneous comments.

At the conclusion of Bible study, the elder asked practical questions about preaching territories, mentioned business-related things about turning in contact cards, and opened a time for questions or problems. One white woman, probably in her 50’s, white hair, glasses and wearing a turquoise pantsuit commented, “Yes, I have a problem. Our former U.S. senator is in my territory. I have managed to get him to the door and he said he would have a Bible study sometime, but I have not been able to get him to the door again.” As she spoke, all eyes seemed to fall upon her and as I leaned over to see her, too, I tried to determine the former U.S. senator

about whom she was speaking. The woman continued, “well, yesterday, I saw him sitting out in the backyard in his wheelchair. The backyard was fenced, but I could see him over the fence. I asked him if I could come back to see him and he wouldn’t turn around.” The elder commented clearly and dryly, “it takes persistence.” (I later learned, from my research, that the Service Training after the weekly Theocratic Ministry School is the “proper” place to ask such a question. The elder may not have wished to entertain the question in the Bible Study setting or he may not have wanted to answer the question in front of a guest (me). He clearly did not make much of an effort to have the conversation with the woman.) With the service and preaching cards turned in, the group was dismissed.

As I left the building, I noticed that the ticket-like window was again open where people were distributing literature, *The Watchtower, Awake!*, Bibles, several books, and videos. The elder to whom I spoke on Saturday caught up with me as I walked out. He reached over to the publications table and presented me with “gifts” of two Watchtower books, *The Bible: God’s Word or Man’s?* and *Mankind’s Search for God*, two videos “United by Divine Teaching” and “Our Whole Association of Brothers” on the multicultural face of the Watch Tower Society, and suggested that I keep the *New World Translation* Bible and the *Sing Praises to Jehovah* hymnal. While I have not seen the videos, the books, Bible and hymnal have been excellent sources of theology of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and have been used in preparing this chapter.

Challenges and Questions for this Community

It is helpful to now consider some of the challenging positions in Jehovah's Witness beliefs and practices that are particularly relevant to moral and faith development. The crux of the moral content of the teachings and ideology of Jehovah's Witnesses may be summed up in the following phrase: "this present wicked system of things **must** be destroyed." Their mission is to publicize the benefits of believing, with absolute certainty, that destruction of the world must occur in order to achieve the new world society on the other side of Armageddon. Beckford's study of Witnesses in the U.K. notes that themes stronger than those of apocalypticism and retribution are the more hope-filled ones of certainty, coherence, revolution and retribution (Beckford, 1977). I find this dialectic paradoxical, that they Witnesses actively wish for and believe in destruction, on the one hand, and peace, love, and tranquility on the other. Additionally, there exists yet another paradox in Witness practice and belief, as Witnesses engage in exclusivist, hierarchical and patriarchal practices "in the present" and believe in the just, egalitarian world society they anticipate on the other side of Armageddon.

There is no moral uncertainty or ambiguity in the Watch Tower Society. Witnesses believe that worshipping God properly means living properly - which includes living honest, truthful and sober lives. Their moral code and the content of their moral instruction are based solely on their Bible, following the words of Proverbs 3:5, 6: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of Him, and He Himself will make your

paths straight.” and Psalm 32:8 “I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give advice with my eye upon you.”

The essential element of the Watch Tower Society’s moral teachings is summarized in this statement:

The fear of Jehovah, which “means the hating of bad,” is the basis for developing godly attributes (Proverbs; 8:13; 9:10). Love and reverence for God, along with a healthy respect for His power and authority, result in our hating and avoiding the bad things He hates. Clear thinking ability, coupled with Godly knowledge, helps us recognize dangers that can poison our mind, heart, and spirituality. We come to abhor selfish and greedy attitudes that can wreck our family and destroy our relationship with Jehovah. Jehovah's Witnesses want to live lives that are spiritually, morally, mentally, and physically clean. (From “Biblical Principles That Can Safeguard You,” *Awake!* December 8, 2004)

Four features that pervade Jehovah ’s Witness doctrine can characterize godly knowledge, according to the Watch Tower Society. As observed by sociologist James Beckford, they are:

1. The separate teaching of the movement must be understood in the context of the conviction of **absolute certainty and truth** that pervades all Watch Tower matters. (A frequent question of one Witness to another is “How long have you been in the Truth?”) The precise teachings are not unimportant, but their combined power to impress potential as well as actual members derives from the persuasive sense that they are absolutely true and guaranteed by the Bible.
2. It has consistently been Watch Tower policy to argue that the Society’s teachings are true to the **exclusion of all others** (people, religion, teachings and ideologies). If views of other groups happen to coincide with those of the Watch Tower movement, it is rarely mentioned. If they disagree, however, the Watch Tower movement offers a lengthy justification for its own position over the differing one.
3. The separate teachings of the Watch Tower Society are deliberately and ingeniously presented as forming a **coherent whole**. Their explicit interrelatedness is claimed as a philosophical proof of their truth. In their attempts to construct coherent position statements, Watch Tower authors rely on didactic, simplifying schemes and

4. Watch Tower literature and sermons deliberately present practical **implications for action** that are said to follow from basic teachings. Very few, if any, theological or philosophical points are very examined in the abstract. The thrust of most of the teachings are towards inculcating ways of embodying the teaching in everyday life – not for the sake of doing so, but because doing so is a matter of life and death.

Underlying each of these features is the incredible sense of **urgency** to act, and to do now. (Beckford, 1977, 120).

Recalling the Four Component Model (Rest, Bebeau, & Volker, 1986; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999), which maintains that at least four integrated abilities are antecedent conditions for effective sociomoral decision making, we now have the ability to raise some questions about the effects this didactic type of moral instruction in mature devotees. The four antecedent conditions of the model include moral sensitivity, the ability to interpret the actions and feelings of other people; moral judgment, determining which moral action is justified; moral motivation, the degree to which the actor feels compelled to act; and moral courage, the ability to implement one's moral choices (Rest, Bebeau, & Volker, 1986).

Given the nature of Jehovah's Witness moral instruction, how they take perspective will be of interest – will they have the ability to exhibit moral sensitivity, the actions and feelings of other people, or will their moral teaching compel them to take an exclusivist view? We will also be interested to see how they go about making moral judgments, in deciding which course of action is justified. We might also expect the faith development interviews to reveal narratives of mature community members who are compelled to act, or moral

motivation, because of the sense of urgency that underlies all the Jehovah's Witness teaching and ideology. Results of the DIT-2, FDI and narrative analyses are reported in Chapter 8.

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Chapter 5: Seventh Day Adventists

Lessons Learned: The Liturgical Construction of A New Moral Reality

“And this good news of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all the nations.” Matthew 24:14 AKJV

“Let our publishing houses do all in their power to diffuse to the world the light of heaven. In every way possible call the attention of the people of every nation and tongue to those things that will direct their minds to the Book of books.” Ellen G. White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 7, 160.

Introduction

I remember the bright blue covers and the richly illustrated story depictions in the set of “Bible books,” as we called them, kept on the lower, two shelves of a family room bookcase in my childhood home. Neither my brother nor I turned to those books when we needed something to read, as my parents hoped, but I do have a vivid recollection of the day Mom and Dad lifted the books from their shipping boxes and placed them on the shelves. I turned to the final volume, thumbed toward the end of the book and began to read the last story. I was sorely disappointed when the last story in the “Bible books” was not the ascension of Jesus because, in my eight or nine year old mind, that was the way the Bible story should end.

I gave that volume another chance and picked it up some time later, curious to find out if not the ascension, what was the concluding narrative in the set of books called *The Bible Story*? I discovered that the final story was about the new earth, a place of happiness and joy and where Jesus would live with his friends. With that, I was very confused. What happened to “ascended into heaven?”

I actually did not get my answer until I started my research in Seventh-day Adventism for this study. The bright blue books were completely forgotten until I

started looking into Adventism in the 1950s. There, in the list of leading Adventist publications of that decade, was Arthur Maxwell's ten-volume set for children called *The Bible Story*. Not only were the books published in that decade, but they have been revised and updated in every decade since and continue to enjoy a large circulation as one of the greatest Adventist publishing success stories.

I actually followed up with my mother about why and how *The Bible Story* was in our home. Her simple answer gave me a chuckle as she said, "I saw a flier in your doctor's office." I shared with her why I found her comment amusing --- not only were they Adventist publications but Seventh-day Adventism maintains an association with a variety of health and medical concerns. Of course, she found a flier advertising *The Bible Story* in a doctor's office!

Overview of this Community

Of the NRMs that emerged from the rationalism of the nineteenth century, Seventh-day Adventism remains controversial, misunderstood, and anything but monolithic. Seventh-day Adventists trace their roots to the Millerite movement of the 1830s and 1840s. A Baptist preacher, William Miller (1782-1849) was never a part of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, though his conclusion that the world would end between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844 began a religious phenomenon known as Millerite Adventism. Millerites could be found in every denomination in Christendom during those years. Many of Miller's followers were expelled from their respective churches for perpetuating Miller's beliefs and prophecies.

When Miller's prophecy failed, some survivors of that Great Disappointment became convinced that in 1844, something significant did actually occur. That

special something was that Jesus Christ had begun a new phase of ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, actively atoning for the sins of humanity, and preparing for Final Judgment. Chief among proponents of the notion that Miller's date was right but his understanding of the event was wrong was Ellen G. White (1827-1915). Many believed Ellen White to hold a prophetic gift and that she was sent to the remnant that survived the prophecies of 1844 as an appointed messenger to God's "remnant church." Early in the movement's history, Ellen White claimed to have had heavenly visions that confirmed the (Heavenly) Sanctuary doctrine,¹⁵ a theological position that retains the significance of the October 22, 1844 as a date that Christ began the process of preparing for final judgment. She also received visions that validated Joseph Bates' previously stated position that the seventh day was the proper Sabbath and that acceptance of the proper Sabbath was consistent with properly following the Ten Commandments. Bates, Ellen White and the latter's husband, Millerite preacher James White, are credited as the founders of Seventh-day Adventism, even though the groups beginnings stemmed from the fusion of three, rather than two, Millerite Adventist groups. These groups were:

1. A group headed by Hiram Edson in western New York State, that emphasized the doctrine of the Heavenly Sanctuary;
2. A group in Washington, New Hampshire, which along with Joseph Bates, advocated the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath; and,

¹⁵ The Sanctuary doctrine asserts that Jesus Christ has moved to the inner sanctuary of heaven where he pleads mercy for sinners on every Day of Atonement. The Sanctuary doctrine is controversial both within and outside of Adventism, because affirming the Sanctuary doctrine denies that atonement took place on the Cross.

3. A group around Portland, Maine, home to the former Ellen Gould Harmon (White), who held the same as a true prophetess, whose visions and worldview were to be followed by Adventists (Hoekma, 1963).

Adventists, like every religious movement, endured schisms, doctrinal aberrations and inconsistencies, but remained largely consistent in their identity for 100 years. A controversial doctrine of the “Shut Door,” a belief that only the faithful remnant would meet the Lord in heaven, became a part of Adventist identity for some, though not all in the movement. When the promised destruction of Babylon did not materialize in 1844, Miller himself wrote, “We have done our work in warning sinners, and in trying to awaken a formal church. God in his providence has shut the door ...”(Miller, letter dated Nov. 18, 1844, in the *Advent Herald*, 11 December 1844, 142). While other leading Millerites rejected the Shut Door doctrine, Ellen White, in the account of her first vision, stated that redemption was impossible for “all the wicked world which God had rejected” (Ellen G. White, “To the Remnant Scattered Abroad,” in James White, *A Word to the Little Flock*, (Brunswick: NJ, 1847).

From its earliest days, the doctrines of the Shut Door, the (Heavenly) Sanctuary, the seventh-day Sabbath, the “spirit of prophecy” in Ellen White and the self-identity as the remnant church typified the Seventh-day Adventist movement. These ideas have made the religious group unique and have contributed, in varying degrees, to its perception as sometimes but not always sectarian, sometimes but not

often orthodox Christian. They are, however, what makes Seventh-day Adventism an interesting study in NRMs.

Why this is a “Fundamentalist” New Religious Movement (fNRM)

Again, in the strict sense of the term, Seventh Day Adventism is not a “new” religious movement, as the movement stems from a mid-19th century group of followers of William Miller (1782-1849). Following the Great Disappointment of 1844, a group of Millerites reframed the expectation for October 22, 1844, arguing that this new date was the beginning of the Final Atonement. Chief among these proponents was Ellen G. White, whose visions confirmed for these believers that Christ had moved to the Most Holy Place to begin preparations for the Second Coming. Consequently, the group that would formally become Seventh-day Adventists in 1863, is well over 100 years of age in theological, legal and publishing terms.

Adventists display sectarian tendencies, however, as they retain a rigid fundamentalism. Sectarian NRMs represent innovative religious responses to the situation of the modern world. Seventh-day Adventists are a unique, charismatic response to 19th century Christian millenarianism, the belief that Christ will soon return to earth, transform it from its decayed condition and restore all things right again, and establish a 1,000-year reign of peace on earth before the Final Judgment. Millenarianism forms a core of the beliefs and theologies of Seventh-day Adventists.

Like other NRMs, Seventh-day Adventists are countercultural. Their most obvious countercultural stance is their worship on the seventh day, making them peculiar on the United States and the world landscape. As American religiosity

wanes with less and less observance of the Sabbath, Adventism's strict observance of the 24-hour period for Sabbath, sundown Friday through Saturday, marks a distinctive difference to American secularity that may or may not stop for an hour or two on Sunday morning. Their theology embraces the Sabbath as a time for celebration for creation, greeting one another with an enthusiastic "Happy Sabbath!" and it is a special time set aside for loved ones and friends to anticipate the glories of heaven, where families and loved ones are united with in one another around the glory and love of God.

New Religious Movements tend to be founded by a charismatic church leader, who is sometimes also highly authoritarian. The charismatic leader at the helm of the Seventh-day Adventist movement is Ellen G. White (1827-1915), who many also regard as a prophet. Though White never used the "prophet" label of herself, she certainly encouraged its use, writing that her visions and writings were the "lesser light" to the "Great light of the Bible." The authoritarian label, however, only loosely fits White, though she did once write that failure to regard her counsel was a first step to apostasy that could ultimately result in damnation (Vance, 1999).

Adventists are a tightly organized group, led by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, positioned at their world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland. As the official source of the Fundamental Beliefs of Adventism, the idea of "progressive revelation" makes Adventism dynamic and fluid, and contemporary Adventism is in a state of flux over whether or not to embrace a diversity of theological positions that emerge from their fundamentalist core. Not the least of the controversial subjects embraced in their debates surrounding theological diversity is

the ordination of women, which, to date, Adventism has rejected. Even with the notion of progressive revelation, the idea that God continues to reveal the contours of the divine plan in every age, the debate over women's ordination is one over how to render the inerrant Word of God relevant for every generation. This argument is paralleled by another debate in Adventist circles, namely, which Biblical translation is the most accurate.

As the very first of the fundamental beliefs held by every Seventh-day Adventist, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the source for a standard of character, experience and doctrine for Adventists meets one of the criteria for fundamentalist New Religious Movement (fNRM).

The Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In this Word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God's acts in history. (2 Peter 1:20, 21; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Ps. 119:105; Prov. 30:5, 6; Isa. 8:20; John 17:17; 1 Thess. 2:13; Heb. 4:12.) (General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2008, "The Fundamental Beliefs".)

Adventists teach that the Ten Commandments, prominently displayed in almost every Seventh-day Adventist sanctuary (or narthex) are the unchanging standard for right conduct and moral behavior. They believe in the literal seven-day creation of the earth and heavens. By coming to know Christ after baptism by immersion (at around age 12 or 13), individuals who follow the commandments closely to lead a sanctified life, characterized by a strict code of Adventist behavior, can become glorified at the Second Advent.

Since the Christian scriptures maintain that divorce is a sin and remarriage is adultery as strictly prohibited by the commandments of God, Adventists hold a strict view of marriage and family:

Marriage was divinely established in Eden and affirmed by Jesus to be a lifelong union between a man and a woman in loving companionship. For the Christian a marriage commitment is to God as well as to the spouse, and should be entered into only between partners who share a common faith. Mutual love, honor, respect, and responsibility are the fabric of this relationship, which is to reflect the love, sanctity, closeness, and permanence of the relationship between Christ and His church. Regarding divorce, Jesus taught that the person who divorces a spouse, except for fornication, and marries another, commits adultery. Although some family relationships may fall short of the ideal, marriage partners who fully commit themselves to each other in Christ may achieve loving unity through the guidance of the Spirit and the nurture of the church. God blesses the family and intends that its members shall assist each other toward complete maturity. Parents are to bring up their children to love and obey the Lord. By their example and their words, they are to teach them that Christ is a loving disciplinarian, ever tender and caring, who wants them to become members of His body, the family of God. Increasing family closeness is one of the earmarks of the final gospel message. (Gen. 2:18-25; Matt. 19:3-9; John 2:1-11; 2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:21-33; Matt. 5:31, 32; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18; 1 Cor. 7:10, 11; Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 22:6; Mal. 4:5, 6.) (General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2008, "The Fundamental Beliefs".)

The strict organization and firm boundaries around who is "in" and who is "out," proper family conduct, and beliefs on marriage give them a sectarian appearance that makes them candidates for this study in fNRMs. They are tightly organized by a central authority, are communal in their organization, and systematic in their proselytizing efforts. In summary, then, Seventh-day Adventists fit the criteria for fundamentalist New Religious Movements. They are among the most interesting religious groups on the world stage, incorporating a set of practices unique to their needs as a religious community.

From the FDI with Maria (pseudonym), a 25-year-old Latina:

P1: What we do — of course everybody comes to church we get in groups of two and you wash the other people's feet. You know how people used to wash Jesus' feet? You choose somebody that you don't know and you show how humble you are. You wash their feet. You know that symbolizes the body of Christ and his blood. You wouldn't call it a ritual it's more like a ...

I1: Why is this important to you?

P2: That's part of our well being.

The Ordinance of Foot-washing is among the more interesting and unique practices of the Seventh-day Adventists. This ordinance, along with the Lord's Supper, is observed four times a year.

History

William Miller was a self-educated farmer and Baptist layman from upstate New York when he set out to preach and teach in 1831, with a Bible, a concordance and a "wooden literalism that allowed the prophetic and apocalyptic works of Scripture to interpret themselves" (Teel, 1995, 2). He came to reject the prevailing notions of his time, those of a temporal millennium and the return of Jews to Palestine (ideas that were later maintained by Charles Taze Russell, who would found the Bible Students group). Miller, alternatively, became convinced of the pre-millennial advent of Christ:

"I found it plainly taught in the scriptures that Jesus Christ will again descend to this earth, coming in the clouds of heaven, in all the glory of His Father; that at His coming the kingdom and dominion under the whole heaven will be given unto Him and the saints of the Most High, who will possess it forever, even forever and ever; that as the old world perished by the deluge, so the earth that now is, is reserved unto fire, to be melted with fervent heat at Christ's coming ..." (Miller, William, "Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ about the year 1843." Troy, NY: 1836, Boston, 1842; quoted in Olson, 1925, 1972, 110).

His convictions led him to a thorough study of the prophetic periods in Daniel and the Revelation.

William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator* carried notice of Miller's Boston meetings and called him a "thorough" social reformer (Teel, 1995, 3). In teaching about the second advent of Jesus, Miller's message carried the usual warnings of religious caution, such as pay all debts, practice sobriety, and witness to the Advent Near. Hence, Miller also preached abolition, temperance and other social reforms required to prepare for the coming Kingdom.

Miller's Massachusetts' preaching, especially in the Boston area, attracted many followers. As Miller did not organize a ministry under a single entity or umbrella, his band of followers cut across faith groups and social causes. Joshua V. Himes, who Miller met in November 1839, was chief among the early Millerite disciples. Himes, then pastor of the Chardon Street (Christian) Church in Boston, arranged for Miller to give a series of lectures there and provided lodging for Miller at his home. At the conclusion of Miller's time in Boston, Himes had become determined "to lay himself, his family, and his reputation upon the altar of God in order to help Mr. Miller to the extent of his ability, even to the end" (Olson, 1925, 1972, 118).

Himes initiated the publishing interest of the advent movement in early 1840, launching a newspaper to encourage the rapid growth and development of Miller's message. In a few short months, the newspaper led to the creation of a network to sound the advent cry across the country. Himes purchased what was, to his mind, "the biggest tent in the country" (Teel, 1995, 4) for Miller's meetings, convened

numerous Second Advent conferences and, eventually, edited two Advent journals, *The Midnight Cry* in New York and *The Signs of the Times* in Boston. The latter two publications helped found others in Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Rochester and Montreal (Arthur, 1996, 585).

Another Miller lieutenant was Charles Fitch, whose most significant contribution to the Millerite movement was the 1842 chart used to demonstrate Miller's calculations and justification for the end time. The idea of Fitch's chart, made to illustrate the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, met with instant approval at an 1842 Adventist meeting in Boston. Fitch, having also published an anti-slavery volume called *Slaveholding Weighed in the Balance of Truth and its Comparative Guilt*, also became very active on the lecture circuit, especially to the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church (Olson, 1925, 1972). On June 29, 1842, advent believers assembled for their first camp meeting in the United States in Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts, convened to follow the close of a big Methodist gathering on the same grounds. Olson (1925, 1972) retells the comments of the Methodist grounds superintendent, hired by the Millerites to assist with the arrangements:

"I never saw half so large a tent before. I and others thought and said, 'where are all the people coming from to fill it?' for it was estimated to hold from three thousand to four thousand ... a great multitude came and many of my Methodist brethren came back. I was so astonished to see those forward who had stood though out meeting. Some of my friends were forward, and some church members, all pleading for mercy" (*History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*, 1874, 245, quoted in Olson, 1925, 1972, 131).

Preachers for the great Advent camp meeting included Fitch and Himes. Miller followed up the success of the camp meeting by delivering his next course of

lectures in the Methodist Episcopal Church in New Haven, later in 1842. Fitch followed suit, moving the Second Advent message into Cleveland, Ohio, where a publishing enterprise had already found fertile soil, and by delivering lectures before students and faculty at Oberlin Institute.

The final key Millerite lieutenant was Josiah Litch, one of Miller's earliest recruits, who, like Fitch, was a product of anti-slavery and temperance agitators (Teel, 1995). Litch, a Methodist minister when he encountered Miller, severed his connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church in early 1842. He took up the cause of the Second Advent mixed with a hefty dose of social reform, preaching this as the best way to prepare for the imminent eschaton. He led the very first Second Advent camp meeting, held in Canada. Himes wrote the following in his newly formed journal, *The Advent Shield* "a place was selected, the ground prepared, and the meeting held in the township of Hatley, Canada East. Such was the good effect of this first meeting that the people of Bolton wished one to be held in their town" (*Advent Shield and Review*, (1), 68).

With Adventism spreading, aided by Miller's triumvirate of lieutenants, by 1842 Miller was pressed to provide some definition to the movement. Miller's message became singularly focused on the impending eschaton, while Himes, Fitch and Litch remained committed to abolition and other social reforms until as late as 1843. Fitch's 1843 sermon, titled "Come out of her, my people" illustrated the Millerites' call to come together as a remnant and out of Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, human institutions, social groups and associations. By their actions, Miller's lieutenants flipped his inclusive call to consciousness into an exclusivist,

isolated and separated remnant society, which singularly was left to usher in the Second Advent (Teel, 1995, 6).

Miller did not condone his lieutenants' actions. He wrote, "I have not ordained anyone to separate from churches ... I have never designed to make a new sect ... I fear the enemy has a hand in this to direct our attitude from the true issue, 'Behold the Bridegroom cometh'" (William Miller, letter to Elon Galusha, April 5, 1844, quoted in Teel, 1995, 6). Miller, accordingly, issued a synopsis of his own views, which were adopted as a foundational teaching of the Millerites. He began formulating these as early as 1842:

1. I believe Jesus Christ will come again to this earth.
2. I believe he will come in all the glory of His Father.
3. I believe he will come in the clouds of heaven.
4. I believe he will then receive His Kingdom, which will be eternal.
5. I believe the saints will then possess the kingdom forever.
6. I believe at Christ's second coming the body of every departed saint will be raised, like Christ's glorious body.
7. I believe that the righteous who are living on the earth when He comes will be changed from mortal to immortal bodies, and with them who are raised from the dead, will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air, and so be forever with the Lord.
8. I believe the saints will then be presented to God blameless, without spot or wrinkle in love.
9. I believe, when Christ comes the second time, He will come to finish the controversy of Zion, to deliver His children from all bondage, to conquer their last enemy, and to deliver them from the power of the tempter, which is the devil.
10. I believe that when Christ comes, He will destroy the bodies of the living wicked by fire, as those of the old world were destroyed by water, and shut up their souls in the pit of woe, until their resurrection unto damnation.
11. I believe, when the earth is cleansed by fire, that Christ and His saints will then take possession of the earth, and dwell therein forever. Then the kingdom will be given to the saints.
12. I believe the time is appointed of God when these things shall be accomplished.
13. I believe that God has revealed the time.

14. I believe many who are professors and preachers will never believe or know the time until it comes upon them.
15. I believe the wise, they who are to shine as the brightness of the firmament (Dan. 12:3) will understand the time.
16. I believe the time can be known by all who desire to understand and to be ready for His coming. And I am fully convinced that sometime between March 21, 1843 and March 21, 1844, according to the Jewish mode of computation of time, Christ will come, and bring all His saints with Him; and that then He will reward every man as his works shall be. (*Sketches of the Christian Life and Public Labors of William Miller*, 170-173, quoted in Olson, 1925, 1972, 135-136).

The Millerite Adventists had become an exclusive remnant, removed themselves from religious bodies of the world and various social institutions, created great publishing enterprises and a culture of waiting for the Lord --- only to be disappointed. One segment of those who survived The Great Disappointment affirmed the Millerite Advent emphasis, arguing the error was not in cosmology but in chronology. This group would become the Advent Christians.

Another segment of those disappointed after March 1844 continued in its belief in both Miller's Advent imminence and his chronology, first believing that the original "Miller-time" of March 21, 1844 was incorrect but a new date, October 22, 1844, was surely the right one. This group, of course, suffered another disappointment. In Portland, Maine, a young Ellen Harmon, along with her parents, brother and sisters, were expelled from the local Methodist church for their very vocal hopes and belief in the Advent Near in both 1843 and 1844 (Olson, 1925, 1972). A sickly young woman and physically fragile, Ellen Harmon "was taken off in vision" (Olson, 1925, 1972, 173) at a morning house worship in Portland. As recorded in her "Early Writings," she "seemed to be surrounded with light, rising higher and higher from the earth ... At this, I raised my eyes and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up

high above the world. On this path the advent people were traveling toward the city” (White, 1945, 58-9).

Following this and other visions, Harmon’s public proclamations and preaching began in 1845, at the age of 17. Among her early visions was an imperative to go to Poland, Maine, to share her visions with the advent people. These visions, eventually published under the title *To the Remnant Scattered Abroad*, infused a new meaning into the year 1844 as the year that inaugurated a final era of divine judgment (Teel, 1995).

In 1844, Capt. Joseph Bates, who had come to accept Miller’s Adventism, also came to believe that the Mosaic Decalogue, with its Fourth Commandment, was an important element of God’s moral law for the “end times.” The Sabbath of Jehovah, he reasoned, was a blessing to humanity and symbolized loyalty to God. Miller Adventists considering the question, exegeted the three messages of the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation, and their interpretation became and remains an important pillar in Adventist theology. The first angel’s message was “Judgment has come!” and this formed the basis for the advent preaching of 1831-44. The second angel’s message, “Babylon is fallen, come out!” was practiced in the summer and fall of 1844, as Advent-lookers separated (or were expelled) from their Churches. The final angel’s message “here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,” informed the Sabbath-keeping, or Sabbatarian Adventists, revealing what Olson describes as “the unchangeable character of God’s great moral law” (Olson, 1925, 1972, 186). The significance of Sabbath keeping was made especially

poignant to Sabbatarians because of its proximity to the other prophecies that resonated so strongly with them (Olson, 1925, 1972; Teel, 1995).

Associated with Bates and the Sabbatarian Adventists was Elder James White, who had lectured heavily during 1844 as a Millerite preacher and movement organizer. White married Ellen Harmon in 1846, establishing the Elder and Ellen White among the few Sabbatarian Adventists scattered throughout New England, and anchoring the pair as a “first family” among them. In spring of 1847, James White published a small pamphlet entitled, *A Word to the Little Flock*, containing Ellen White’s first vision, already published, but connecting the Elder White with the former Ellen Harmon, and aiding their publication efforts among and beyond “the remnant who embraced the third angel’s message.”

By 1848, amid hopes for “a light to advocate for the truths they believed” (Olson, 1925,1972, 201), Ellen White had a vision that she shared with her husband – “I have a message for you. You must begin to print a little paper and send it out to the people” (Olson, 1925, 1972, 202). The Whites began printing *Present Truth* in July 1849, from Middletown, Connecticut, 11 miles from their home at the time. In the same year, the first Seventh-day Adventist hymnbook, *Hymns, for God’s Peculiar People that Keep the Commandments of God and the Faith of Jesus* was compiled by James White. By 1850, the White, having received some financial support for returning to Paris, near Portland, Maine, printed the eleventh and last *Present Truth*, launching the subsequent *The Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. In spring of 1851, the Whites moved again to Saratoga Springs, New York,

and changed the name of their paper to *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, the name very similar to the present-day *Review and Herald*.

The publishing effort with the traveling preaching afforded the Whites a platform to fine-tune their Sabbatarian Adventist theology. Along with “Father” (Capt.) Joseph Bates, the Millerite preacher, the Whites are considered the official co-founders of the Seventh-day Adventists in the fall of 1860. From the time of the mid-1840s Advent Movement, through the mid-1950s, little changed in the way of the teaching of the Adventist church. James White and Joseph Bates provided the exegetical support, preaching and editorial work as Ellen White carried the movement’s charismatic voice. The “remnant” motif became their defining message as the young movement set out to define their Sabbath truths, name the unidentified apocalyptic beasts, and to discover their meaning and mission.

In 1847, Joseph Bates provided shape to the moral example the “remnant” should follow. He argued simply that the testimony and faith of Jesus was the ultimate and sufficient moral example for the “remnant” movement. James White’s definition of the moral norm was a bit more restrictive: just as the “commandments of God” grounded the movement’s commitment to a Seventh-day Sabbath, the “testimony of Jesus” was the “doctrine of the Shut Door.” In other words, White contended that only those who followed the commandments of God, to include the Seventh-day Sabbath, and followed the moral example Jesus offered in the Gospels would be “caught up to meet Him in the air.” By 1850, however, White’s *The Present Truth* proclaimed the Shut Door open again, conforming to the less

restrictive definition of Bates and identifying the “testimony of Jesus” as the teachings of the Gospel (Teel, 1995).

Still developing a theology for the remnant, in 1851, James White drew on Joel 2:32 to write that the remnant described in that verse experienced the last-day outpouring of spiritual gifts (Teel, 1995). By 1853, the “spirit of prophecy” was a central belief in the Adventist movement. Following Teel (1995), it is easy to see how the remnant began to equate the “testimony/faith of Jesus” with the gift of prophecy and, by clear implication, the charismatic voice of Ellen White. Ellen White’s visions served to create a foundation for the remnant movement; James White, from 1855 forward, preached, taught and wrote to support his wife’s prophetic gifts. White’s theological system clearly defined the remnant of Revelation as the commandment-keeping Adventists who evince the “spirit of prophecy,” with that spirit exhibited in the testimonies of Ellen White.¹⁶

Another fundamental theme in Adventist doctrine from the 1840s is the changing understanding and exegesis of the lamb/dragon creature of Revelation 13, the creature with horns like a lamb and who spoke like a dragon. In 1851, the pages of the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* carried an exegesis by J.N. Andrews, identifying this apocalyptic creature with the United States government (this later followed in book form as *The Three Messages of Revelation XIV, 6-12; Particularly the Third Angel’s Message and the Two-Horned Beast* (Battle Creek, MI: Review

¹⁶ Ellen White’s visions and the “spirit of prophecy” associated with them, remained a part of Adventist doctrine through the 1980s. At that time, some Adventists were concerned that the visions and subsequent writings of Ellen White were too prominent in the fundamental beliefs of the sect and set them too far apart from the mainstream. Many current-day Adventist theologians are advocating for a return of this fundamental doctrine of the “spirit of prophecy” as evidence of the God’s gifts to the people proclaiming the Advent Near.

and Herald, 1982) (Teel, 1995). Together with James White's assertion that "never was there a people whose opposition was so plainly marked out in the Word as ours" (James White, Letter to Brother and Sister Hastings, 1848, quoted in Teel, 1995, 6), Sabbatarian Adventists began their strong concerns about the social ills of the pre-Civil War United States. For Andrews, the twin horns of the apocalyptic beast signified the twin ills of "Republican civil power and Protestant ecclesiastical power. While the republic professes republicanism, it practices slavery" (Teel, 1995, 9). As much of Protestantism proclaimed, "all equal before God," it was complicit in slavery and other social contradictions. Just prior to the beginning of the Civil War, Ellen White spoke of the draconic nature of the republic made evident to her in the Fugitive Slave Act. Ellen White classified the Fugitive Slave Act as an unjust law that must not be obeyed. "Slavery," White wrote, "represents the cosmic controversy between Heavenly Jerusalem and Earthly Babylon" (Ellen G. White, 1901, 1, 359).

Sabbatarian Adventists were also involved in the temperance movement, prohibited the use of tobacco, prescribed austere dress for women, and preached to boycott the ballot box in the 1856 elections. Their political passivity was justified by a resolve to leave the righting of social and political relationships --- justice --- to God's judgment. Slavery, argued Ellen White, would be rectified by the Lord's coming in judgment, not by battles of the soon-to-come way, but by the Battle of Armageddon (Teel, 1995, 11).

In 1860, as the Sabbatarians officially became Seventh-day Adventists, they were forced to grapple with defining their core beliefs, much as had Miller in 1844. Among their basic beliefs were the imminent return of Christ, the seventh-day

Sabbath, the divine inspiration of Ellen White's visions, the unconscious state of the dead, and the importance of October 22, 1844 as the date on which "investigative judgment" began in heaven. Their practices included baptism by immersion, foot washing, and "systematic benevolence" as a support for ministers along with Adventist publishing efforts (Numbers, 1976).

Adventists had also to grapple with the issue of military service, just as they were setting up their ecclesial structures. Their literal dedication to the commandments, the fourth (Sabbath) and the sixth ("thou shalt not kill"), along with the priority to spread their message, made them reluctant to enter military service. Ellen White made their decision easier when she reported her vision suggestive of the matter, "I was shown that God's people ... cannot engage in the perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith" (White, 1901, 9, I). Once Adventists arrived at their position, they enforced it, disfellowshipping members who did take up arms on either side (Lawson, 1995). (This, despite the Adventist's disdain for the religious intolerance shown by the churches' expulsion of the Millerites during the 1840s and some states jailing Sabbatarians who had violated blue laws.)

Between 1870 and 1901, Adventism went international as it built 16 colleges and high schools, a medical school, 75 hospitals, 13 publishing houses and 31 miscellaneous institutions. The roots Adventism began to plant were accompanied by an evolving Adventist eschatology, as the Advent signs appeared more and more distant. They continued to see the U.S. as the two-horned beast of Revelation 13, but it was no longer portrayed as being in the dragon phase. Rather, the two-horned beast appeared lamb-like, suggesting that its destruction was less imminent than earlier

believed. Another interpretation that shifted by the late 19th century was that it was Adventists themselves, rather than the former slaves, who became the new population whose abuse would bring a certain and prompt end to the republic (Lawson, 1995).

Adventists continued to view participation in the political process as unsavory and not aligned with God's plan for them, but by 1892, there was a slight shift in that position. As the growing number of Adventists became increasingly visible, many had fallen victim to various states' Blue Laws, those statutes that prohibited work on Sunday. Even as their eschatology maintained that persecution of Adventists and the passage of a National Sunday law were sure signs of the Second Advent, Ellen White had counseled Adventists to help prolong the future of America "so the Adventist message could go forth and flourish" (Butler, 1974, 193-4). They established yet another publication, this time devoted to religious liberty, founded the National Religious Liberty Association, and helped defeat Senator H.W. Blair's Sunday Rest bill (Lawson, 1995).

With World War I, Adventists reaffirmed their position to non-combatancy, though they did so in a way to express their patriotism to incur less backlash from mainstream society. They determined, as they did during the Civil War, that unarmed military service was consistent with their beliefs. They reasoned, further, that medical service in the armed forces served Adventists in two ways: first, medical duties were acceptable work for the Sabbath and second, military medical personnel were not armed and were non-combatants. In 1916, they established Red Cross training centers at their schools and hospitals, assuring that Adventist draftees would be attractive to medical units in the military. This strategy proved effective in the U.S.

as well as other countries during World War I, resolving the issue of suitable roles for military service and suitable work for the Sabbath. It also steered Adventism to the front of the line in terms of training its adherents in medical service related fields (Lawson, 1995).

In 1939 when war broke out in Europe, movement leaders in the U.S. responded with an established medical training program for potential draftees. Adventist leaders, working in conjunction with military personnel, offered the Medical Cadet Training Programs, directed and staffed by regular army officers. In 1941, the *Review and Herald* declared, “refusing to be called conscientious objectors, Seventh-day Adventists desire to be known as conscientious cooperators.” The cooperation with the military was such that, by the time of the Korean War, the military appointed Adventist chaplains, paid by the military and who were career military officers. The Adventist General Conference began to endorse Adventist clergy for those posts and to offer financial aid for seminary for would-be chaplains (Lawson, 1995).

Bull and Lockhart (2007) consider the middle part of the 20th century to be “undoubtedly the golden age of White Adventism in America” (106). The World Wars and other conflicts across the globe reaffirmed much of Adventist eschatology, scholarly achievements in Adventist fundamentalism were easily located in publications like the Seventh - day *Adventist Bible Commentary*, edited by F.D. Nichol, and the children’s series by Arthur S. Maxwell called *The Bible Story*. (The Review and Herald Bible story collection that found its way to the bookshelves of my childhood home after my mother read an informational pamphlet in a physician’s

office.) There were spirited debates at Adventist colleges and universities regarding the degree to which critical, textual scholarship should be applied to the Bible and to the “spirit of prophecy.” Theological debate centered on the nature of Christ and of the atonement (some maintained that atonement did not take place on the Cross but is an ongoing process in heaven, as the “Sanctuary Doctrine,” detailed in “Theological Context”). As the late twentieth century approached, legalistic, fundamentalist Adventists came to be confined to and described by the term “historic Adventists,” as other segments of the Adventist world allowed for a greater sense of spiritual freedom and a relaxation of certain Adventist taboos.

Samples (1990) argued that the 1950s stirred much controversy in Adventism as it encountered evangelicalism, particularly in North America. Evangelicals labeled Adventism a non-Christian cult, primarily for its reliance upon an unbiblical prophet, Ellen G. White, as a source of authority, its soteriology based on faith plus works, and its denial of the Cross of Christ as sufficient for the atonement of sins. Adventism responded to evangelicalism by publishing its controversial *Seventh-Day Adventists answer questions on doctrine: An explanation of certain major aspects of Seventh-day Adventist belief* (QED). *Questions on Doctrine* maintained that Adventists did not regard Ellen White’s writings as infallible or as canonical authority and that salvation was solely a gift of God’s grace. Further, *Questions on Doctrine* repudiated its own traditional Adventist doctrine that Christ had inherited a human nature affected by the Fall and that believers would have to maintain a sinless nature if the last day occurred between the Day of Atonement from year to year (Sample, 1990). Through *Questions on Doctrine*, Adventism became less cult-like but,

according to Bull and Lockhart, overreached itself, raised uncertainties about what Adventists actually believe, and created “the most destabilizing era in the movement’s history” (2007, 106).

That destabilizing event rippled across Adventism, producing three streams of contemporary Adventist thought and practice. The current-day broad currents within Adventism can be grouped as Evangelical Adventism, Traditional Adventism, and Liberal Adventism.

Evangelical Adventism, following the lead of *Questions on Doctrine*, affirms the prophetic gifts of Ellen G. White, but state that her writings are not infallible and are not the basis of doctrinal authority. In following the doctrinal assertions of the *Questions*, evangelical Adventism looks less like a NRM than traditional or liberal Adventists do. Since one of the features of NRMs is a charismatic leader/founder of the movement who wields an unquestioned authority over the group, evangelical Adventism is without its charismatic core. They also reject the central Adventist teaching of faith plus works in favor of a more Pauline and Lutheran view. Righteousness by faith (sans works and spiritual gifts) is believed to be separate and distinct from, and logically prior to, sanctification (Samples, 1990).

Traditional Adventism, emerging in the 1960s and 1970s, bases its foundation squarely upon the authority of Ellen G. White. As an attempt to resurrect the distinctiveness of Adventism, traditionalists follow those Adventist teachings that received the validation from Ellen White and her prophetic gift. Some traditional Adventists would affirm the infallibility of White’s scriptural interpretations, while

others maintain that her body of writings should be the basis for the authority of their doctrine.

Liberal Adventism, in contrast to the former versions, does not stem from doctrinal difference, but is an attempt to embrace the theological diversity within the movement, especially as it accommodates to influences from immigrants from the developing world. Liberal Adventists are comfortable with a diversity of practices and pluralism of thought while retaining Adventist distinctiveness, such as emphases on the Ten Commandments, the Sabbath, and on health. This group is inclusive in scope and rejects the “Shut Door” ideas and the “remnant” identity of the nineteenth century Sabbatarians (Samples, 1990).

The shape of current-day Adventism, from an outside, sociological view, will be considered in the next section.

Outside View

Sociological Context

Seventh-day Adventism is a “denominationalizing sect,” to use sociologist and Adventist scholar Ronald Lawson’s term, a group that is a well-kept secret of American religious presence. As a denominationalizing sect, it is moving more toward the center of American religious life, appearing in some ways more like a denomination and becoming less sectarian over time. It is also a small religious group, comprising only one-quarter of 1 percent of the population in the United States (Hankins, 2002).

Of the Roozen, McKinney and Carroll (1984) four types of orientations of institutional religious presence, the sanctuary orientation most adequately describes

the Seventh-day Adventists. The sanctuary orientation focuses on a world to come, and Adventists are certainly preparing for the Advent Near. This religious orientation provides its adherents with a sanctuary from which to withdraw or retreat from the secular world (Roozen et al., 1984, 35-6). Participation in greater society was, in Ellen G. White's words, entering the world of institutionalism and evil structures (Teel, 1985). When Adventists began to organize in 1863, they did so to deny the presence of Babylon in their ecclesiastical and benevolent efforts. Consequently, Adventists worked within U.S. political structures for the causes of temperance, abolition and religious liberty. Early in their history, they declined the opportunity to vote, arguing that neutralizing political strife was the work of God and not theirs (Teel, 1985).

Ronald Lawson, himself an Adventist and scholar of the tradition, initiated a massive sociological study in the 1990s, spanning a period of over 10 years and 3000 interviews with church administrators, pastors, teachers, hospital personnel, college students and leading laypersons. He also culled data from Adventist periodicals, statistical report and secondary sources. So who are Adventists, according to Lawson? Adventists, in the course of their history, opted for a professional ministry and established schools, colleges¹⁷, hospitals, even health food-factories (Lawson, 1995), despite their eschatologically urgent ideology. As a result, theirs is a group characterized by increasingly upward mobility. Lawson

¹⁷ Adventist supported universities in the U.S. are: Andrews University, Atlantic Union College, Columbia Union College, Griggs University, La Sierra University, Loma Linda University, Oakwood University, Ouachita Hills College, Pacific Union College, Southern Adventist University, Southwestern Adventist University, Union College, Walla Walla University. The two Adventist supported medical and allied health schools are: Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences and Kettering College of Medical Arts.

(1995) cites a recent survey of Adventists that reveals that two of three men hold professional, managerial and white-collar jobs and of all Adventists, the proportion that has completed some level of higher education is almost double that of the general population.

Lawson reports that the group began to evangelize African Americans before the end of the nineteenth century (1995). Roof and McKinney (1987) named Adventists, along with American Baptists, as the “two denominations reporting large numbers of Black members” (141-2). For Adventists, that was 27 percent. By 1992, the Adventist figure was reported at 29 percent (Lawson, 1995). Kasmin and Lachman (1993) found the percentage of “non-Hispanic Whites” in Adventism in 1992 stood at “just under 60 percent” and by 1998, less than 50 percent (Lawson, 1995). Currently, Adventists are close to being a “majority minority” religious group, at least in the U.S., as increasing numbers of Latinos join their ranks. The communities I observed for this study certainly reflected this “majority minority” trend, and of the five persons who volunteered to be interviewed, (one was not included in the DIT scoring), one was White, one was African-American, and three were Latino.

Adventism, unlike some other NRMs, experienced “denominationalizing” trends on a number of fronts, not the least of which is the accommodation to racial segregation in the U.S. Adventists began a special evangelization effort to Southern Blacks in the 1890’s. The religious movement of former abolitionists, suffragists, temperance preaching Northern rural Whites was, at first, stunned by Southern segregation. In the 1890s, Ellen White urged integration of the Adventist church,

arguing that White Adventists had no theological reason or right to exclude Blacks from their places of worship (Bull and Lockhart, 2007, 280). Visible Adventists, like John Harvey Kellogg (of healthy breakfast cereals fame) advocated defying segregation laws. In the Southern “mission fields,” however, where Ellen White’s son Edson was evangelizing Black communities, he argued that he could not be successful in so doing if he antagonized Whites. In 1908, Ellen White publicly bowed to racism, claiming that her wish would be to ignore prejudice, but the continuation of the Adventist message necessitated separate White and Black churches (Bull and Lockhart, 2007, 280). From that time to the present day, assert Bull and Lockhart (2007), “Adventists have never relinquished the idea that good relations between (Whites and Blacks) are best served by some kind of segregationist policy (279).

Adventists began a Negro Department in 1909, after a number of African American churches, along with clergy, emerged in the South. Oakwood College, an historically Black College (HBCU), began as an Adventist training school in 1896 in Huntsville, Alabama. In 1944, Adventists created separate conferences for black churches, overlapping geographically with existing conferences, which then became all white. This change placed African American clergy administrators in charge of African American Churches and evangelism, and it resulted in significant growth among African Americans (Lawson, 1998).

We have reviewed the impact of accommodating to segregationist trends, but modern values to which Adventists refuse compromise are individualism, independence, anti-dogmatism, cosmopolitanism and the acceptance of doubt.

Modernization theory predicts religious groups experience growth to the extent that they are willing to accommodate current-day values. As people are exposed to formal education and other modernizing processes, the same theory predicts those people will be less attracted to churches with rigid doctrinal systems and behavioral codes (Lawson, 1998, 241). More conservative groups such as Adventists, therefore, can survive in the short term by attracting less modern people, such as immigrants from developing countries. This has most certainly been the case in Adventism, particularly in the United States. The result has been a phenomenon where growth in the land of its origin, the original source of its missionaries, has been largely from converts from what were originally mission fields (Lawson, 1998, 337).

Conversely, as Adventists in the “motherland” became increasingly better educated, more socio-economically affluent, and more inclined to the modern values described above, many “graduate from Adventism” in young or middle adulthood. Further, the Adventist movement presents itself as a millennial subculture separated from its surroundings. Consequently, the appeal of the Adventist subculture declined among its more cosmopolitan members. “White flight” and African American flight has taken place as immigrants enter “American” Adventist congregations. Some of those who flee move to different congregations, some to different regions of the country, some away from Adventism altogether (Lawson, 1998).

Black Adventist congregations, because of the other-worldly focus of the religious tradition, were not historically involved in civil rights advocacy and are not regarded as the community bulwarks as are Black congregations elsewhere on the Christian spectrum. Ammermann (1997) found that Black Adventist congregations in

Los Angeles remained largely apolitical with respect to the African American community. She also noted that the West Indian presence in formerly “black” Adventism significantly reshaped musical and liturgical forms and preaching styles, and were less distinctively African American with the passage of time.

Around the globe, however, Adventism looks more like a predominantly Third World Church. In the U.K., for instance, Barker (1996) called it “an almost wholly Black religion” (54). Adventist leaders made growth their priority in the early 1980s, in an attempt to demonstrate that God is still leading and blessing God’s “remnant church” (Lawson, 1995). As a result, world membership in Adventism increased by 117 percent in the 12 years of 1981-1993, from 3.6 million to 7.9 million, with a large number of new converts on the continent of Africa. Africa is the largest Adventist division in the world, with Latin America being third after the “motherland” of North America.

Theological Context

The Seventh-day Adventists with whom I have spoken and worshipped are a diverse group with a collection of beliefs that are broad reaching. This is evinced in my earlier discussion of evangelical, traditional and liberal Adventism and other trends in contemporary Adventism. In addition, Adventism maintains that it is not doctrinal but solely Biblically inspired and, as such, they maintain, “the Bible is (their) only creed” (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008). Yet, there are 28 Fundamental Beliefs, as outlined by their centralized headquarters in Maryland, which Adventists hold as the essential teachings of Holy Scripture. These fundamental beliefs undergird their theology as practiced in the sanctuary and the

world. Outlined here are the essential teachings of Adventism that demonstrate its unique character and distinctive practices.

Adventists believe that the world is the arena of cosmic conflict, where good and evil is played out in the everyday. The conflict of good and evil, Christ's return during the Second Advent, and the vindication of God all play central roles in the development of a theological system derived from the Millerite Adventist ashes. Key components that are unique to Adventism are "The Great Controversy," the significance of the seventh-day Sabbath, Ellen White's role as a prophet, the connection of health and faith, and the Sanctuary Doctrine, which must be considered here to understand Adventist worship, everyday practices, and moral education.

By understanding the Great Controversy, Adventist theology becomes easier to understand, and the trends in Adventism are more easily predicted.

All humanity is now involved in a great controversy between Christ and Satan regarding the character of God, His law, and His sovereignty over the universe. This conflict originated in heaven when a created being, endowed with freedom of choice, in self-exaltation became Satan, God's adversary, and led into rebellion a portion of the angels. He introduced the spirit of rebellion into this world when he led Adam and Eve into sin. This human sin resulted in the distortion of the image of God in humanity, the disordering of the created world, and its eventual devastation at the time of the worldwide flood. Observed by the whole creation, this world became the arena of the universal conflict, out of which the God of love will ultimately be vindicated. To assist His people in this controversy, Christ sends the Holy Spirit and the loyal angels to guide, protect, and sustain them in the way of salvation. (Rev. 12:4-9; Isa. 14:12-14; Eze. 28:12-18; Gen. 3; Rom. 1:19-32; 5:12-21; 8:19-22; Gen. 6-8; 2 Peter 3:6; 1 Cor. 4:9; Heb. 1:14.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

The theology here asserts that the universe originally existed without sin. God and angelic created beings dwelt in peace and all loved and praised God, who endowed all the beings with freedom of choice. Satan, an angel in this utopia, was much favored

by God, according to Ellen G. White, second only to Christ and who, eventually, wanted to share God's throne and glory (White 1913 [1890], quoted in Battisone, 1986). From Satan's rebellion, God chose not to destroy Satan because "the inhabitants of heaven and of the worlds, being unprepared to comprehend the nature or consequences of sin, could not have seen the justice of God in the destruction of Satan" (White 1913 [1890], quoted in Battisone, 1986). Thus, Satan was allowed to introduce sin into the world so that all could see the consequences of sin "that the justice and mercy of God and the immutability of his law might be forever placed beyond all question" (White 1913 [1890], quoted in Battisone, 1986).

Satan introduced The Great Controversy into the world when he tempted Eve to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In response, God instituted a plan of redemption to offer salvation to the earth's inhabitants and where God will be vindicated as the God of good and of justice. In God's plan of redemption, Christ has sent the angels and the Holy Spirit to guide, protect and sustain believers in the way of salvation.

Likewise in the plan of redemption from sin is the "remnant" church, whose unique mission is to keep the commandments, proclaim God's coming vindication and to warn the world that we are living in the last days before judgment.

The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ, and heralds the approach of His second advent. The three angels of Revelation 14 symbolize this proclamation; it coincides with the work of judgment in heaven and results in a work of repentance and reform on earth. Every believer is called to have a personal part in this worldwide witness. (Rev. 12:17; 14:6-12; 18:1-4; 2 Cor. 5:10; Jude 3, 14; 1 Peter

1:16-19; 2 Peter 3:10-14; Rev. 21:1-14.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008). (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Adventist theology maintains that God's plan of redemption included the *Antediluvian* church, which was first led by Adam and later, Noah. Later in history, God established Israel, but she lost the path of redemption by being obsessed with idols, false gods, and so forth. God established a new church in Christ, handed to the apostles, upon whose deaths the path of redemption was lost once more. From the Millerite movement, however, the path to redemption has been revealed once again and in the remnant people, the world will see its last witness and hear its final warning before Christ returns to earth and God is vindicated as good and just. Seventh-day Adventists believe they are not only the people who will receive salvation, but they are the core around which the faithful will gather at Armageddon¹⁸ (Vance, 1999, 41). Adventists have a unique warning for the world, symbolized in the 'three angels' message of Revelation 14, which are 1) judgment is come, 2) come out(!) of Babylon¹⁹, and 3) keep the commandments.

¹⁸ There are some in Adventism today, as well as some Adventists in history who would argue that Seventh-day or Sabbath-keeping Adventists are the **only** people who will receive salvation. Known as the "Shut Door" doctrine, this belief is found variously throughout contemporary and historical Adventism, and the "Shut Door" originally maintained that believers who did not receive the advent message prior to 1844 were doomed. As time progressed and the original Millerites died, this theology became increasingly untenable. Exactly how exclusive the remnant is in God's plan of redemption, however, remains an open theological question.

¹⁹ At various times in Adventist history, the message of the second angel, to "come out of Babylon," has been interpreted differently. To the Millerites, leaving Babylon meant joining them from Catholic and Protestant churches. To Sabbatarians, coming out meant a separatist position to the United States government, in which they didn't vote, did not accept conscription into the Civil War, and did not participate in laws that conflicted with the mission of Adventism. In modern day Adventism, coming out of Babylon represents being in and not of the world and/or the warning against Sunday Sabbath and the necessity to restore the seventh-day Sabbath before the advent.

Related to this theme of the Great Controversy and the cosmic struggle of good and evil, Adventists believe that the Ten Commandments are the unchanging standard of right conduct in the world:

The great principles of God's law are embodied in the Ten Commandments and exemplified in the life of Christ. They express God's love, will, and purposes concerning human conduct and relationships and are binding upon all people in every age. These precepts are the basis of God's covenant with His people and the standard in God's judgment. (Ex. 20:1-17; Ps. 40:7, 8; Matt. 22:36-40; Deut. 28:1-14; Matt. 5:17-20; Heb. 8:8-10; John 15:7-10; Eph. 2:8-10; 1 John 5:3; Rom. 8:3, 4; Ps. 19:7-14.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Keeping the commandments of God is intimately linked with observing the seventh-day Sabbath.

The Sabbath is a day of delightful communion with God and one another. It is a symbol of our redemption in Christ, a sign of our sanctification, a token of our allegiance, and a foretaste of our eternal future in God's kingdom. The Sabbath is God's perpetual sign of His eternal covenant between Him and His people. Joyful observance of this holy time from evening to evening, sunset to sunset, is a celebration of God's creative and redemptive acts. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; Luke 4:16; Isa. 56:5, 6; 58:13, 14; Matt. 12:1-12; Ex. 31:13-17; Eze. 20:12, 20; Deut. 5:12-15; Heb. 4:1-11; Lev. 23:32; Mark 1:32.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Twenty-four hour observance of the Sabbath and worship on the seventh day is believed a symbol of redemption in Christ and a sign of a life of sanctification.

Adventist Christology maintains that Christ's sacrifice on the cross is sufficient for all, even though there are two narratives that exist alongside this fundamental belief. Relating that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient for all, Adventists hold that:

In Christ's life of perfect obedience to God's will, His suffering, death, and resurrection, God provided the only means of atonement for

human sin, so that those who by faith accept this atonement may have eternal life, and the whole creation may better understand the infinite and holy love of the Creator. This perfect atonement vindicates the righteousness of God's law and the graciousness of His character; for it both condemns our sin and provides for our forgiveness. The death of Christ is substitutionary and expiatory, reconciling and transforming. The resurrection of Christ proclaims God's triumph over the forces of evil, and for those who accept the atonement assures their final victory over sin and death. It declares the Lordship of Jesus Christ, before whom every knee in heaven and on earth will bow. (John 3:16; Isa. 53; 1 Peter 2:21, 22; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 20-22; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15, 19-21; Rom. 1:4; 3:25; 4:25; 8:3, 4; 1 John 2:2; 4:10; Col. 2:15; Phil. 2:6-11.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Along with this belief that Christ's sacrifice was sufficient for all is sometimes a narrative that suggests that atonement will only benefit "those who avail themselves of its provision" (Knechtle & Sohlmann, 1971). As Traditional Adventists, represented in this 1970s publication, believe that salvation is available to those who love and obey God, keep the commandments, follow a strict code of specific behaviors, and develop a relationship with Christ. The logical conclusion of such a "works"-based system is that only Adventists could possibly attain the spiritual maturity to achieve salvation in Christ. Baby boomers and their children, the Adventists of the 1990s, began to grapple with a new notion for Adventists that salvation is a "free gift" of God's grace.²⁰ Vance (1999) observes that contemporary Adventism is "poised between a desire to interpret obedience to "God's law" as evidence of salvation and a hesitance to attribute salvation to anything other than "God's saving grace" (56).

Also controversial within Adventism is the narrative tradition, begun by the visions of Ellen G. White, that Christ's atonement was not completed on the Cross,

²⁰ See Pearson, M. (1990). *Millennial dreams and moral dilemmas: Seventh-day Adventism and contemporary ethics*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press and the discussion above on sanctification in contemporary Adventism.

but rather in heaven. White's teaching on the Sanctuary details how Jesus' atonement on the Cross was partial because he is now actively atoning for the sins of humanity in the heavenly sanctuary. Historically, Evangelical Adventism adjusted this view in their 1957 *Seventh-Day Adventists answer questions on doctrine: An explanation of certain major aspects of Seventh-day Adventist belief*, in which Adventists of the 1950s, desiring to appear more evangelical to further the Adventist message around the world, omitted the Sanctuary teaching from the book. Bull and Lockhart (2007), concede that *Questions of Doctrine* did much to align Adventism with mainline Christianity, but also created "the most destabilizing (era) in the movement's history (106). Because the partial atonement theory is a part of Ellen White's writings and a part of the historical narrative and collective memory of the Adventism, there is a lack of consensus over whether or not it is part of the official church beliefs. Suffice it to say, for the purposes of this study, that this question is an active one in the minds of many contemporary Adventists and is one of the belief issues that separate some congregations from others.

Equally perplexing within Adventist circles is the defining role of Ellen White, the spirit of prophecy, and the idea of progressive revelation in contemporary theology. As one of the founding members of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, Ellen White was the recipient of hundreds of visions, which provided the "remnant" movement with sanction for many beliefs and the clear imperative to exclude other beliefs or questions. She, in many cases, was the final arbiter of correct practices (such as racial segregation, dress, dietary practices, etc.). She is regarded as the final manifestation of the "spirit of prophecy," and, though she did not speak of herself as a

“prophet,” she certainly encouraged the preeminence given her visions and writings (Vance, 1999). White instructed her contemporaries that ignoring her counsel would be tantamount to a first step toward apostasy and ultimately damnation, writing at one time: “It is Satan’s plan to weaken the faith of God’s people ... Next follows skepticism in regard to the vital points of our faith, the pillars of our position, then doubts as to the Holy Scriptures, and then the downward march to perdition” (White in Vance, 1999, 43).

In some circles, White’s writings and counsel are regarded with the same authority, not only in principle, but also in the literal inerrancy, as the Bible. In other Adventist circles, White’s counsel is seen as a way to interpret and understand the Bible. The fundamental belief, in contemporary form, takes this latter view, elevating White’s “spirit of prophecy” only as the medium through which Adventists understand the Bible.

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen. G. White. As the Lord's messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth which provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction, and correction. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested. (Joel 2:28, 29; Acts 2:14-21; Heb. 1:1-3; Rev. 12:17; 19:10.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Many of the standards of Adventist behavior, “instruction, and correction” were first received in visions of Ellen White, later to be introduced via James White and the *Review and Herald* into the community of believers. These values, as codes for behavior, remain a part of Adventist belief:

We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with the principles of heaven. For the Spirit to recreate in us the

character of our Lord we involve ourselves only in those things which will produce Christlike purity, health, and joy in our lives. This means that our amusement and entertainment should meet the highest standards of Christian taste and beauty. While recognizing cultural differences, our dress is to be simple, modest, and neat, befitting those whose true beauty does not consist of outward adornment but in the imperishable ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit. It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently. Along with adequate exercise and rest, we are to adopt the most healthful diet possible and abstain from the unclean foods identified in the Scriptures. Since alcoholic beverages, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs and narcotics are harmful to our bodies, we are to abstain from them as well. Instead, we are to engage in whatever brings our thoughts and bodies into the discipline of Christ, who desires our wholesomeness, joy, and goodness. (Rom. 12:1, 2; 1 John 2:6; Eph. 5:1-21; Phil. 4:8; 2 Cor. 10:5; 6:14-7:1; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; 10:31; Lev. 11:1-47; 3 John 2.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Some Adventist historians have suggested that Ellen White's commitments to dietary and health, and, subsequently, the Adventist emphasis on health and the preponderance of Adventists in the health care field, is a direct result of White's connection to the health reform movement of the 1850s and 1860s. This American health reform movement explicitly connected health and diet with "moral reform." Health reformers saw spices, dairy products and meat as increasing the propensity to a "heated and animal nature," (read: sexual desire) proscribing these foods to reduce sexual activity among its adherents. White integrated these tenets of the health reform movement with Adventist theology, referring to the body as a "temple" which must "be made spotless," and published this widely in the *Review and Herald* and in her *Appeal to Mothers* (1864).²¹

²¹ This dietary and health emphasis can be noted with one glance to Decatur's Natural Foods and Christian Book Store, located on Memorial Drive, Decatur, GA. This explicit integration of healthy foods with books on Christian lifestyle, behavior and family life in a warm, welcoming and upscale bookstore, is located within yards of the Southern Union Division Headquarters of the Seventh Day Adventists. The bookstore's exterior signage, however,

Adventists use the word “truth” a great deal, e.g., “as the Lord's messenger, [White's] writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth.” Now it should be obvious that their sense of truth is anything but monolithic and it is certainly not static. Adventism has a tradition of belief that is dynamic and a theology that suggests God's progressive revelation of the divine plan. Present “truth,” in the Adventist view, may have presented it differently twenty years ago, but is clearly God's message to them for this moment in time (Vance, 1999). There is flexibility, in Adventist theology, for belief to morph over time, as long as it remains biblical.

The “truths” that are unique to Adventism, separate them from Christian Protestantism, and that also provide clear distinctions from contemporary secularism are the Sanctuary Doctrine, the Investigative Judgment, and, of course, the teachings about Advent millennialism and the Sabbath.

The Sanctuary Doctrine maintains that Christ's atonement is a two-part process. The Cross was Christ's atoning sacrifice, but along with that, His atoning ministry to humanity is an ongoing process, taking place in heaven. After his Resurrection and Ascension, Christ entered the “outer apartment” or Holy Place (in heaven).

There is a sanctuary in heaven, the true tabernacle which the Lord set up and not man. In it Christ ministers on our behalf, making available to believers the benefits of His atoning sacrifice offered once for all on the cross. He was inaugurated as our great High Priest and began His intercessory ministry at the time of His ascension. In 1844, at the end of the prophetic period of 2300 days, He entered the second and last phase of His atoning ministry. It is a work of investigative judgment

does not identify the store with Seventh-day Adventists. Only after reviewing some of the books in the store did I realize that they are published at publishing houses owned by the group. In Chattanooga, where Southern Adventist University lies 12 miles outside the city, in Collegedale, there is a vegetarian restaurant that is explicitly associated with the Seventh-day Adventists.

which is part of the ultimate disposition of all sin, typified by the cleansing of the ancient Hebrew sanctuary on the Day of Atonement. In that typical service the sanctuary was cleansed with the blood of animal sacrifices, but the heavenly things are purified with the perfect sacrifice of the blood of Jesus. The investigative judgment reveals to heavenly intelligences who among the dead are asleep in Christ and therefore, in Him, are deemed worthy to have part in the first resurrection. It also makes manifest who among the living are abiding in Christ, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and in Him, therefore, are ready for translation into His everlasting kingdom. This judgment vindicates the justice of God in saving those who believe in Jesus. It declares that those who have remained loyal to God shall receive the kingdom. The completion of this ministry of Christ will mark the close of human probation before the Second Advent. (Heb. 8:1-5; 4:14-16; 9:11-28; 10:19-22; 1:3; 2:16, 17; Dan. 7:9-27; 8:13, 14; 9:24-27; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6; Lev. 16; Rev. 14:6, 7; 20:12; 14:12; 22:12.) (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

On October 22, 1844 (formerly the “revised” date of the Second Advent by the Millerites), Jesus entered the “inner apartment,” or Most Holy Place. The Adventist idea of the sanctuary, the “inner apartment,” and the Most Holy Place is modeled after the Tabernacle of the Hebrew Bible: each day, ancient Hebrew worshippers would enter the sanctuary with an animal sacrifice, place their hands upon the animal, and confess their sins. In doing so, the people transferred their sins to the animal that was subsequently slaughtered by the priest, with their sins associated with the blood of the animal. The ancient Hebrew High Priest would cleanse the sin that had accumulated in the sanctuary annually, by purifying the Most Holy Place in the sanctuary, the Ark of the Covenant, “to satisfy the claims of God’s holy law” (Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial Association, 1988, in Vance, 1999).

For Adventists, the rituals of the earthly sanctuary, in the worshipping community, parallel the divine High Priest’s work of the daily cleansing the heavenly

sanctuary. The repentance of sin, within Adventist community, is the real transmission of the same from the earthly penitent into the heavenly sanctuary, through the blood of Jesus. When he entered the “inner apartment,” the Most Holy Place in the heavenly sanctuary on October 22, 1844, the work of His final ministry of atonement began.

Christ’s first task in the final ministry of atonement was to investigate and adjudicate those who had died in Him. For the living, Christ is actively cleansing the heavenly sanctuary through a methodical process of, first, recording every name and every sin in the books of heaven, and second, determining who is entitled to redemption and who is not. This is the process of the Investigative Judgment, and Christ must complete this work of atonement before He can return to the earth.

Jesus pleads the case of every sinner and every sin; every name is mentioned and every case closely investigated. If Christ can prove that a person has repented (based on the individual’s participation in the rituals of the earthly sanctuary), the sin is blotted out and the name is written in the Book of Life. If the case cannot be made, the name is not written into the Book of Life (Vance, 1999). This process of investigation and adjudication is done every year, once a year, on the Day of Atonement. Since the Investigative Judgment, takes place only once a year, Adventists teach that should the Advent arrive on some day other than the Day of Atonement, “sinners” risk not being written into the Book of Life. Therefore,

following each Day of Atonement, a repentant believer must assume a “sinless” nature to be redeemed in the Final Judgment (Neff, 1990).²²

The Sanctuary Doctrine and the Investigative Judgment, both elaborated by the prophecies and visions of Ellen White, are the basis of controversy within and from outside Adventism. White’s depiction of her vision of the last days of the atoning ministry of Christ, before the Second Advent, are found in her book, *The Great*

Controversy:

It was seen also that, while the sin offering pointed to Christ as the sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as mediator, the scapegoat (animal sacrifice) typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of his people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of his ministration, he will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment must bear the final penalty ... Satan will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners (White, 1911, 422).

White’s elaboration of these and other visions associated with the atoning ministry of Christ in heaven continue to be one of the reasons that Seventh-day Adventism is drawn into the contemporary controversy over NRMs and often find themselves on the margins of the Christian mainstream (Gallagher, 2004, 41).²³

The imminence of the Second Advent is a central tenet of Adventism:

The second coming of Christ is the blessed hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel. The Saviour's coming will be literal, personal, visible, and worldwide. When He returns, the righteous dead

²² As mentioned earlier, some Adventists have recently adapted this Sanctuary Doctrine and their views of atonement toward believing in the advocacy of Jesus and the transfer of sins as a “free gift of God’s love.”

²³ Not a small problem for Seventh-day Adventists in the current-day controversy over NRMs is that the Branch Davidians, the Bible students who had come to study the book of the Revelation with David Koresh in Waco, Texas, “saw themselves as firmly rooted within the Seventh-day Adventist tradition and thus, within Christianity” (Gallagher, 2004, 41).

will be resurrected, and together with the righteous living will be glorified and taken to heaven, but the unrighteous will die. The almost complete fulfillment of most lines of prophecy, together with the present condition of the world, indicates that Christ's coming is imminent. The time of that event has not been revealed, and we are therefore exhorted to be ready at all times. (Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:7; Matt. 24:43, 44; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-54; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 2:8; Rev. 14:14-20; 19:11-21; Matt. 24; Mark 13; Luke 21; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 1 Thess. 5:1-6.) (General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Ask an Adventist about their sense of the imminence of the Advent and you will receive a host of answers, with most of those in disagreement with the others. As early as 1884, Ellen White had begun to explain the delay in the arrival in the Second Advent. Over the years, Adventist theology has developed four primary expectations for the delay in the arrival of the Second Advent. First, and most obvious after the discussion above, is that Christ has not yet arrived because the Investigative Judgment has not been completed. The delayed advent allows more time for people to repent and live exemplary lives in Christ. While this theology does demonstrate the ultimate compassion of Jesus, it does lead to a sense of the limitations of God's ability to complete judgment within a short period. A second explanation arose in the 1980s, and is loosely referred to as the "Harvest Principle," being closely associated with Herbert Douglass in his 1979 book (on an Adventist publishing press) *The End: Unique Voice of Adventists about the Return of Jesus*. Douglass argued that when Adventism has ripened, the Harvester will come to harvest the righteous. Closely associated with the sectors of Adventism that wish to turn away from the Sanctuary Doctrine/Investigative Judgment, the Harvest Principle is usually considered the idea that most articulates an emphasis on sanctification. Third, Ellen White argued that the delay in the Second Advent was to give the remnant church adequate chance to

evangelize the world. With this pronouncement in the 1880s, Adventism “put down roots,” establishing 16 colleges and high schools, a medical school, and 75 “sanitariums” all before 1901 (Lawson, 1998). A final explanation for the delay in the Second Advent is based upon the set of biblical revelations that point to the signs of Christ’s return. Contemporary Adventism, therefore, maintains that Christ will be coming soon, but not before all the final signs take place. Just before Christ’s arrival, Adventist eschatology says, Satan will be allowed to “stir up God’s people,” who are, of course, Adventists (Vance, 1999). The “time of trouble” and Adventist persecutions have not yet occurred, they say, so we cannot expect Christ in the immediate (one to two year) future.

Adventists hold hope for an imminent Second Advent because it will establish the millennial reign of Christ:

The millennium is the thousand-year reign of Christ with His saints in heaven between the first and second resurrections. During this time the wicked dead will be judged; the earth will be utterly desolate, without living human inhabitants, but occupied by Satan and his angels. At its close Christ with His saints and the Holy City will descend from heaven to earth. The unrighteous dead will then be resurrected, and with Satan and his angels will surround the city; but fire from God will consume them and cleanse the earth. The universe will thus be freed of sin and sinners forever. (Rev. 20; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; Jer. 4:23-26; Rev. 21:1-5; Mal. 4:1; Eze. 28:18, 19.) (General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Upon his return, Christ will call forth the righteous dead, who will be made whole once again, and with the living righteous be taken to a heavenly paradise. Satan will be made the scapegoat for all sin and, with his angels, be banished to live on the desolate earth where he will wander for the millennium. Following the thousand

years, the wicked will be raised at the second resurrection and will receive their judgment.

On the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, God will provide an eternal home for the redeemed and a perfect environment for everlasting life, love, joy, and learning in His presence. For here God Himself will dwell with His people, and suffering and death will have passed away. The great controversy will be ended, and sin will be no more. All things, animate and inanimate, will declare that God is love; and He shall reign forever. Amen. (2 Peter 3:13; Isa. 35; 65:17-25; Matt. 5:5; Rev. 21:1-7; 22:1-5; 11:15.) (General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists, 2008).

Christ, the redeemed, and the heavenly angels will return to earth, the New Earth, and his goodness and God's vindication will be a public, universal vindication, culminating history and setting all things right as they were in the beginning of history.

Bull and Lockhart have called the seventh-day Sabbath “the key to understanding the Adventist relationship with America. In its peculiarity (the seventh day Sabbath) it makes sacred the Adventist alienation from the American way of life,” thus giving Adventism a unique identity (1989, 166). Yet, the fundamental beliefs discussed here are also unique to Adventism, bestowing a distinctive character to their worship, their religious practices, and lending unique features to the nature of their faith and moral development.

Inside View: Ethnography

Sabbath day worship and Sabbath School classes are the central rituals of the Adventist community. Decatur Belvedere holds two Sabbath day worship services at 8:45 and 11:15 on Saturday mornings, with each worship service being unique unto itself. The early worship at Belvedere is much like a prayer service, with a short

homily offered by the same homilist who will offer the same at 11:15. The early worship consists of a Praise Service, a time of congregational hymn singing, followed one Scripture Reading from the Christian Scriptures, Intercessory Prayer, the Offertory, the Homily, a Closing Hymn and Benediction.

Even though the early worship service at Belvedere begins with lively congregational singing, the mood remains quiet, prayerful, and almost academic. As a community that espouses the Christian value of service, worship is, in the Adventist tradition, truly the “work of the people.”²⁴ The people are asked to kneel for the intercessory prayer and most everyone does so, kneeling at their seats of “typical Protestant” pews and in the aisles. The Sabbath bulletins contain a sheet dedicated to “sermon notes,” and the community uses the space dutifully. Most of the congregants arrive with Bibles in hand, apparently ready for a time of Bible study.

Atlanta Boulevard runs a slightly different Sabbath schedule – early service at 8:15, Sabbath School at 9:15 and Sabbath worship at 11:00. They call their early morning worship “early morning prayer,” and, at 8:15 AM, is a prelude to their Sabbath School beginning one hour later. Children’s Sabbath study begins promptly at 9:15 AM, while adults gather in the sanctuary for singing and a brief inspirational talk before moving into their separate classes for study. The church elders teach adult classes at Atlanta Boulevard while the senior pastor leads a new members’ and inquirers class to teach the theology and “fundamental beliefs” of Adventism. The

²⁴ Liturgy is “the work of the people.” The early church fathers described their praise and worship by using the Greek word *liturgy*, which means: “the work of the people.” Their use of this word points to their understanding of the corporate nature of worship and the power in a band of believers united in praising God. “This miracle of corporate worship occurs when a spectrum of different individuals—dozens, or even hundreds of them—come together and become one body, with a single mind and purpose. Each participant brings a special and unique cluster of life experiences and then donates them to a common purpose: *the praise of God*” (Peters, A., “Translating Liturgy into ‘The Work of the People.’” *Direction*, 16 (1), 68.)

pastor leads his talks with the central tenet of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, “ours is a church whose mission is to preach the soon return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and to inform those in our community that Jesus loves and cares for them.”

Regardless of the Adventist community, however, there is no mistaking the Sabbath worship service in the late morning as the central ritual of the community. Congregants move about the sanctuary, outside on the grounds, and throughout their buildings greeting one another with a jubilant “Happy Sabbath!” The mood is festive and foreshadows the celebration that is the Sabbath and the, in their words, “Divine Worship Service.”

Decatur Belvedere has a “Divine Worship Management Team,” consisting of a worship manager, greeters at the doors, elders on duty to answer questions, a deacon and deaconess available for service needs and prayer requests, a person to direct and assist guests to worship and ushers to help congregants find seats. Entering the main sanctuary of Belvedere is much like entering another, more idealized, world. A media stand, retrofitted long after the completion of the building, coordinates lighting, sound, images broadcast of the very large screen behind the raised platform where the ministry leaders are seated. The media center is located in the back of the worship space, between the sets of double doors on either of the room.

The sanctuary of Decatur Belvedere is very similar to many Christian Protestants worship spaces, as an auditorium setup typical of the worship spaces of the early 20th century. The worship space is very large radial-planned room, with exposed rafters, and an elevated ceiling making it seem much larger than its actual

size. A dozen or so chandeliers hang from the ceiling, illuminating the space with a glorious, but intimate, light. Long banners are draped from the ceiling, hanging over and just outside the elevated platform area. Fresh flower arrangements dot the platform on either side, in the front, in the back, and on either side of the clear, acrylic-looking lectern. Several large chairs were arranged in a straight line behind the lectern, though the entire platform was but one adult-sized step taller than the floor and pews where the congregation would eventually be seated. Also on the platform, a small square table with a chair is set up just to the right of the platform, where, I soon learned, a sign language interpreter would translate the worship service.

The banners were, in the slowly filling sanctuary, the most telling feature of the theology of this Adventist congregation. On one banner, hanging just to the right of the elevated platform, was a depiction of the Bridegroom of Matthew 25:6 (Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.), a very attractive Christ with flowing light brown hair, white skin and a blue robe, riding the clouds of glory as He might during His Second Advent. The banner on the left, of similar size and with the same wisp of clouds in the background, read, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout ... and the dead in Christ shall rise ... we who are alive ... shall be caught with Him to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess 4:16-17). Immediately, the words of that most triumphant hymn began to fill my memory and ring in my ears to where I could almost hear it “Caught up to meet Him, caught up to greet Him ... we’re caught up to meet Him in the air” ... as if I hearing the words for the very first time, they had a powerfully new meaning in this context:

Lyrics: “Caught Up”
I long for that day

I long for that day
when we'll be changed
Changed, Changed
We'll be caught up,
Caught up, to meet him in the air

I pray for that day
I pray for that day
when we'll be changed
Changed, Changed
We'll be caught up,
Caught up, to meet him in the air

I hope for the day
I hope for the day
When we'll be changed

Verse
I'm not yet, what I shall be,
when he comes back I'll be changed from mortal,
to immortality,
When he cracks the sky, I'll meet him in the air,
I know that I will be.

Caught Up ooh, caught up (repeat)

Written By: Paul "PJ" Morgan, performed by the
Virginia Beach Interdenominational Choir,
accessed at <http://vbichoir.org/music-7.html>.

The Adventist theology in this hymn was made apparent to me for the first time. I understood the theme of the second coming of Christ as the blessed hope of the Adventist believer, and that this much hoped-for event was the climax of the gospel, that event for which the Adventist lives, works, and ministers to the rest of us. I understood, for the first time, that magnitude of the hoped for Second Advent – literal, worldwide though also personal, visible and glorious. I understood, the words of the verse to ring of Adventist belief --- that when he returns, the righteous dead will be resurrected and thus, immortal, and together with the righteous living will be

glorified to live forever in heaven with Jesus. It was humbling to realize I had not heard those Adventist themes from those words before!

As more and more people entered the sanctuary for the beginning of worship, I noticed a multicultural community filling in the pews. There were white faces here and there, with far more black faces, most of whom spoke with an accent. As the Belvedere area of Decatur is filled with Jamaican restaurants, area markets carry ginger beer, ginger cakes, pigeon peas, and the Belvedere Kroger carries authentic “Blue Mountain Curry (for that West Indian taste),” my guess was that the accents were West Indian.

Adventist leaders are servants of God, blessed with the power of prophecy and other spiritual gifts. One of the central fundamental beliefs of Adventists is that,

“According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the church in pastoral, evangelistic, apostolic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God's varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love” (Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:9-11, 27, 28; Eph. 4:8, 11-16; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Peter 4:10, 11.) (General Conference of Seventh Day Adventists, Silver Spring, MD, 2008.)

The pastoral leadership of Adventist congregations assume the titles of “Chief Servant,” and the chief servant of the Decatur Belvedere community signs his name as “Chief S” in his signature line. When members refer to the chief servant, however, he is known as “Pastor Rhone” or, since he holds a Doctor of Ministry degree, “Dr. Rhone.”

I visited the Belvedere Adventist congregation on its annual Uniformed Services Day, a day to honor the children and teenagers involved in either Pathfinders, for teens, or Adventurers, for youngsters 5-9 years of age. These groups are much like secular Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, wearing uniforms, earning merit badges, camping, marching, serving and growing in their understanding of Adventist beliefs. As the Belvedere community supports an Adventist school, Pathfinders and Adventurers are anchored in the school activities as well as in the congregation. What follows is a “thick” description (Geertz, 1975) of a Sabbath worship as it unfolded on Uniformed Services Day.

Music was as much a feature of Adventist worship as it is in most Protestant worship forms. All the hymns were taken from the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, a group publication that dates back to the mid-1800s, and published by the Adventist publishing concern, Review and Herald Publishing Association in Washington, D.C. and Hagerstown, Maryland. Congregational singing, while standing, was very much a part of the worship, but one soloist offered the song “I’m Running to You Jesus, Please Take Me Home” as a “Special Music” feature of the worship honoring the uniformed services. The congregation was seated as the special music was offered. Spontaneous vocal responses could be heard, ringing through the sanctuary, as the soloist sang the chorus, rendering a congregational participation even in this singular offering by the soloist.

After congregational singing on Uniformed Services, the morning speakers, all in the uniforms of Pathfinders or Adventurers, rose to lead the young Pathfinders (teens) and Adventurers (5-9), seated in the front rows, in their respective pledges.

The Pathfinder Pledge

By the grace of God,
I will be pure and kind, and true.
I will keep the Pathfinder Law,
I will be a servant of God,
And a friend to man.

I observed many adults saying the pledge along with the youngsters. They may have been the parents of the youngsters or former Pathfinders, but they were clearly supportive of their young people's work.

The Adventurer Pledge

Because Jesus loves me,
I will always do my best.

The Adventurer Law

Jesus can help me to:

Be obedient
Be pure
Be true
Be kind
Be respectful
Be attentive
Be helpful
Be cheerful
Be thoughtful
Be reverent

Following the pledges and between the Special Music selection and the time for the Spoken Word, the morning preacher stood up and exclaimed "God is good!" The congregation responded loudly and in unison, "All the time!" The preacher then asked the question, "All the time?" to which the congregation responded, "God is good!"

The Spoken Word, the sermon for Uniformed Services Sunday, was offered by the youth pastor, who appeared before the congregation in his Pathfinder leader's uniform. The youth pastor, who also spoke with what I believe to be a West Indian accent, offered a spirited sermon with which the congregation responded when asked, and often responded when not asked. The text of the sermon was taken from 2 Kings 4:19-23, and the text appeared on the large screen behind the pulpit. The screen indicated that the biblical text was taken from the King James Version.²⁵

2 Kings 4: 19-23: And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and [then] died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut [the door] upon him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? [It is] neither new moon, nor Sabbath. And she said, [It shall be] well.

The sermon title, "It Shall Be Well," was announced twice, just before the morning preacher offered the prayer before the sermon. The prayer asked for a removal "of the impediments of the Evil One" and invoked God to "speak now as we listen." He began the sermon reminding the congregation of the Georgia Cumberland Conference Pathfinder theme, "We will serve." The preacher connected the Pathfinder mission and the upcoming homily --- the congregation, just as did the Shunammite woman of 2 Kings 4:8, "is obligated to share the good news, to go out there and serve. To share the blessings of God with others so God can bless you some more. To bless others so Jesus can fill you up with more blessings. There is

²⁵ While there is much debate in Adventism over which biblical translation is best (a debate that has much to do with the evangelical, traditional, or liberal orientations of the congregation), I am told that the more traditional congregations in the South prefer the King James Version.

something about the response of Jesus in us that is extraordinary!” the preacher exclaimed. A number of shouts of “Yes!” could be heard throughout the sanctuary.

The preacher defined service as going the extra mile, stressed the importance of servanthood, and then added “you serve because you love serving.” Referring again to the Shunammite woman, who asked her husband to build a small (guest) room for Elisha, we were told “service is going the extra mile; going the distance. God is asking that of us. Even when we don’t have it to give, we should give anyway.”

Recalling the story of 2 Kings 4:19-23, the preacher grew quiet while speaking the death of the Shunammite woman’s beloved child, contrasted with the increasing volume of his voice in emphasizing her hope-filled statement that “it shall be well.” The story telling seemed to reach a denouement as the preacher exclaimed, “when we are at our extremity, that’s God’s opportunity!”

It was a signal that the so-called celebration phase of the sermon would begin. The preacher did not fail to deliver the celebration, centered on hope, as he made the following points:

- Elisha had a relationship with God, the same God who breathed breath into humanity and the same God who is a work today;
- God is more than able to unlock possibility;
- Today, God wants to provide for us.

- The Shunammite woman had hope. Even when her beloved son died, she had hope;
- Like the Shunammite woman, the listening congregation is obligated to have and pass on hope. They must teach children service and what it means to serve and to help.

- Without hope, the Christian faith would collapse. God has started a good work in all of us; we have to have faith to the end. Hope fortifies love; holds us together when times seem dark and dismal.

- In the current day situation, sometimes people “can’t tell what the real situation is.” He related a study of lab rats in separate tubs of water. During the learning phases of the experiment, one group of rats stayed in some amount of water all the time. A second set of rats was periodically lifted out of the water. The trials were to test whether or not the groups of rats would respond differently to being left in water for 24 hours. The results? The first set of rats all drowned after the 24 hour trial period. The second set, however, swam for 24 hours, surviving the trial period. The preacher’s point? “Hope holds power!” a statement that drew thunderous applause.
- “What is our hope?” the preacher asked, “One day we will see him coming in clouds of glory;”
- “What is the hope we have today?” he asked again. “Hush, child, God isn’t dead!” He ended his sermon with these words, “One of these good days, it shall be over. He will come to take us home, no more death, no more sorrow, no more pain. Experience a great banquet and feast when Jesus returns!”

As the Sabbath service ended, the congregation was asked to remain standing following the closing hymn, “Anywhere with Jesus (I Can Safely Go),” and benediction. A drum cadence began at the back of the sanctuary and the two teenagers in the Pathfinder club on the last row, draped with sashes and gloved for flag bearing, took to their positions in front of the sanctuary and near a group of flags, a Pathfinder flag, an Adventurer flag, a Seventh-day Adventist flag and an American flag²⁶. A younger child, from the Adventurer Club, who stood in front of the flag for her club, joined them. On cue, each of the four young people picked up their apparently assigned respective flag, marched to the center of the platform where they met in two pairs of two. As the remaining Pathfinders and Adventurers stood, the two pairs of flag bearers started the recessional, with the drum cadence in the background, and all of the uniformed services, young people and their leaders, began

²⁶ The appearance of an American flag in the sanctuary of an NRM was, at first, surprising. After learning a little more of the history of the Adventist movement, its legacies of accommodation to the U.S. culture for the sake of evangelization, especially in the 20th century, the flag’s presence was a little less of a shock.

to march. Almost predictably, the organist began playing the recessional hymn as the congregation began to sing, “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord...” It was a spectacular, emotional, recessional --- young people beamed as they marched past their parents, families and friends, the sometimes-teary congregation joining them in song, many also marching in place. The result was inspirational, with tears, cheers, and hope permeating the sanctuary and practically dripping from the rafters. If this was not designed to be “recruitment” Sabbath worship for the Pathfinders and Adventurers, it surely should have been.

Challenges and Questions for This Community

The “Remnant Worldview”

A number of sociologists have speculated on why some religious groups become “denominations” and others remain more sectarian. Johnson (1963) suggests that a church, or, in more recent discourse, a “denomination,” accepts the social environment of its surroundings while a sect rejects its immediate social environment. Yinger hypothesized that religious movements that emphasized the individual nature of salvation (or liberation in the Hindu context) tend to accommodate to its surrounding status quo. Conversely, religious movements that challenge broader institutional structures and call for God’s righteousness and justice to be realized in a future world, tend to accommodate less easily to the surrounding culture, tend to articulate an alternate value system, develop higher group identification and morale, and develop into a religious system that stands in opposition to the value system of contemporary culture (Teel, 1995; Yinger, 1957).

Teel (1995), an Adventist theologian, agrees with Lawson (1995), the sociologist, that Adventism will likely remain, intentionally so, on the periphery of contemporary society and the American religious mainstream. Teel (1995) argues that the “remnant” worldview of Adventist theology requires the religious movement to stand firmly against the value system of contemporary culture, where they are elements that do not square with the prophetic admonition to do justly, extend mercy and walk humbly (Micah 6:8). In its historical wrestling with its identity as a “prophetic remnant” for “between the times,” Adventism embraced four models in different periods of its history as it lived out its unique brand of “apocalyptic ethics.”

As suggested by Teel (1995), those four periods are:

1. Millerite Adventist inclusivism: The remnant of the 19th century, prior to 1844, rejected becoming a “last church” in favor of an inclusivism that provided sanctuary to those calling for reform of the US governmental structures (such as slavery). The ultimate reform for this group, of course, was preparing the culture for and proclaiming the message of the Second Advent of Jesus.
2. Millerite Adventist come-outerism: The former radical reformers of the 19th century were influenced by the date setting Millerites to direct their attention from reforming cultural institutions to preparing an interim ethic for the arrival of Jesus and the coming Kingdom of God. As such, reformers “came out” of the institutions and joined to construct a new and “in-between” ethic.
3. Sabbatarian Adventist radicalism: The “come-outers” mentioned above understood the “Great Disappointment” to be an invitation and opportunity to answer God’s call to construct a radical social ethic. Though they continued to perceive the immediacy of the eschaton, they “ran with the rhetoric of the radical reformers, but left it to God to run the reforms” (Teel, 1995, 23). According to Teel, they found this frustrating because it separated social ethics from action.
4. Seventh-day Adventist institutionalism: The self-proclaimed remnant that declared the institutional church to be the “whore of Babylon,” organized to develop its social ethic into a chain of educational, medical and publishing entities across the world. The interim social ethic motivated individuals at a personal level and encouraged

Teel's outline, then, traces a history of Adventist apocalyptic ethics as radically inclusive and urgent through the early days of the Sabbatarian movement. As Sabbatarianism took root, the calls for radicality grew faint as the movement awaited God's hand in the work of reform. As the wait grew longer, Seventh-day institutionalism took priority to the call for and urgency of social reform. That Seventh-day institutionalism accommodated the social ethics of the U.S. culture is demonstrated by Lawson, who documents how the institutional softened its stance on voting, conscription, participation in greater society, and racial segregation (Lawson, 1995, 1998a, 1998b).

Current-day Adventists argue for a social ethic that calls upon their church to be inclusive, radical (as in countercultural), and with the prophetic edge of Ellen G. White of the 1890s. (For example, Ellen White denounced racial segregation in the 1890's but bowed, ten years later, to the reality of racism so that the Adventist institution would thrive.) The Ellen White of the 1890s taught against the twin evils of institutionalism and injustice. She called upon the remnant to address the ills of U.S. society and church alike, and called to others to join her in addressing the social ills that inhere to such structures. An articulated challenge for current-day Adventists is the search for a paradigm that embraces a personal and social ethic and

responsibility similar to that of White. This includes the spirit of prophecy as a way of testifying to Jesus, recognizing the signs of the times, and speaking truth to power.

My interest, in studying this community, is to determine which communal voice(s) emerges as stronger --- the institutional Adventist voice? Is it the eschatological urgent voice of the Adventist living into God's justice, mercy, and humility? Is the spirit of prophecy and speaking truth to power a genuine social ethic among Adventists today? Results of the DIT-2, FDI and narrative analyses are found in Chapter 8.

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Chapter 6: The Restoration Movement/Churches of Christ

Lessons Learned: The Rational Enlightenment Construction of Moral Education

Jesus died for his church, the bride of Christ. (Ephesians 5:25-33) Man throughout history has corrupted the church that Christ died for through denominationalism, by adding man-made laws to the scriptures, and by following creeds other than the Holy Bible.

It is possible today, to be obedient to the will of Christ. Christians can resolve to restore the church to being the church of the New Testament. (Acts 2:41-47) – From “Some Things You Should Know,” *Gospel Minutes*, Ft Worth, TX

Introduction

A distant memory from my college years, I remember my first exposure to the churches of Christ²⁷ from its “Soul Talks.” I remember well my “prayer partner,” a bright, slightly older and very pretty 20-something white woman, when I was 19, who seemed somewhat impressed with me and who eventually invited, and drove, me to her predominantly white Church of Christ congregation in Durham, North Carolina. What I did not realize in those few weeks of exposure to the churches of Christ is that I was witnessing a group schism in progress. The congregation of the churches of Christ that originated the idea of “Soul Talks” to evangelize college campuses, 14th Street Church of Christ (later named Crossroads Church of Christ), was in the process of incubating a group, to be completely separated from the churches of Christ, known as the International Churches of Christ. In that moment in time when I was a “seeker” college student, I was aware only of the “discipling” movement that apparently recruited, and then tracked extremely closely, select college students. Indeed, my “prayer partner” was never far away and often a little closer than I would

²⁷ Church of Christ historian Edwin Harrell, Jr. calls his reader’s attention to his use of the lower-case ‘c’ in church when referring to the group known as churches of Christ, consistent with the movement’s insistence that it is not a separate denomination and that there is only one church of Christ.

have liked. Did I experience or recognize that intense “partnering” as “cultic” behavior? Possibly. Probably. At the same time, I was wildly fascinated with this religious group of which my Methodist ears had never heard.

Overview of this Community

The churches of Christ are a twentieth-century movement, claiming their official beginnings from a split with the Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) in 1906. Actually, it would be more correct to say that by 1906, the separation of the churches of Christ from the Disciples of Christ was official. This split from the Disciples of Christ was the full expression of the seeds of ideological difference sewn in the earliest days of the 19th century movement to restore the New Testament Church, known as the Restoration Movement.

The Restoration Movement began as four separate movements that evolved about the same time, in separate geographical regions of the 19th century U.S., all striving toward an ideal to achieve unity of all believers in Christ. Those four strands came together in the Stone-Campbell movement of the 1830s, forming a group called simply and informally “disciples of Christ.” From this group, the more conservative branch would separate as the churches of Christ by 1906. They four elements were:

- James O’Kelly’s 1793 resignation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, protesting the connectional system of assigning pastors to congregations, and calling others to join him in taking the Bible as their only creed. O’Kelly resigned from the Baltimore conference of his church, but his influence was largely felt in Virginia and North Carolina;
- Baptists in New England in 1802, led by Abner Jones and Elias Smith, who, concerned about denominational names and creeds, decided to be designated only as “Christian;

- Barton Warren Stone, who participated in the frontier Kentucky dissolution of the Springfield Presbytery in 1804, so they would unite with the one body of Christ; and,
- Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander, who left the Presbyterian Church in 1809, contending that only the Bible, not creeds or denominations, should be binding on Christians. The Campbells' work was largely in what is now West Virginia.²⁸

These four movements developed independently of the other, but eventually connected with one another to form one strong restoration movement, with unity of all Christian believers as their goal. Their intent was not to create a new church, but a return to the apostolic church as described in the Bible. What is now known as the Stone-Campbell Movement, or Restorationism, began as a group of people called together by a vision of “love your neighbor” and love in Jesus. “Sharing a common Father, born through a common new birth, held by a common Lord, they pursued a common course – the adventure of loving their neighbor as they loved themselves,” so says one church of Christ insider.

A simplified mission statement for that radically autonomous group that did not believe in creeds might be “to restore the lost practices of the primitive church as found in the New Testament.” (Casey, 2004, 487-488). American historian and member of the churches of Christ David Edwin Harrell, Jr. has called the group “an intensely rational movement, hewn out in debate, logical argument, preaching and proof-texting” (1988, 241). At the same time, this restoration quest is uniquely

²⁸ In 1831-2, some of the churches from the Stone and Campbell groups began to merge, joined, eventually, by some of the New England “connection” group championed by Jones and Smith and most of the group of “Republican Methodists,” formed through the efforts of James O’Kelly, from my hometown in North Carolina. The Stone-Campbell churches eventually became the Disciples of Christ or Christian church, from which the churches of Christ were separated by 1906. After the Civil War, the New England Christian Connection churches of Jones-Smith that did not merge in 1832, established headquarters in Dayton, Ohio. In 1931, they merged with the Congregational Church, also based in New England, then merged with the Evangelical and Reformed Church in 1957, to form the United Church of Christ (Olbricht, 1999-2006).

American, paralleling the quest of President Andrew Jackson to restore the constitutional purity of early America. The Restoration Movement advocated abandoning all speculative theology, creeds and human church traditions for the perfect blueprint of church found in the New Testament. The leaders of the movement held that the Protestant Reformation distanced the Church from the exaltation of human traditions present in the Catholicism, but the medieval Reformers had failed to press through to the true essence of primitivism. In other words, the Reformation had not gone far enough to achieve full restoration of the one church of Christ.

The Campbell tradition, a preaching style that embraced formal rhetoric adjusted to the religious sensibilities of the developing American frontier, remains strong in all three main branches of the Stone-Campbell movement, but is likely a factor more in the churches of Christ than the other two groups.

The churches of Christ are a predominately-southern state movement, clustered in Tennessee, Kentucky, northern Mississippi, northern Alabama, southern Missouri and along the Ohio River Valley in West Virginia. Their presence is also notable in the border and old southwestern state group, from Texas to Arkansas (Casey, 2004). The churches of Christ are the more conservative and countercultural of the three religious groups (Disciples of Christ, Christian churches, and the churches of Christ) produced by the movement to restore New Testament Christianity.

One example of a countercultural practice that still remains with the present-day churches of Christ is in their views of the pastor system. One church of Christ

insider teaches that the pastor system as practiced by mainstream Protestantism is unbiblical. Further, the institution is problematic because, according to the teacher, “the ex-Catholic priests who became the disciples of Luther were sent out by him to perform the seven, slightly altered, pastoral duties of the Catholic priesthood, minus the priestly garb and without the “Father” and “Priest” titles. Instead, they exchanged their former titles for that of “Pastor” (Peatross, 2000, 65).

The churches of Christ are the conservative wing of the first major schism in the Restoration Movement, and were identified as an autonomous body by the Federal Census of Religions in 1906. They claim approximately 3,500,000 members, with 170,000 being African American and some 10,000 speaking Spanish as a first language. The members of the churches of Christ in India number above 1,000,000 and those on the continent of Africa number just under 1,000,000 (Olbricht, 1999-2006).

Many historians and sociologists of religion might suggest that, despite their short history, the churches of Christ have long since acquired the status of “denomination.” The churches of Christ, however, by virtue of their theology of primitivism that calls for all denominations to “meld into union as one Body of Christ,” reject both the terms “sect” and “denomination” (Hughes, 1996). They also resist the words, “fellowship” and “brotherhood,” preferring the word “movement” to describe the process, which they believe is ongoing, of edifying and supporting the one true body of Christ.

The U.S. state with the largest number of members of churches of Christ per capita is Tennessee with Texas following a close second. Major universities

associated with the churches of Christ are Harding, Abilene Christian²⁹, Pepperdine, Lipscomb, Freed-Hardeman, Oklahoma Christian, Faulkner, Lubbock Christian, Ohio Valley, Rochester, York and Florida College. Alexander Campbell founded what is now Bethany College in the town of the same name in West Virginia. The movement also supports 40 colleges and secondary schools and 75 orphanages and homes for older or elderly adults.

Unlike the previously reviewed new religious movements (NRMs) in this study, churches of Christ have no central ecclesial structure that unites local congregations. As a tradition that values autonomy and maintains that only Jesus Christ has more authority than the elder does in the local congregation, the churches of Christ have no established method by which to establish doctrinal positions or consensus. Local congregations, from their preachers and evangelists, understand the accepted points of view of the movement as espoused by their associated universities and religious journals (Olbricht, 1999-2006). Editors of journals often highlight consensus positions and publish pieces consistent with accepted points of view to the mainstream churches of Christ. Occasionally, congregations will come together to sponsor lectureships on different topics, to assure that members in local congregations hear and understand the teachings and practices of the larger movement.

Likely the most visible and prolific son of this conservative and Southern tradition that would become the churches of Christ is David Lipscomb (1831-1917), of Nashville, Tennessee, for which a university in the tradition in the same city is named. As editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, based in Nashville and the leading journal

²⁹ Founded as Abilene Christian College, Abilene Christian University is the largest associated college or university associated with the churches of Christ.

of the movement, only Alexander Campbell surpasses Lipscomb's imprint on the theology of the movement.

Austin McGary (1846-1928) one of the more ardent, primitivist adherents of the time, founded the *Firm Foundation*, yet another journal, in 1884. As the Civil War and the post-war Reconstruction led to estrangements in the nationwide movement, McGary's *Firm Foundation* and Lipscomb's *Gospel Advocate* gave voice to the Southern, conservative and deeply disgruntled congregations. As the debate over the role of instrumental music in worship took place, largely contested in the two journals, many of the congregations that were supporting "The Law of Silence,"³⁰ who also happened to be mostly Southern, began separating themselves from the others as early as 1895. Within a few short months, the question of instrumental music had defined a point of contention in the group and, for the Southern group, had become a test of "true faithfulness" to the Scriptures. That the debate began and was perpetuated by the editors of the two journals illustrates how valuable these journals are to the movement and how highly valued the journals' positions are regarded.

After 1906, in church of Christ historian Harrell's words, "the spirited offspring of the religious rednecks of the postbellum South"³¹ went its separate way,

³⁰ "The Law of Silence," a type of hermeneutical practice first named as such by Alexander Campbell, argues that only what is expressly Biblically commanded, given as an approved example or indicated as permissible by inference can be a practice of the church. Therefore, if a practice is not specifically mentioned or approved by the New Testament, it is forbidden. "The Law of Silence" is alternatively expressed as "speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where the Bible is silent."

³¹ Michael W. Casey, Carl P. Miller Chair of Communication at Pepperdine University and church of Christ insider, is fond of reminding the movement of its sectarian and countercultural roots. He has lamented what he considers political accommodation to the values of the American South by the current-day churches of Christ. He ends one journal article with the following observation, "politically conservative and embarrassed or ignorant

fashioning itself into a “radically congregational,” sectarian and countercultural movement held together by its informal networks and anchored by its journals (Harrell, 1964, 277). Campbell-styled restorationism, or primitivism, was its leading theological concept as the churches of Christ rejected denominationalism, creeds and confessions as well as all practices they believed to reflect human products of culture, circumstances and the times in which they lived.

The early churches of Christ developed their beliefs about God, Christ, Scripture, salvation and the church from their unique New Testament hermeneutical practices. The result is an Enlightenment-based rationally driven perspective, unique to religious traditions of the American South, designed to appeal to the “common sense” of the masses and to restore unity to the broken body of Christ. The very name “church of Christ” exemplifies this spirit and zeal to recapture the essence of the first century church.

Theological features of the churches of Christ are: an affirmation of the centrality of Scripture, the responsibilities of all members in the body of Christ, a genuine struggle with the Biblical example of *ekklesia*, personal commitment to Christ, devotional life, focus on Biblical ethics and morality and concern for the needy (Olbricht, 1999-2006). Practice features include: *a cappella* (which literally means “in the chapel”) music, weekly communion celebrated as a memorial to Christ and confessor’s rather than believer’s baptism by full immersion (as one insider says, “with lots of water”).

of the past, the sons and grandsons of the religious rednecks have joined the elite whom their forbearers feared and loathed” (Casey, 2002, 475).

Here is an interesting tidbit about this NRM: A 2006 analysis by the Gallup Organization of Princeton, New Jersey found that members of the churches of Christ were more likely to attend worship services more often than other religious group. Gallup's finding that suggests that groups known for their conservative theology report higher attendance than those that identify themselves as mainstream or mainline. Studying worship attendance between 2002 and 2005, the Gallup Organization pollsters reported 68 percent of Church of Christ members attended services at least once a week. This is compared with 67 percent of Mormons, 60 percent of Southern Baptists, 44 percent for Methodists and Presbyterians. By contrast, 43 percent of Lutherans and 32 percent of Episcopalians reported the same frequency of attendance.

Why this is a “Fundamentalist” New Religious Movement (fNRM)

In the strict sense of the term, the churches of Christ qualify as a “New” Religious Movement (NRM) in that they point to the completion of their separation from the Disciples of Christ in 1906. As a movement, they are a 20th century phenomenon. As a matter of their theology, however, they claim to be an extension of the first century church and a restored version of that New Testament community.

New Religious Movements represent innovative religious responses to the situation of the modern world, despite their portrayal as being rooted in ancient traditions. The Stone-Campbell Movement and, by extension, the churches of Christ are a response to the crisis of denominationalism in Christendom. The Stone-Campbell followers were adamant about theirs being a movement to unite all of Christendom in a restoration of New Testament Christianity. The churches of Christ

continue to espouse the belief in unity of all believers, even as its practices have reflected a type of legalism and exclusivism that makes them appear sectarian. These sectarian practices, likely very much in flux at this moment in the movement's history, are what make them ripe for study as an NRM at the beginning of the 21st century. These sectarian tendencies are displayed in their often preached claim to be the only true body of Christ and in their insistence they are the only and correct practices of true believers.

Like other new religious movements, the churches of Christ tend to be countercultural. Since they are body of believers in loosely connected congregations, it is impossible to make a claim that this movement is completely one way or another. The only tie that binds the group is a common loyalty to the principles of the restoration of New Testament Christianity. However, the thrust of their beliefs, teachings and practices are based on their New Testament hermeneutic that actively resists the interference of culture and personal beliefs. In the course of this study, the group's history will reveal that their hermeneutical practices led it to view scriptural mandates differently at different moments in history. For the most part, however, the movement views itself as following the New Testament mandates with literal precision, regardless of the currents in secular culture.

New Religious Movements tend to be founded by a charismatic church leader, who is sometimes also highly authoritarian. Alexander Campbell's influence in what are now the churches of Christ remains quite palpable. The biblical hermeneutic that he explored and developed in order to understand the contours of the first century church remain at the heart of why the churches of Christ are what and who they are.

This biblical hermeneutic has led the movement to take positions that have been exclusivist, reflected a hard legalism, and that rejected of other traditions within Christendom. Over the course of his life, Campbell himself, however, softened his position on recognizing the validity other Christian traditions. Yet, the churches of Christ continue to embrace the hard-lined, authoritarian, exclusivism of Campbell's early work. Suffice it to say, however, that Campbell remains the strong church leader to whom the churches of Christ still look for guidance even in the 21st century.

As the very first of the fundamental beliefs held by all of the churches of Christ, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the source for a standard of all of life, places this group squarely within the definition of fundamentalist NRM.

As stated by one published document of the churches of Christ:

“The original autographs of the sixty six books which make up the Bible are considered to have been divinely inspired, by which it is meant that they are infallible and authoritative. Reference to the scriptures is made in settling every religious question. A pronouncement from the scripture is considered the final word. The basic textbook of the church and the basis for all preaching is the Bible” (Baxter, 1997-2005).

Churches of Christ teach that the New Testament is the unchanging standard for right conduct and moral behavior. They insist upon a five-step plan to salvation that is mandated by the Christian Scriptures. Those five steps are to: 1) hear the Gospel, 2) believe the Gospel, 3) repent of sin, 4) confess all sin, and 5) be baptized by full immersion. While some outsiders charge that the churches of Christ believe in baptismal regeneration, insiders teach the proper Scriptural understanding is that in baptism, God bestows the grace which, along with faith in Christ, the believer is justified. Similarly, the role of the Holy Spirit in conversion lies in its capacity to

effect “rational acceptance of the common sense appeal of the mandates of Scripture” (Casey, 2002).

As the Christian scriptures maintain that divorce is a sin, that remarriage is adultery and is strictly prohibited by the New Testament, churches of Christ hold a strict view of marriage and family and the “proper order” of males and females in society. They teach the following as obligations of the marriage covenant: 1) husbands to love the wife, 2) the husband to provide for the family, 3) the wife is required to submit to the authority of the husband, 4) both husbands and wives are required to render affection due the other, 5) they are bound by law and the law of God to their spouses for as long as they live.

The strict organization and firm boundaries around who is “in” and who is “out,” and the group’s proper family conduct and marriage practices, and their unyielding literalism give them a sectarian appearance that makes them candidates for this study in fundamentalist NRMs. Lending itself also to this conclusion is the movement’s reading of the New Testament that does not recognize the leadership of women and an insistence that highest leaders of the congregation, the local elders, must be the “husband to only one wife.” In more conservative sectors of the movement, a debate rages over whether or not any modern man can meet the biblical criteria (1 Timothy 3:1-8) for elders of local congregations.

In summary, then, the churches of Christ fit the criteria for fundamentalist NRMs. They were among the fastest growing religious groups in the world community at the end of the 20th, addressing needs many people found unaddressed in mainstream religious communities. Challenges they face for the 21st century will,

no doubt, revolve around their understanding of Christian unity vs. sectarianism and how they will relate to and interact with secular culture. They will also likely wrestle with their biblical hermeneutical practices, particularly as they relate to the challenges of gender justice, women's leadership, ordination of women, and even questions such as musical instruments in worship and marriage and divorce. This is a peculiar moment in this movement's history, as some sectors wrestle with change and approaching the Gospel with humility, while others remain steadfast that an evolving secular culture should not have any impact on a New Testament church. How the group responds to these and other questions will have an enormous impact on whether or not they remain more of a fundamentalist NRM or if they will begin to approach being a mainstream, though conservative, tradition.

History

“Christianity is the perfection of that divine philanthropy, which was gradually developing itself for four thousand years. It is the bright effulgence of every divine attribute, mingling and harmonizing all the different colors in the rainbow, in the bright shining after the rain, into one complete system of perfections,—the perfection of glory to God in the highest heavens, the perfection of peace on earth, and the perfection of good-will among men.” Alexander Campbell in the first edition of *The Christian Baptist*, August 1823.

As stated earlier, the Stone-Campbell Movement began with the confluence of several smaller movements. I will begin this short survey of the history of the churches of Christ with the main movement leaders, Alexander Campbell (1788-1866) and Barton W. Stone (1772-1844). In constructing this survey, I will highlight those themes that inform the churches of Christ as they are today. The churches of Christ are not a monolithic unified body that believes just one way or another, but

represent a range of perspectives around some central restorationist, or primitivist themes. These main themes are assembled here.

Alexander Campbell immigrated to the United States in 1809, just after completing his first term at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. The son of a Scottish Presbyterian minister, Campbell studied at Glasgow, among other things, John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding*, George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric* and James Beattie's *Elements of Moral Philosophy*. With father, Thomas Campbell also in the U.S., both father and son eventually broke with Presbyterianism. They both believed that returning to the ideas of the Bible and restoring the ecclesiastical structure of the church as found in the New Testament would unite all Protestant denominations in faith in God in Jesus Christ. Implicit in their hope for uniting Protestantism was the sense that the Catholic Church, with its extensive doctrines, ecclesiastical hierarchy and creeds had moved too far from the New Testament ideal to be reformed (Casey, 2001).

The elder Campbell assembled others of like-mind to form the Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania in 1809. The foundational document of the group, authored by Thomas Campbell, was titled, "The Declaration and Address," and around this document, Thomas with son Alexander began to plant churches in the region around Pittsburgh. After 1816, the Campbells joined Baptist ministers of the (Pennsylvania) Redstone and Mahoning Association, alongside several Ohio and Kentucky Baptist churches who also supported the Campbell's outlook and ideals (Olbricht, 1999-2006).

The younger Campbell's 1816 "Sermon on the Law," at the Redstone Baptist Association meeting in Western Pennsylvania initiated a season of mistrust between the Campbells and the Baptists. Alexander Campbell had come to reject a number of the Baptist theological positions, including that of Mosaic Law being the rule for life of Christians. For seven years following the 1816 "Sermon on the Law" and in the season of tension with the Baptists, Campbell reviewed his studies at Glasgow, studied the New Testament, taught extensively in the private academy for young boys he had begun, and preached extensively throughout the region. When a Kentucky preacher expressed surprise at the content of Campbell's sermons and that he did not use elocution in a way consistent with eastern (U.S.) educated preachers, Campbell replied that he "had long ago studied all those arts of elocution" but he "conscientiously refrained from any attempt to use them" (Casey, 2001, 160). Campbell also added that if the Apostles had followed the fancy rules of elocution, they would not have been believable. The examples found in the New Testament, he reasoned, were the perfect model for preaching as well as practice.

For seven years, from 1823-1830, Alexander Campbell edited *The Christian Baptist*, all the while retooling his theological arsenal, studying Scripture, and firming up his sense of restorationism (or primitivism). In an 1826 edition of *The Christian Baptist*, Campbell admitted, "I have endeavored to read the Scriptures as though no one had read them before me; and I am as much on my guard against reading them today, through the medium of my own view yesterday, or a week ago, as I am of being influenced by any foreign name, authority or system whatever" (Campbell, 1826). Though what Campbell attempted to do --- read the Bible without personal

bias and without context --- was impossible to do, what he did do was create a type of Biblical hermeneutical practice that would influence what would become the churches of Christ. In searching for that hermeneutic that would best assist him to discern his primitivist theology, he went back to the basics of the New Testament and what he learned at the University of Glasgow. In constructing a hermeneutical method, Campbell turned to his Enlightenment mentors of John Locke, Scottish Common Sense philosophers, and the inductive reasoning method of Sir Francis Bacon.

John Locke's essay, "Letter on Tolerance," which Campbell reprinted in its entirety in the *Millennial Harbinger* (which he edited from 1830 -1866 after dissolving *The Christian Baptist*) assured his readers that if they chose not to follow the rules of a particular church, they could be excluded from that particular body but should not be prosecuted by the State. Scottish Common Sense philosophy, as espoused by Thomas Reid (1710-1796) and Dugald Stewart (1753 – 1838) held that people could trust their senses, in contradiction to the skepticism of David Hume (1711-1776). Scottish Common Sense philosophy says that people come to know and understand through careful observation. Through the inductive method of Sir Francis Bacon, one could 1) observe specific instances of an event then 2) apply, with care, the specifics of an event to a larger, general principle. People could thus discover laws, nature, and most any other truth, like reading the New Testament, without fear of interference from illusion, opinion, or speculation (Childers et al., 2002).

These Enlightenment ideas informed Alexander Campbell in his youth and factored heavily in the development of the features of a hermeneutic that would

inform the early Stone-Campbell congregations and later, the churches of Christ. These features include a belief in the individual's ability to come to the truth, an emphasis on education, faith in the reliability of human reason and, eventually, a mandate to require only what the Bible requires (Childers et al., 2002). Additionally, when Campbell's Enlightenment optimism met the rigors and rugged individualism of the American frontier, the result was a firm conviction that every individual who approached Scripture with a sincere heart, common sense, and with the proper methods would arrive at the *same* truth in matters of Christian faith and practice.

Barton W. Stone (1772-1844) was a Presbyterian minister at Cane Ridge and Concord, Kentucky at the turn of the 19th century, as the Second Great Awakening swept across the Kentucky and Ohio frontiers. The largest camp meeting in during that time was held in 1801 in Camp Ridge, near Lexington, Kentucky. Enjoying the ecumenical spirit of the camp meeting era, several preachers formed an independent presbytery, the Springfield Presbytery, in which Stone was an active and vocal participant. In 1803, Stone withdrew from the Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky altogether, denouncing much of Calvinist theology and asking believers to unite in a new fellowship, with "no creed but Christ," suggesting they call themselves only by the name "Christian." Soon, thereafter, carrying the energetic ecumenism to its logical conclusion, the independent Springfield Presbytery was dissolved, in order to "sink into union with the body of Christ at large" (Olbricht, 1999). The idea of the "no creed but Christ" found fertile ground in the hearts of many of the frontierspeople and grew rapidly. By 1804, Barton Stone had become the regional representative figure in the dissolution of the Springfield Presbytery and in rejecting

Presbyterianism in favor of connecting with the one true church of the New Testament. He was one of five ministers who published the document called “The Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery” in 1804, a manifesto of sorts explaining the aims and purposes of dissolution in order to bring unity to Christ’s one church. His followers eventually numbered 8,000, spreading into Ohio, Indiana and Illinois.

In his autobiography, later in his life, Stone would call Calvinism “among the heaviest clogs on Christianity in the world. It is a dark mountain between heaven and earth, and is amongst the most discouraging hindrances to sinners from seeking the Kingdom of God, and engenders bondage and gloominess to the saints” (Stone, 1972). Even as he rejected Calvinism, from his Reformed background Stone retained a strong sense of God’s sovereignty and a belief that congregations should be autonomous, with local elders as their only church leaders.

The followers of Stone and Campbell came together as one group in 1832. The legacies of the two men – Stone and Campbell – are very different, however, most especially with respect to the way each one understood the Christian message and how it was to be lived in the world. Campbell’s view was more moderate and postmillennial, that the Second Coming of Christ would occur after the Glorious Millennium, where Stone was more apocalyptic and pre-millennial³². Campbell’s

³² “Millennium is a Latin word, and signifies a thousand years --- This period is spoken of in Rev. 20” (Stone, 1833, 312). ... “Some have thought that Christ would not come and reign in person on the earth; that his coming and reign on earth are entirely spiritual. How then differs his reign in the millennium from his present reign? His first coming was in person; so shall his second be. His first coming was to save his people from their sins --- his second is to save them from death and HADES, and not from sin. His first coming was not to judge the world, but to save the world--his second coming is not to save, but to judge the world. In his first coming he abode but a few years on earth; in his second he will abide 1000, and not leave the world, till he has adjudicated on it, and assigned to each one his eternal portion in heaven or

years as the editor of *The Christian Baptist* reveal his focus on the New Testament for essentials for the restoration of unity to Christ's church, albeit in a sectarian way. Later, as the editor of *The Millennial Harbinger*, Campbell softened his sectarianism, identifying more points of response with Protestant denominations than he did in his earlier years.

Stone remained more consistent throughout his public ministry, forging a path decidedly primitivist and distinctively separate from Protestant denominations. Stone's views remained more culture-denying and less accommodating than Campbell's and, throughout his lifetime, he continued to be largely pessimistic about the role of government in society in the life of a true Christian. Stone was convinced that he had never "seen a man much engaged in politics and religion at the same time," that the politics of government were in opposition from the politics of Spirit-led people (Stone, 1842, 123). The pursuit of earthly power "destroyed fervor of devotion" (*ibid*, 126) and thus, it was to be avoided.

Hughes (1998) documents how these differences in the legacies of the two men sewed the seeds of division that led to the separation of the churches of Christ from the Disciples of Christ by 1906. On October 23, 1849, a group of individuals met in Cincinnati, Ohio, in order to create a general church organization to further the work of the group that merged in 1832. Recalling Barton Stone's involvement with the dissolution of the Springfield Presbytery, though Stone died in 1844, many of the congregations resisted this impulse, calling it divisive and sinful. This call for an

hell. For at the end of the 1000 years, Satan is loosed, and the wicked are raised from the dead-- this is the 2d resurrection. Satan is permitted to collect his old armies composed of all the wicked now raised from death, and to deceive them once more with the hope of conquering the armies of Jesus. As soon as they are collected together, the judgment is set on them, and they are condemned to suffer the vengeance of eternal fire" (*ibid*, 314).

overall ecclesial organization ran largely along geographical lines, with Northern U.S. congregations more desirous of a unifying body of “Christians” as many of the congregations in the South supporting the choice for autonomy and scriptural simplicity and purity.

A few years later, a melodeon, a mechanical musical instrument was introduced into a Midway, Kentucky congregation. Until that time, all singing in the Christian churches was *a capella*. The restorationist impulse led to a study of the New Testament in congregations and in the tradition’s journals. Some congregations asserted that the New Testament did not expressly prohibit the use of the musical instrument in worship. Another group of congregations read the silence about instruments in the New Testament, where instruments were specifically mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures, to indicate that musical instruments were forbidden in the early Christian church and thus, were an unauthorized worship practice. This latter group buttressed their argument with references to Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, texts that specifically speak about the worshipping assembly that mention only vocal music.

Finally, the issue of slavery and the Civil War did much to create division in the Christian body of unity. With geographical tensions, different hermeneutical practices for discerning primitivist theology, varying views on millenarianism, apocalypticism and sectarianism, and the churches of Christ began to separate themselves from their mother organization by 1895. When the dust settled and they discovered who they were, the churches of Christ represented the more conservative, sectarian and apocalyptic congregations, that expressed a more literal view of the

Bible, and were by far, likely located in the South. The churches of Christ retained the modern, distinctive Biblical hermeneutic of Campbell, while maintaining a primitivism and apocalyptic outlook more typical to that of Stone. Despite its indebtedness to Stone, Campbell's stamp on the churches of Christ, to date, seems to have left a deeper imprint on their history and theology. Yet, insider historians, such as Hughes (1996) and Harrell (2000), are suggesting the movement take a look again at the ministry of Stone in light of postmodern concerns about Enlightenment thinking and its prominence within Campbell's legacy.

To complete this historical survey of the churches of Christ, let us now take a little leap forward to the middle of the 20th century. The movement enjoyed periods of prosperity in the 1920s and again in the 1950s. By the 1950s, a building boom was evident in the movement. During this time, Broadway Church in Lubbock, Texas and its architectural sister, College Church in Abilene, Texas along with West End Church in Nashville, Tennessee became the impressive examples of the dogged tenacity of the Southern church. The 1950s was also a time of emergence and visibility for (White) churches of Christ in the U.S. Leaders of these congregations were better educated. Elders became more organized; meetings reflected the members of the churches of Christ experiences in the corporate world. The movement forged its 20th century identity in these years, typified by creative programs, powerful urgent preaching, worldwide missions, especially in Africa and South America, and a strong sense of what was and was not approved doctrine.³³

³³ Historians of the churches of Christ acknowledge that African American and Hispanic congregations practiced and worshipped different than did White congregations in the 1950s as they do today. However, they charge, when "the brotherhood" is referenced, they speak of

By the 1950s, the churches of Christ defined and practiced a very clear sense of the New Testament church. Their “right understanding” of Scripture led to the proper practices and doctrines, and any who did not believe or practice in this way, they taught, would not enjoy salvation. They were led by elders, served by deacons, raised up and recognized preachers and evangelists. They worshipped *a cappella*, observed the Lord’s Supper every week, did not recite the Lord’s Prayer or participate in any congregational readings, nor did they have singing groups or solos. They believed in the Holy Spirit as a facilitator of reason, as well as in Providence, holding that God could work through other people (Childers et al., 2002, 10).

That God can work through out people is evident in this interview with Subject 086 of the churches of Christ:

When you have to make an important decision, how do you go about making it?

I gather the empirical data. I may talk to the experts, but I also value very highly people who are not experts and I also value very highly people who might be totally uninformed. For example, let’s say if I need to have the answer to something, you may be totally uninformed about it. If I ask you, I think God has the executive authority to put into your heart, at that moment, the answer that I need. He can use a person who doesn’t even have a clue that they are providing the confirmation. So there a number of avenues.

Even without a central ecclesiastical authority, the churches of Christ embraced a strong sense of who they were. With the tremendous growth of the churches of Christ in the 1950s and 1960s, their evangelistic expansion, as well as their worldwide missions, members encountered other beliefs, other people’s values, and other religious systems in a completely different way.

those congregations that worshipped *a cappella*, taught the five steps to salvation, including baptism by full immersion, and observed the Lord’s Supper every week.

By the 1960s and '70s, the exclusivism, the teaching that only the churches of Christ were true church, which thrived and dominated doctrine, had its zenith. In some sectors, the idea that to be among the elect one had to be a member of the churches of Christ and adhere to its legalism, or strict unwritten code of doctrine, had begun to erode. There were at least three reasons that led to this doctrinal revision. First, many members, then encountering the outside world in new ways for the first time, grew uncomfortable with a rigid, judgmental view of others. A less than hospitable view of other people did not reflect the movement's understanding of the New Testament, the character of Jesus, or the example of Paul. Second, the group's reading of Scripture led to a new scrutiny of its doctrines and practices. The group known for "reasoning together" slowly assented to a renewed sense of understanding of the call to be a New Testament church. Third, the exposure to and real dialogue with other people, traditions, and groups led the fellowship to witness fruits of the Spirit in other settings. How could the churches of Christ deny there were other members in the family of believers? (Childers et al., 2002).

I will begin to close this historical survey near the point at which I started. By the 1980s, the "Soul Talks" evangelistic model, begun at 14th Street, later to be Crossroads Church of Christ in Gainesville, Florida, had received a lot of attention across the tradition. The Crossroads Movement took on a life of its own, associating with the "Boston Movement" where Thomas "Kip" McKean at the Boston Church of Christ became its most visible leader. The Boston group officially dissociated from the churches of Christ in the 1980s, creating the second schism with which the churches of Christ were associated. The Boston group eventually took the name of

the International Churches of Christ, declaring themselves a denomination shortly thereafter, with McKean its unquestioned leader. This denomination has grown silent since 2002, shortly after the departure of McKean from the movement, who reportedly apologized for his “leadership sin of arrogance.”³⁴ There are some factions in the International Churches of Christ that now advocate reconciling with the churches of Christ.

The churches of Christ in the 21st century are a group wrestling with the New Testament concept of *ekklesia*. Not surprisingly, some groups within the body wrestle with different types of issues at different moments in history. Over the last century, churches of Christ have aligned themselves in smaller groups within the larger movement. Each of these subgroups justifies their positions with their particular reading of the New Testament Scriptures. These subgroups that define themselves around particular theological issues are: non-Sunday school congregations, who maintain that Sunday school is anti-Scriptural and imitates “the denominations;” one Cup congregations, who hold that multiple communion cups are anti-Scriptural; pre-millennialist congregations, the more apocalyptically oriented congregations; and Gender Justice congregations, 15 congregations that acknowledge the leadership gifts of women by Gal. 3:28. Also aligned in subgroups are ethnic identity congregations, where some, though not all, African American or Hispanic

³⁴ McKean’s resignation letter dated November 6, 2002. The entire quote reads “God through His Word, through circumstances and through true brothers has made it clear that my leadership in recent years has damaged both the Kingdom and my family. My most significant sin is arrogance -- thinking I am always right, not listening to the counsel of my brothers, and not seeking discipling for my life, ministry and family. I have not followed Jesus’ example of humility in leadership. Other sins manifested themselves through my anger. My anger has often shut people down and, worse yet, fostered an environment where people were afraid to speak up. Additionally, I failed to build strong, mutually helpful relationships. I did not respect those whose leadership gifts could have complemented my own. I was insensitive to the needs of weaker Christians and churches.” Accessed at <http://www.kipmckean.com/Documents/Resignation.pdf>, on June 10, 2008.

congregations worship consistent with their ethnic sensibilities in New Testament *ekklesia*.

Outside View

Sociological Context

Of the Roozen, McKinney and Carroll (1984) four types of orientations or styles of institutional religious presence in US culture, the sanctuary orientation most adequately describes the churches of Christ, but this sanctuary orientation may be eroding in favor of a more evangelistic and socially pro-active church. As a loosely connected group of autonomous congregations, however, it is difficult to assert that the churches of Christ are any one way over another. Further, sociological studies of the movement as a whole have not been conducted. The general trends I highlight here are based on a sense of the past and current-day movement's teachings and cannot be generalized to every congregation within the movement.

Congregations displaying the sanctuary orientation focus on a world to come beyond this known temporal existence. Adherents find a sanctuary from which to withdraw or retreat from the secular world (Roozen et al., 1984, 35-6). To movement founder Alexander Campbell in his younger years, issues of politics and government were met with a somewhat "grudging acquiescence" (Watts, 2005, 110). Having served a short stint as a representative in the Virginia Constitutional Congress, Campbell had become more than a little discouraged about the virtues of modern democracy. He did not urge the faithful to participate in civic life but he did not advocate sectarian withdrawal, either. To his mind, the advantages of civil

government were in its capacity to resist injustice and violence, and should be held accountable for protecting individuals and religious groups from persecution.

Some years later as the Stone-Campbell Movement was in full swing, Campbell observed, “governments have either been directly opposed to the Church ... or pretended friends, and therefore their influence has always been opposed to the true spirit and genius of the Christian institution (Campbell, 1969, 135). In the years surrounding the bitter political scene of 1840, Campbell contended that, “this present politics of this country are more purely mercenary than any other politics in any other country, or the former politics of our country (Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger*, 1840, 414). Accordingly, Campbell clearly advocated withdrawal from the civic sphere as well as non-participation in the military. Even as he urged Christians to support common school education (public education) he was largely ambivalent on the issue of slavery, stating that “a Christian may, indeed, seek to have it annihilated or modified (Campbell, *Millennial Harbinger*, 1845). He looked away from political participation in governmental affairs to the restoration of New Testament church to bring in the millennium, when all the great problems of injustice, unrighteousness, and falsehood would cease.

The older Campbell also declared that no nation could rightfully be called a Christian nation, for such a nation, he reasoned, would be required to administer Christ’s laws, pledge allegiance to Him as the governing authority of all things and come into being by adopting his constitution (Watts, 2005). Campbell concluded that a Christian nation would not be possible, nor could it exist, until the Reign of Christ in the glorious millennium. His contention, printed in the pages of the *Millennial*

Harbinger, was a cry against what he believed to be hypocrisy in the U.S. government. Campbell, like many of the 19th century preachers, was convinced that the Kingdom of God would not come until all people had been persuaded to follow Jesus of Christ, the Prince of Peace.

From Alexander Campbell, the 20th century churches of Christ inherited two narratives about and two approaches to the relationship of Church with society. One narrative fits very neatly with the sanctuary orientation, and for those churches of Christ that maintain:

- (future) or other worldly in their outlook, (there can be no Christian nation before the millennial reign of Christ);
- sectarianism and remaining separate from the world; (government and society as always been opposed to the spirit of the Christian institution);
- a primitivist worldview, privileged over others, that holds a serious suspicion of secular society, as well as “the denominations” and the scandal of a divided church (look instead to the restored Church to solve the problems of injustice and unrighteousness).

The categories of Roozen and colleagues (1984) suggest that the evangelistic orientation focuses a world to come, just as do the sanctuary types, but the evangelistic groups possess an overriding concern about the erosion of personal morality in society. The members of congregations practicing this evangelistic orientation are to share the good news with those outside the fellowship to invite them

into a salvific community. Theirs is not a mission to create social reform or change but to introduce an immoral world to another way of life.

The churches of Christ, from Alexander Campbell, inherited the view that the restoration of New Testament church is necessary to bring in the millennium, when all the great problems of injustice, unrighteousness and falsehood will cease. This narrative, represented by the younger Alexander Campbell's biblical scholarship, allowed for participation in, albeit reluctantly, government and politics in order to further the message about and prospect for a unified Church. Unity of the Church to bring in the millennium is the stated goal of relationships of the Church with society and government.

The Stone-Campbell movement and early churches of Christ maintained that the denominational system of Christendom is antithetical to the teachings of Jesus and the practices of the early church, claiming only one family of God, one body of Christ, and one church instituted by Christ. Their conviction that their brand of New Testament Christianity is the correct Christian practice to the exclusion of all others is the basis from which they evangelize, for often, their teachings suggest that there can be no salvation outside the churches of Christ. Consequently, they feel a mission to invite others to participate in Christ's only church as the means by which Christian standards and morality can save the world.

The following points summarize the evangelistic worldview and the congregations of the churches of Christ that orient themselves in this way:

- focuses on a future world in which temporal concerns are overcome (achieving the New Testament (re-)united Church to bring in the millennium);

- concern over the deterioration of traditional standards of personal morality (society must, therefore, come to THE church of Christ for salvation);
- need to introduce an ethical and spiritual dimension in the public arena (society recognize its need for THE church of Christ);
- members are encouraged to participate in public life to share the message of salvation with those outside the fellowship (Roozen et al., 1984).

The goal of evangelization, therefore, is not as much for individual salvation as it is for the redemption of the Body of Christ.

The Roozen et al. (1984) categories are but one way of looking at the varieties of religious expression in the churches of Christ. Wallis (1984) outlined three types of NRMs as: world-rejecting new religion, world-affirming new religion, and world-accommodating new religion. The trajectory of the mainstream of the churches of Christ over the last 100 years has been from a world-rejecting movement toward a world-accommodating religion. As a sociological exercise, tracing this trajectory through the churches of Christ's history with respect to the issue of pacifism proves extremely interesting. This trajectory dovetails with many church of Christ theological perspectives as well. First, Wallis' typology of world-rejecting NRMs is:

- More recognizably religious than other types;
- Views the prevailing social order as having deviated from the divine prescriptions;
- Discounts self-interests of individuals, or deindividuation, to the interests of the group, leader or authority figure;
- May anticipate an imminent and major transformation of the world;
- Expects a new world or new world order to shortly commence;
- The faithful have come out of the world to join the world-rejecting movement;
- Disciplined character of life may extend to the use of sanctions to encourage the achievement of movement goals; and,
- Such movements tend to be mandated by the divine through the medium of a leader who is also highly authoritarian (Wallis, 1984).

The faithful from many traditions, indeed, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and others formed together to join the unity movement of Stone-Campbell. Barton Stone's contribution to the 19th century movement that would give rise to the churches of Christ included strong pre-millennialist, apocalyptic and sectarian threads in the complicated Stone-Campbell tapestry. Campbell and Stone explicitly connected the ideas of unity the Church with the arrival of the millennium. Both emphasized the necessity of salvation of the Body as primary, which would include salvation for individuals. Tolbert Fanning and David Lipscomb carried this strong apocalypticism embraced by Stone in the 19th century, through the tradition later in the century.

By the end of World War I, Stone's apocalypticism was virtually abandoned by most, though not all, of the churches of Christ. The disappearance of pre-millennialism and apocalypticism as mainstream theological positions within the movement led toward the abandonment of the notion of collective salvation by unifying the Church. The economic boom of the post-war twentieth century and the retreat of smaller, splinter groups convened around pre-millennial concerns left mainstream churches of Christ reflecting "middle class values" and accommodating the ideals of "Christian America" (Hughes, 1996). These ideals of "Christian America" include the strong emphasis on individual and personal religiosity, of religious systems equipping individuals to live in the world, and stepping away from the social or group implications of and for religious practice and belief. The ideals of "Christian America" are consistent with American individualism.

Wallis' typology of world-accommodating NRMs argues that these movements display the following features:

- The distinction between the religious and the worldly spheres is primarily individual and personal, rather than social as it is in world-rejecting types;
- Less a protest against the world than a protest against prevailing religious institutions;
- Membership is drawn from “respectable” working classes, people who are integrated into the social order but not happy with it;
- Forms of practice in worship and ritual will characteristically be collective while beliefs and the benefits of practice are personalistically oriented; and,
- Functions to reinvigorate the individual for life in the world, rather than encouraging the individual’s separation from the world (Wallis, 1984).

Two sociological models (Roozen et al., 1984; Wallis, 1984) predict the churches of Christ are poised for a shift in the way they understand themselves and their mission to the world. Likely, the issue that best reveals the shift in the sociological orientation of the current-day churches of Christ is its history with pacifism.

The restorationist vision of the churches of Christ, much like their theological “cousins the Anabaptists and one of their founding “fathers,” Alexander Campbell, argued that the Kingdom of God was separate from, and would eventually replace, secular government. David Lipscomb, as editor of the *Gospel Advocate* in Nashville, charged the movement to see itself as pilgrims and strangers in the earthly kingdom. Lipscomb was convinced that the chief function of government was making war, a position stronger than Campbell’s moderate view, leading the former to conclude that military service and Christian service were incompatible with the other. Lipscomb and a group of church leaders petitioned the Confederate authorities and later, the Union government in Tennessee, conscientious objector status for draft age men in the churches of Christ (Casey, 2002). He argued, before his fellow Southerners and in the pages of the *Gospel Advocate*, that the common man was taxed and devoured

to gratify the ambition of politicians and civil government (Hooper, 1979), supporting a position that was both apolitical and pacifist.

During the Spanish-American War, both popular journals of the churches of Christ, the *Gospel Advocate* and *Firm Foundation* in Texas, took a very public stance and opposed Christians engaging the war or supporting it in any way. By the beginning of World War I, apolitical pacifists in the churches of Christ had begun to be targeted as anti-American and were suppressed by both society and government. J.C. McQuiddy, then editor of the *Gospel Advocate*, was subsequently threatened with arrest for violating the Espionage Act, because of the journal's public pacifist position in its printed articles. Therefore, in July 1917, the Advocate stopped publishing pacifist articles for the duration of the war (Casey, 2002).

In 1917, the year of Lipscomb's death, H. Leo Boles, president of David Lipscomb College in Nashville, delivered a speech in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, urging Southern Christians not to fight in the war. Boles received hate mail after so doing. Despite the presence of some opposition to his position, in October 1917, Boles and 38 preacher alumni of the school sent a petition of protest to President Wilson, asserting that the students at Lipscomb College could exert great influence over the minds of Tennesseans.

Cordell Christian College in Cordell, Oklahoma, was kept under government surveillance and was eventually shut down by pro-war activists, because of the very public pacifist position of the chair of its Board of Regents, W.D. Hockaday. The college president, J.N. Armstrong, who was also a David Lipscomb graduate, incurred the wrath of the government, the public, along with a significant number of

the members of the churches of Christ. Hockaday defended Armstrong so vehemently that pro-war, patriotic town residents painted yellow Hockaday's Granite, Oklahoma store. Hockaday's nephew and some Cordell students were sent to Ft. Leavenworth military prison for their objections to war. (Casey, 1998). As the only legal position for the conscientious objector was non-combatant status, those men who took the absolutist position against military service went to prison when they refused to do non-combatant duty.

Within the short span of World War I, that is 1914-1918, members of the churches of Christ opted to assimilate into the mainstream of the American South, turning their backs on many of their own to avoid persecution and charges of sectarianism and anti-Americanism. They no longer tolerated their historically absolutist position with regard to military service and their theology no longer reflected apocalypticism or linked primitivism with pacifism. While the Churches of Christ had the sixth largest number of conscientious objectors of all religious traditions in the United States during World War I, most draft-age men in the movement accepted military service and fought for their country. By the end of World War I in 1918, Abilene Christian College, the same institution earlier shut down by pro-war activists and soon to be the largest college in the tradition, established a Student Army Training Corp to prepare its students for military duty (Casey, 2002). For the most part, pacifism became a minority position during the war and most members began to seek to be part of the establishment in Southern society.

Congregations in the churches of Christ enjoyed a modest boost in socioeconomic status during the postwar prosperity of the 1920's. H. Leo Boles

stepped down as president of Lipscomb College, assuming the position of editor of the *Gospel Advocate* and anxious to steer the movement back toward its apolitical, pre-millennial, and pacifist origins. Boles worked fearlessly to educate and clarify the pacifist stance to the movement congregations, launching a series of articles on the New Testament teachings on carnal warfare. For the most part, congregations remained silent on Boles' efforts to revive the pacifist position in the movement. While Boles met no opposition during his time at the helm of the *Gospel Advocate*, he also did not enjoy any support from other Southerners.

In 1933, A.B. Lipscomb, nephew of David Lipscomb, began an effort to coalesce congregations in the churches of Christ into a group that would express its opposition to war. Lipscomb's Valdosta, Georgia congregation gave voice to and launched the effort, constructing an official declaration that churches of Christ were "unalterably opposed to war in all of its phases" (Lipscomb, 1933, 5) but, moderated slightly from several decades earlier, claiming that the proper pacifist position was that of non-combatancy. The declaration was placed into the public record at the War Department (Casey, 2002).

Opposition to the declaration quickly surfaced. Claiming that the Lipscomb-led declaration was dangerously close to assuming an authority inappropriate for an autonomous movement, preachers from Kansas to Oklahoma decried the document as dangerous, leading to the suggestion that churches of Christ had an ecclesiastical head much like the denominations.

By World War II, pacifism was in full retreat within the movement. Foy E. Wallace, Jr., editor of *Bible Banner*, called conscientious objectors "freak specimens

of humanity” who possess a “dwarfed conscience” (Wallace, 1942, 6-8; Casey, 2002). By its silence otherwise, the movement seemed to support the position of George Benson, president of Pepperdine College, who argued that “democracy and the free enterprise system much be preserved, thereby winning the war was a paramount Christian objective” (Casey, 2002). By World War II, only 200 men from the churches of Christ claimed conscientious objector status, compared with several thousand in World War I.

By the 1960s and 1970s, the mainstream congregations had shifted toward “conservative patriotism,” characterized by a disdain for anti-war protesters and a healthy concern about the “communist threat.” Tradition preacher and World War II veteran Glenn Nichols observed that there was more scriptural proof for backing the government and society than in “shirking one’s duties as a citizen” (Casey, 2002, 474). George Benson, as president of Pepperdine University, continued to support conservative political causes, playing a significant role in the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980. Reagan, who was from a Disciples of Christ background, supported a strong position on military preparedness and many of the mainstream congregations in the churches of Christ movement mirrored this position.

Despite their early emphasis on apoliticism and pacifism, the churches of Christ at the end of the 20th century had become a middle class, patriotic, and conservative movement. Preachers such as Nichols and leaders like Benson, in speaking for the tradition, reflect its accommodation to Southern cultural values rather than opposition or rejecting them. They encouraged a “good citizen” stance to the world and viewed the religious tradition as one that nurtured the individual and

personal spheres of life in a social system that was not particularly flawed. The mainstream of the churches of Christ, by the end of the 20th century, had accommodated the cultural values of the American South, anxious to demonstrate themselves as “respectable” and conforming to societal expectations, supporting its followers’ life in, and not outside of, the world around them.

Theological Context

The churches of Christ are intentionally anti-creedal and their theology maintains local churches are autonomous, bound only to one another by a common belief and similar practices (Jude 3; Galatians 5:1). Further, the churches of Christ maintain that the denominational system of Christendom is antithetical to the teachings of Jesus and the practices of the early church, teaching that there is one family of God, one bride of Christ, one body of Christ and one church instituted by Christ. Consequently, their theology is not located in a statement of fundamental beliefs, a doctrine taught by the ecclesial *magisterium*, or published by a theocratic organization that defines the culture and beliefs of the group. The theology of the churches of Christ is located in their teachings. For the essential core of the teachings of the churches of Christ, I drew extensively to the tract “Some Things You Should Know,” published in Ft. Worth (1999), a compilation of Biblical texts interpreted through the restorationist lens. These teachings in this tract constitute the core beliefs of the churches of Christ that render them unique.

The mission of the churches of Christ, a name directly from the Christian Scriptures, is the restoration of New Testament Christianity. The basis of their existence is the New Testament, as the churches of Christ represent a return to the

church begun by the apostles, the true church of Christ. The objective of the churches of Christ is religious unity of all believers in Christ and the restoration of the one apostolic church of the first century. According to one leader in the churches of Christ, “ours is a plea to let the Bible be heard where it speaks and to be silent where the Bible is silent in all matters. Ordained by God, Christ is the only head of His one church.” The churches of Christ do not see themselves as a denomination and or as a religious movement that started at the beginning of the 20th century. It is, rather, a movement designed to restore the body of Christ that was begun at Pentecost, which they date at 30 C.E.

Ecclesiology

Since Alexander Campbell’s presentation of the “Search for the Ancient Order of Things” series in *The Christian Baptist*, the Stone-Campbell Movement traditions have insisted on just a few practices that reflect the “marks of a true church” that should never be altered. These include baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, taking the Lord’s Supper every Sunday, local congregational governance by elders and simple worship songs that should reflect scriptural concepts. Worship should include taking place Sunday, singing, praying, preaching, giving and the Lord’s Supper. Worship should never include candles, incense and/or other human-given adornments.

Barton Stone’s approach to Scripture was more charismatic than Campbell’s more rational one. He advocated that a restored and precise practice of *ekklesia* was worthless without the evidence of the Spirit of Christ in the lives of believers. Accordingly, it wasn’t as necessary for individuals to come to the **same**

truth by “common sense” (Campbell) as it was for individuals to embrace the spirit of truth in love, peace, and forbearance (Childers et al., 2002).

Many in the churches of Christ argued that it was the universal Church and its followers the only true Christians, because only they were practicing Church, as it should be, with others practices being corrupt. Further, the churches also practiced a type of legalism that implicitly held that those within the movement who did not take seriously its unwritten doctrines were equally lost. In many ways, this exclusivity and legalism was the logical extension of a movement whose founder(s) taught that:

“(On the Millennium) About the commencement of this period, or just before its commencement, Babylon, the great whore is judged and destroyed, Rev. 19, 1,3. The spurious church of Christ is called Babylon, because of its pride and confusion; and called the great whore, because she has forsaken the true husband, Christ, and followed after other lovers. She is not owned as the Lamb's wife, as in 7th verse (Stone, 1833, 312,313).

This exclusivity is present to this day in some congregations, while others have long since resigned this exclusivist claim.³⁵

The Restored Church’s Worship

Campbell taught that worship should include the memorial observance of the Lord’s Supper, teaching and/or preaching of the Word, sincere prayer from the heart and not from a prayer book, and contributing to the extension of the Kingdom (giving

³⁵ I participated in a Bible study series called “Who Is My Neighbor?” at the Graceview Church of Christ in Stone Mountain, Georgia. The teacher argued that the faithful Christian’s neighbors are other Christians, and Christians are any people who (the five points of salvation) ‘Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess and are Baptized’ in the name of God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ.” I asked, “Is the Hindu not our neighbor? Should I not care about all those Hindus and Buddhists killed by the tsunami?” He teacher nodded and simply repeated, “Your neighbor is anyone who has heard, believed, repented, confessed and been baptized.” I don’t think he particularly appreciated my question. Nevertheless, the teacher did assert that likelihood of other faithful Christians among other Christian traditions. He did not, however, teach that salvation extended to those other than Christians.

and evangelism). Worship should not include musical solos or singing groups, the Lord's Prayer, or congregational readings.

The churches of Christ are best known for their opposition to instrumental music in worship and that is often the reason attributed to its separation from the Disciples of Christ. Behind the issue of *a capella* music, however, is a larger issue of how to interpret Scripture. The churches of Christ maintained that the lack of reference to musical instruments in the New Testament requires that their use be forbidden. To not forbid musical instruments in worship was anti-scriptural and thus, a salvation issue. So strongly do they feel about this issue that, early in its history, the church of Christ tradition would assert whether or not a congregation used musical instruments in worship was a test of that group's faithfulness or its corruption.

Christology

The churches of Christ connect Truth with the person and example of Jesus Christ, who taught that His truth was from God. This is a Truth: through the Cross, Jesus established the church, the Bride whom He loves; he invites humanity to live in His church and He will return to redeem the faithful church. Further, Jesus is so intimately connected with the Truth that he claims that "I am the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6). Here is where the rational view of Campbell is heard -- though Jesus desires a relationship with us, he stressed that it is more important for us to be His disciples and assent to the aforementioned "facts" about Him. "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed" (John 8:31). Jesus indeed seeks a relationship with us, the teaching states, but true, faithful discipleship cannot be separated from the Truth (Childers et al., 2002).

The following section from an FDI illustrates a rational Christology of Subject 086, much like Campbell's:

Are there any symbols, images, or rituals that are important to you?

P31: Yes. Just not symbols in the sense of visible. I think that the reason God said "make no graven images" is because He wanted to give us his own portrait. Jesus is his portrait. ... *Logos, logos*, a visible demonstration of a concept. So what God was saying, don't make a graven image of me because you are going to be deficient if you do. I am going to give you my own *logos*. He comes along and does. From that perspective, yes symbols are important.

Pneumatology

Many of their critics have charged the churches of Christ with not believing in the person of the Holy Spirit. The conspicuous absence of specific teachings on the Holy Spirit leads many to question how the tradition, which does profess a belief in the Holy Spirit as well as the Trinity, understands these things. The answer is located in the tradition's origins in the Stone-Campbell Movement.

Campbell's reliance upon the Scottish-Enlightenment thinkers' Common Sense to understand early church practices, led him to question that value of, what he called, "emotional excess." His own suspicions about the emotional displays he witnessed during frontier camp meetings left him with a certain resistance to explore the work of the Holy Spirit. Examining closely the two main founders of the tradition leaves one scholar historian to declare Stone the more "pneumatologically attractive" of the two (Hughes, 1996).

What evolved in the tradition is a belief that the Holy Spirit works with reason and in the Scriptures. The tradition holds that the work of the Holy Spirit was perfected in the first century church, and since the arrival of the complete written

Word of God, the need for the miraculous measure of the Holy Spirit no longer exists. This belief holds that 1) the gifts of the Holy Spirit were to last for only a short time (Eph. 4); 2) prophecy, tongues and knowledge would be done away, but faith, hope and love would remain (1 Cor. 13); 3) the purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit was to confirm the Word of God (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). After the Word was confirmed, there were to be no more gifts of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the revealed written Word of God replaces the need for the miraculous. The Word now confirms the historical record of the miraculous that confirms the truth of the Gospel.

Does this theology deny the person of the Holy Spirit? Is this teaching consistent with Christian orthodox doctrine of the Trinity? The answer is “no.” The churches of Christ claim a belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, but if pressed, will turn to the New Testament “to speak only where the Bible speaks.” The Trinity is regarded as more a product of experience and philosophy rather than a New Testament Truth.

Soteriology

In the five points to salvation --- hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized --- the process toward salvation and inclusion into the Church is largely intellectual. By a rather cognitive process, the would-be Christian submits to baptism where she receives God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation is received at the moment one understands the Truth, rather than at the moment of first belief or confession. The Holy Spirit’s role in conversion is believed to facilitate the individual’s reasoning ability, her capacity to understand the Truth. Conversion

requires the power of the Gospel, the tradition says, and the power behind the Gospel is the Holy Spirit (Childers, 2002).

Intimately connected with the process of salvation is the process of baptism by immersion. God saves by grace through faith in Christ, but in assent and submission to Christ's command to be baptized, God's grace and salvation is received. Immersion into the name of "the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," as with other theological points, is a litmus test for true Christians. For would-be members, baptized in infancy and sprinkled when they could not assent to the practice or repent and confess, submission to immersion is a solution. The problem remains, however, how members of the churches of Christ should regard and interact with professing Christians who have not been immersed. Another question that arises from their formula is about people who cannot assent to baptism or articulate repentance or confession. Cannot cognitively challenged persons become members of the Body of Christ?

Theological Anthropology

Alexander Campbell wrote in *The Christian System* in 1839: ... our nature was corrupted by the fall of Adam before it was transmitted to us; and hence that hereditary imbecility to do good, and that proneness to do evil, so universally apparent in all human beings (Childers, 2002, 104). Yet, Campbell's faith in human reason led him to believe that humanity, given the right tools and teaching, could arrive at the truth. Only Christ could resolve the gap between humanity's depravity and the ability to arrive at the truth, Campbell argued. He believed that humans did

have the capacity to be transformed and perfected by the work of God in Christ in our lives.

Campbell's argument as heard in the FDI with Subject 086, a member of the church of Christ:

What is the purpose of human life?

P29: I think the purpose of human life is -- God created the angelic host and created the human host. I think what God does with human beings is puts His wisdom on this plane. He brags on humankind to the angels. Look at that, my wisdom at work.

That is what God does, he takes people from wherever they are and brings them to a different quality of values than they are living and puts them on display for the angelic host and puts us on display for other people. That is why we need to advocate and advance the contemporary successes as well as the historical ones.

Inside View: Ethnography

I spoke with and worshipped with members of the churches of Christ in Decatur, Georgia, Stone Mountain, Georgia, and one interview comes from a member of the religious group in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Avondale Church of Christ in Decatur, Georgia, is located just across the road from the regional headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventists. A smaller community of a few hundred, Avondale worships in a fairly small, but very neat building that is modestly appointed, but impressive in its multicultural (Black and White) and diverse worshipping members. The two preachers of Avondale are White and Black males, who also lead a radio ministry that airs on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

Graceview Church of Christ in Stone Mountain, Georgia is a small storefront church that emerged from the leadership of its current teacher while at Hillcrest

Church of Christ in South Decatur, Georgia. Worship, which includes classroom type instruction, and their so-called “think tanks” all take place in one large room in what would otherwise be retail space. The congregation is predominately African-American, as is its “parent” church, Hillcrest. Visitors of various racial backgrounds and ethnicities visit the church, however, owing to the community’s national television evangelism program, “Call & Ask”. In existence for a little over two years, Graceview’s leaders keep close contact with visitors and with inquirers, as I was, while studying and connecting with people there.

In the churches of Christ, the preacher/teacher/evangelist is a male leader who has emerged from the congregation, who is addressed by the simple title of “Brother”. Elsewhere I have noted the tradition’s objection to the word “pastor” and there are current-day debates within the tradition over whether or not congregations should hire trained (clergy) leaders. At issue is not if male leaders should be trained, but whether or not it is consistent with the Gospel to pay them. Consequently, those men who do emerge as teacher-leaders or evangelists are usually those men who have taken it upon themselves, financially and otherwise, to acquire the training to lead congregations and/or to preach the Gospel.

Churches of Christ dearly love simplicity so that the light of the Gospel may shine. It should come as no surprise, then, that there is no elevated pulpit in churches of Christ (assuming the building was built for a congregation in the tradition) nor is there a designated area from which preaching and teaching is presented. There is no choir or choir stand as congregational singing is favored because “the Church is together when we sing.” There are no candles, no banners, no paraments, no

adornments of any kind in the worship space. Featured prominently at the front of the worship space is a simple table holding the setup for the Lord's Supper, which is usually some neatly stacked trays sitting atop the table. The table is adorned with a simple cross. A clean, freshly pressed white sheet covers the communion trays. There are churches of Christ who practice one-cup communion, holding that to do otherwise is anti-Scriptural and imitates the corrupt practices of "the denominations." Avondale and Graceview churches of Christ are multiple cup congregations.

Worship leaders sit with the congregation when not leading worship, reflecting the tradition's commitment to democratic worship and the worship work and priesthood of all believers. The simplicity of the worship space in churches of Christ, therefore, reflects tradition's theology that worship is not building centered, it is (individually) heart centered and (worshipping) community focused.

Hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ is absolutely essential in this tradition that regards the sixty-six books of the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures as infallible and authoritative. One of the tradition's main beliefs is presented in a document, located in the Graceview visitor's packet, called "What Must I Do to Be Saved?" (Graceview Church of Christ, 2007). The first step, the document says, "One must hear the Gospel: How shall they call on him whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). As a congregation in this highly rational tradition, the Graceview document explains that one must hear the Gospel, as part of the five steps to salvation, with the others being believing, repenting, confessing and baptism by immersion.

As a radically congregational tradition, it is surprising the churches of Christ vary so little in their worship practices. Basic to every worship service are the central rituals of congregational singing, hearing the Word of God, a first and last prayer, giving, and always the Lord's Supper. In fact, worship is said to unfold in five steps and in each community, only five elements are listed on the worship bulletin. Those are Singing, Prayer, Listening, Giving, the Lord's Supper.

Avondale Church of Christ indicates that they have two preachers who preach the Word after it is heard in worship, and the word "preaching" is noted as such in the Sunday bulletin. Graceview Church of Christ claims to have a teacher to instruct its members in the Word during worship, therefore its programs read "teaching" after the reading of the Word. Graceview claims that Biblical instruction in the community is such that it calls Sunday service "Sixty Minutes of Life Changing Worship."

Singing is an important part of the few established worshipping rituals in churches of Christ. Even before worship begins, a "Worship Leader/Music" will emerge for some moments of praise as the congregation prepares itself for service to God in worship.³⁶ Here are a few words from the "Preacher's Pen" of Avondale Church of Christ about the importance of singing:

³⁶ Jack Boyd, a professor of music emeritus at the tradition's Abilene Christian University, reminded members of the Churches of Christ that "Despite what is commonly believed, praise teams were not invented by the Churches of Christ. Modern praise teams using pop-oriented musical styles were actually started in the 1950s by Pentecostal churches seeking to attract unchurched people to their services. The Baptists took up the newer hymnody and style in the 1960s. The rest of Christendom climbed on the Praise Song/Praise Team band wagon in the 1970s and '80s. ... Part of our problem in Churches of Christ has been a scarcity of historical knowledge as it affects our worship practices. Far too many of our members believe that they know church music when, in fact, they only know Church of Christ music, and that often means Church of Christ music of the 1940s, '50s and '60s. Further, a significant number of our own young people — high school, college — are asking for more traditional hymns and a more formalized (read: liturgical) service. (**Christian Chronicle**, June 2007)

The New Testament of Jesus Christ authorizes us to sing, and nothing else. We are not to add to or take away from God's word. Instrumental music in worship to God is an addition to God's word.

Singing is a corporate act. The church is to be together when we sing. Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 both emphasize the mutual act of singing. We are to speak to one another in our singing. Speaking to one another demands we are together when we speak. All we are authorized to do is to speak or sing - we have no authority for more.

Singing is also an individual act- each one of us is to sing, each one is to speak. Listening without singing does not fulfill the command. The purpose is stated in the command (Colossians 3:16). We teach and admonish one another when we sing. This makes it necessary for the songs we sing to be consistent with the doctrines taught in the Bible. We should not sing (teach) things the Bible does not teach. Because we teach of God, Christ, the Spirit, the church, redemption, salvation, repentance, judgment and heaven, songs must be scriptural.

Like every act of worship, singing is spiritual in nature. It is a reflection of our sincere hearts poured out in song unto God. The melody is made in our hearts, not on some mechanical machine. Paul speaks of grace in Colossians 3:16 and says that grace is in our hearts. This completely removes the common human temptation to make spiritual things about physical sensation. You receive no glory for playing well because you are not authorized to play anything. There is no choir for our best voices, because everyone is to sing to one another. No. God's way is everyone sings! Sing out loud, sing praise to Him, glorify Him, teach and admonish one another. It does not matter how well you sing; it matters how sincerely you sing.

Theologically, as the preacher above noted, congregational singing precedes the worship service because it calls the members together into one accord, singing the same note of praise to begin the service to glorify God. Further, as the preacher noted, there is no prayer and no performative aspect to the congregation's praise – it is merely the sincere spiritual act of singing for God.

Songbooks, or hymnals, are simple compilations of, mostly scripturally based, hymns, with only the lyrics presented. In other words, the hymnals are pages of hymn lyrics, without musical notes or notations of any kind. The “Worship Leader/Singing,” a man (and likely always a male) who has the gift of a beautiful

voice, stands before the congregation and sings the first verse of the hymn all the way through before the congregation joins him in song. Congregational song is one of the few opportunities the worshippers have to engage the worship along with the leaders, and the congregation always sings while standing.

In the Graceview community, another opportunity for the congregation to engage the worship is in the recitation of the books of the Bible. The “teacher,” as he is called at Graceview, stands before the congregation and, with the congregation standing, from Genesis to Revelation, the congregants, in unison, recite the (Protestant version) sixty-six books of both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures from beginning to end. The woman, seated to my right and at whose invitation I first visited Graceview, was aghast that I could not finish the list of the Hebrew Scriptures as she so easily could.

Churches of Christ practice an elder system, much like their Reformed “step-parent,” the Presbyterians. In each existing congregation, groups of elders, or presbyters, serve as the governing body of the local group. The local congregations based on qualifications set down in 1 Timothy 3:1-8, select these men, and only men. Serving under the elders are deacons, teachers, and evangelists or preachers. The latter do not have authority equal to or superior to the elders. The elders are shepherds or overseers who serve under the headship of Christ, making no earthly authority superior to the elders of the local church.

The leaders of the worship at the churches of Christ are preachers or teachers, all of whom are male who emerge from the congregations, as well as traveling evangelists who visit congregations from time to time. At Graceview Church of

Christ, the primary congregational leader is called simply, “the teacher,” and everyone refers to him as “Brother Marshall.” Brother Marshall has this to say about his role as the teacher and as the founder, if you will, of Graceview Church of Christ:

“More than twenty years ago, God placed a burning desire within my heart to plant a congregation of the Lord's church. In the 80s, I attempted to plant a congregation in Warsaw, North Carolina. But, God said this is neither the time nor the place. In the 90s, I attempted to plant a congregation in Gastonia, North Carolina. Again, God said this is neither the time nor the place. In 2003, that evangelistic fever returned more passionately than ever, therefore, I planned once again to launch out in 2005 and see what God would say this time. Now, here we successfully stand. But, I do now understand why God had earlier said not now and not here.”

Brother Marshall had written eight books as of the time I visited Graceview. They are, according to him, **Good and Angry**, a personal guide to anger management, **The Power of the Tongue**, what you say is what you get, **God, Listen**, prayers that God always answers, which includes a 50-day addiction recovery guide, **Final Answer**, **Success in a God Idea**, Show Me the Money, seven exercises that build economic strength, **God Knows** (there is no need to worry), and his latest book at the time **My God**, why I am a member of the Church. (His books and television program may very well be his source of income if, in fact, this new congregation is one of those in the tradition averse to paying its leaders.)

Brother Marshall's message on this Sunday morning addressed character construction. With the congregation seated, he began his talk, elaborating his plan for the Biblical study on character development. He proposed a month-long, Sunday morning teaching series on developing character, and the daily-recorded telephone messages I (and every other member and visitor) received reinforced this theme. In a few broad strokes below, I will try to summarize the content of Brother Marshall's

teaching on character. (The non-gender-inclusive language herein is his construction and not my own.)

“Our Lord appreciates, applauds and rewards character. Character is the willingness to do right, as God defines right, regardless of the cost (John 9:20-22). The parents of the formerly blind man were unwilling to admit the truth that it was Jesus who had healed their son. We must do right regardless of immediate costs. We must do right regardless of subsequent costs.”

“Character is the willingness to do right, as God defines right, regardless of the costs, because it is right to do right. We may do right for instrumental reasons, but we must also do right for intrinsic reasons. We may do right because of what we receive, but we must also do right just for the feeling of knowing that we have done right (Daniel 3:13-18).”

“God is always right and He made us in His image. Therefore, He wants us to do what is right because we reflect His nature. Therefore, God places character development at a premium priority.”

“People of character have few conflicts with authority. People of character enjoy greater harmony within their relations. People of character are dependable. People of character are predictable. We love people who are predictable for they are easy to get along with.”

“God wants you to let Him reconstruct your character. Pray this prayer daily:
“God always give me the conscious wisdom to know what is right and the courageous will to do what is right.”

After concluding the message, the teacher made another appeal to the congregation, one that was also mentioned in the Sunday bulletin. The teacher said, “The church is to be an academic institution. Therefore, we must place studying the Bible as a priority. Hectic schedules often make it difficult for all of us to come together at the same time each week to study. Yet, God is giving each of us an excellent opportunity to study his word.

The teacher directed our attention to this, which was printed in the bulletin (emphasis as in the original text): “Through Graceview, Nations University is offering to anyone the opportunity to enroll in a course of study that leads to a **Certificate in Religious Studies**. You may pursue this study by 1) internet, 2) email, or 3) postal mail. This flexibility allows each of you to work during your personal availability. Beginning 1 January, we want 100% enrollment in **Course Number BRS 1, The Hebrew Scriptures**. We anticipate completing at least one course per quarter. You may visit www.nationsu.org for detailed information.”

I felt somewhat surprised as the teacher asked everyone to enroll in the course and to complete at least one course per quarter. I did not note any strange looks, sighs, or other expressions that would indicate surprise on the part of any of the congregants.

In concluding the sermon and as a way of inviting guests and others into discipleship, Brother Marshall spoke a little about the church of Christ movement. “We are not a denomination. We are a fellowship of Christians who want to understand and do the will of God. We do limit ourselves by the word of God; therefore, we do not want to interpret the Word through “tradition-tinted” ideologies.

We are bound to no human-made creeds or traditions nor do we defend denominational practices and institutions. Our Lord expects us to look beyond historical positions and ideas that conflict with Scripture. Therefore we always ask, “What do precepts, principles, and precedents of Scripture have to say to the situation? We take our commitment to the building up of the body of Christ seriously.”

As the congregation of Graceview prepared for receiving the Lord’s Supper, we remained seated and, for the first time, I saw women rise from their seats in this small retail space. Dressed in white, the women moved toward the table. With one standing on one side of the table and the other on the other side, the women lifted the sheet from the trays and made an elaborate show of folding the sheet – first in half, then in half again, and so forth. They then returned to their seats.

Elders in the congregations moved toward the table, with two men picking up trays of small squares of bread and two men picking up one tray each of cups of wine. The men carrying the trays of bread moved into one of the two aisles of seats, each one sending the tray down the aisle to be returned when it reached the end of the aisle. As the tray of bread reached me, seated in an aisle seat, I had failed to observe whether or not the other congregants were holding their bread, anticipating the wine, or if they were taking the bread as it was offered to them. I quickly got my answer as the elder said to me quietly, “Eat it!” When I did, he patted me on the back as I passed the tray down to person seated next to me. When the cup-tray carrying elder arrived, I knew to drink the wine as it was presented to me, and then pass the tray to the person seated next to me.

With the Lord's Supper concluded, a simple benediction ended worship. As the congregants stood and greeted one another, two or three people I did not know were comfortable enough to hug me although they had only seen me a handful of times before. Brother Marshall always asked if I would take time to speak to him before I left for the day. Shortly after I arrived back at home every Sunday, I received a personal phone call from Brother Marshall, inviting to the community Bible study on Wednesday night. His evangelizing phone and email messages arrived each day, facilitated by the medium of broadcast technology and software. Much like my "prayer partner" from my college days, Brother Marshall and Graceview were never far from my sight.

Challenges and Questions for This Community

The biggest challenges to the churches of Christ at the present time are Biblical hermeneutics, women's roles (in leadership) and marriage, divorce, and remarriage.

In their struggle to understand how best to restore the practices of the New Testament church in worship and in society, they developed a unique, rationally driven method of Biblical hermeneutics. This hermeneutical practice and the doctrine it helped create have given the movement its unique identity, but it has also provided it with an incredible responsibility, that could develop, over time, into a burden.

A premise of Campbell's hermeneutical practice was that every person, given the right tools, methods and teaching, would arrive at the *same* truth about the Gospel. As one of his ardent beliefs, there is small wonder why he never doubted the movement's capacity to bring restore unity to the Body of Christ. In the postmodern

world of the 21st century, however, we can no longer accept that every individual, exposed to similar biblical teaching, will arrive at the same conclusions. The churches of Christ bear witness to this fact of postmodernity, sub-grouped as they are into ethnic congregations, and congregations that follow Scriptures that lead them to pursue varying expressions on the Scriptural validity of Sunday school, multiple communion cups, pre-millennialism, and women's leadership roles.

Childers et al. (2002) charge the churches of Christ to re-examine their Biblical hermeneutics by allowing the practice to reflect on and scrutinize itself. They hear, in postmodernity, a call for the movement to rethink itself and its practices in light of a world that understands it can embrace various truths. The question becomes, can churches of Christ admit multiple truths? Will they acknowledge the presence and gifts of other faithful Christians with different opinions from their own? "The idea that we are the only Christians assumes at least two things," say the Childers group, "that 1) being right in every belief and practice is the only legitimate reason for churches of Christ and 2) that we cannot admit the true Christian identity of believers in other groups without forfeiting our reason for being" (Childers et al., 2002).

Inviting the tradition into a fresh, new way of interpreting Scripture and living in the Truth, insider Peatross (2000) says that any other way is "like a dark tunnel filled with stale air and numbing darkness." He adds, "Christ had nothing but stinging words for those who live in the tunnels of legalism" (Peatross, 2000, 8). What would Jesus do in this peculiar moment in the life of the churches of Christ? Most certainly, he would claim the moment in His name.

The issues legalism, intense rationalism and exclusivism may be challenges for members of the churches of Christ. My question was if this would be evident in their FDIs and on the DIT-2. Results of all elements in this study are recorded in Chapter 8.

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Chapter 7: The Charismatic Restoration Churches in the 21st Century

Lesson Learned: Ritual Imprinting of Bodies and Embodied Knowing

Ephesians 4:11 "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, (4:12) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (4:13) until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ." (NRSV)

“Pentacostal mission is uniquely characterized by the development of a ‘radical strategy’ – an apocalyptic scenario of divine intervention in signs and wonders to ensure that every tribe and nation hear the Gospel before the close of human history” Gary McGee (quoted in Lord, 2005, 38).

Introduction

Several years ago, I was introduced to a younger, African-American man through a mutual acquaintance. He was in seminary at the Church of God Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee. Moments later, he was joined by a woman the seminary student introduced as his wife, who was also an M.Div. student at the same school. They were a handsome couple. The people to whom I spoke about them talked of the gifts for ministry they obviously held and shared with them. Indeed, the people to whom I spoke could not speak more highly of this couple. It was obvious these people thought they were special people with special gifts.

Years later, when I returned to Atlanta to complete the fieldwork for this study, I was directed to members or ex-members of two charismatic-type churches. One was the Cathedral at Chapel Hill³⁷ off Flat Shoals Road, in Decatur, Georgia.

³⁷ In late 2007, allegations of sexual misconduct were directed at 80-year-old Archbishop Earl Paulk, Jr., then pastor of the Cathedral at Chapel Hill and the founder of the Chapel Hill Harvester Church and School. Since those allegations surfaced, Paulk has resigned as pastor with D.E. Paulk now in the senior pastor’s seat, along with his wife, Brandi. D.E., as he refers to himself, shocked the congregation in February, 2008, when he told them that DNA

The other was Total Grace Christian Center, off Covington Highway, and in Decatur, a newer community that had just renovated and moved into an old building that was formerly a Target. These communities shared some common characteristics aside from their theologies and similar members. They are large, multicultural, “mega-church” communities, known for vibrant worship including liturgical dance, charismatic preaching, and powerful music.

I visited the Total Grace Christian Center first, noting that the sign out front was prepared in bright purple and gold (the colors of the fraternity Omega Psi Phi and, with Morehouse being in Atlanta, I thought there was likely some connection). The sign read “Total Grace Christian Center World Headquarters.” Inside the building, which had been converted into a rather opulent space, I saw a bookstore tucked into a room with glass walls that featured books, tapes and CDs of the Grace Singers and the pastoral leaders’ sermons. I spent some time in the bookstore, wandered inside a few of the classrooms that were mostly full of people, peeped into the kitchen where some fresh younger teen faces offered me a cup of coffee, then strolled back to the front of the building where I saw greeters near the front door. I talked with the greeter who let me know a little bit about the community and about the worship space I was about to enter. She also referred to the senior pastor as “the apostle” (with a lower-case ‘a’) and showed me his photo hanging on the wall. As

testing had revealed him to be the elder Paulk’s son and not his nephew. Earl Paulk has admitted to a relationship with his sister-in-law.

This study will obviously not consider these allegations or track the outcome of the legal matters pending against Paulk. Rather, it does consider the charismatic restorationist theology he embraced and espoused in the 14 books he published over his career and since he attended Candler School of Theology. D.E. Paulk, in his new ministry at the Cathedral at Chapel Hill, has said that his “family founded the Cathedral at Chapel Hill in 1960. The Paulks have always been known for their ministry of restoration. For more than 47 years, the Cathedral has opened its doors to people from every walk of life” (Chapel Hill Harvester Church, 2008).

you, no doubt guessed, I discovered that “the apostle” was the same male seminary student I had met a few years earlier. The greeter explained that had been elevated from “pastor,” a few years earlier, to “apostle” because he was planting a church, or planned to plant a church (consistent with the definition of “apostle” in Acts 13:1-4, 14:14), in his native Puerto Rico. That was also why this name of the Christian Center was the “World Headquarters,” and this main ministry center was church home to, then, 4000+ members. So I entered rather large worship space, complete with cameras, sound stage, monitors, microphones and an elevated stage, found a seat in the amphitheater type set up, and waited to hear the Word of God from a genuine current-day apostle, along with his wife, now called “Pastor Dr. Toni.”

As the praise team began to assemble to begin their music and praise before the start of worship, a ministry leader came forward and gave a little welcome to Total Grace Christian Center. He ended his welcome with “celebrated throughout the world for its awesome praise and worship and intellectual, charismatic preaching, when people say there is no place like Total Grace, they actually mean it!”

To add just a little more background to the Apostle Alvarado and his relationship to Total Grace, I learned of these events subsequent to my time spent in the community:

As the demand for covering and guidance from the Apostle Alvarado grew, a collection of pastors wanted to further express their covenant relationship with him by forming an official fellowship. In 2005, Bishop Alvarado was nominated by these pastors to the Office of Bishop for the newly founded Grace Fellowship of Churches and was officially consecrated for this office in June 2006. With his heart for pastors, love for church planting, and his own dual Latin and African American heritage, Bishop Alvarado is uniquely positioned to serve as presiding prelate over an international movement in contemporary

Christendom” (From “Bishop Alvarado’s Bio,” at <http://www.totalgrace.org/about-us/bishop--co-pastor-alvarado/bishops-bio/>, accessed on June 15, 2007).

First things first, however, let’s spent some time uncovering the background of congregations like Total Grace, the Cathedral at Chapel Hill and others like them. Who and what kind of congregations are they? Are they part of an NRM?

Overview of this Community

The story of Total Grace and the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit at Chapel Hill Harvester Church (Decatur, GA) is one that picks up shortly after the last one left off – in a hope of restoring the Church to what it was in the first century. In the restorationist wave that swept across the United States during the 19th century, all currents advocated a return to the apostolic church, but different groups looked to the same New Testament for different aspects of *ekklesia*. Some focused on government, some on lifestyle, some on the message, but all wanted to restore to contemporary Christian life something that they believed had been lost in the intervening centuries.

Of the NRMs studied herein, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh-day Adventists along with the churches of Christ would lay claim to a restorationist impulse in their Christian ecclesial practices. Other Christian groups that would argue they are following a model of New Testament church are the Disciples of Christ, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), Churches of God (Cleveland, TN), Independent Christian Churches/Churches of Christ and many others. Each of these groups maintains that they have captured the unique way of practicing Christianity or worshipping God in Christ as the early Christians did. Further, the Hare Krishnas, or Vaisnavism, also represent a restorationist impulse within Hinduism in their belief

that Krishna, as Caitanya, returned to our realm to teach a wayward humanity proper relationships and worship practices that it had long over millennia.

For now, however, we shall concentrate on Christian, and in particular, charismatic restorationism. The term “charismatic” here refers to participants in renewal movements punctuated by gifts of the Holy Spirit, ecumenical in scope, that occur outside of classical Pentecostal denominations. Charismatic Restorationists differ from these other Christian groups in that theirs is a call to restore the power, patterns and, especially, the spiritual gifts of the New Testament church. The Charismatic Restoration movement differs from the charismatic evangelicals in that it is focused on transforming the nature of the church, rather than simply focusing on individuals. Charismatic Restorationism shares at least one goal with the 19th century Stone-Campbell leaders, that of restoring, and thereby transforming, the Church into its “pure” position as the unified Bride of Christ. Contrary to its 19th century version, however, a necessary part of this transformation in the 21st century is the restoration of the spiritual gifts (i.e. prophecy and Baptism of the Spirit), powers and authority along with the structure of the early Church. The transformational process includes an emphasis on the renewal of the fivefold ministry mentioned in Ephesians 4:12, which includes apostles and prophets, as the leaders who will assist in the new restoration of the apostolic church and ultimately, they believe, the Kingdom of God. Indeed, what is basic in this NRM is a belief that elsewhere in Christian practice there is a discontinuity between the early apostolic church and where the church is today, but theirs a movement of the Holy Spirit wherein the *charismata* are reappearing, and is evidence that the early and “true” church is being restored.

There are some who consider this Charismatic Restoration movement a part of the neo-Charismatic Movement, a “third wave” of the Charismatic Movement that started in the early 20th century. Other definitions consider “third wave” charismatics to be evangelicals who have not left their denominations or abandoned their theologies but who have experienced the “recent work of the Holy Spirit” (Nation, 1992). Those who claim this moment in the history of the Charismatic Movement to be the third wave argue that:

- The First “wave” began in the early 20th century with the rise of Pentecostalism during the Azusa Street Revival.
- The Second “wave” began in the early 1960s as Father Dennis Bennett of the St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California received the “fullness and power” of the Holy Spirit, signaling the Charismatic Movement experience in mainline denominations, including Roman Catholicism.
- The Third “wave” began in the mid-1980’s and continues today, as God is progressively restoring the truths of the New Testament to the church today, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are evidence of this restoration. This term emerged from John Wimber’s classroom ministry at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1981 and is associated with Wimber’s Vineyard Movement as well the “Signs and Wonders” Movement (Wagner, 1988).

. The charismatic third wave is associated with popular names in charismatic as well as televangelism circles, such as Kenneth Copeland, Kenneth Hagin, Bob Tilton and, founder of the Chapel Hill Harvester Church (commonly called the Cathedral at Chapel Hill), Earl Paulk.

Frank Viola, in his *Reimagining Church*, calls the charismatic third wave a “cousin” to restorationism, identifying the two so closely as to use the term third-wave restoration. With third-wave restoration stressing restored apostolic power in the church, Christians, in great numbers, are packing their bags to flock to these “Christian Meccas,” desperate for a sign from God (Viola, 2008). The term, “great

numbers,” may be something of an exaggeration in terms of nationwide numbers. A visit to Total Grace Christian Center on a Wednesday night, however, will confirm that “Christian Mecca” might be an appropriate term for what is happening in Decatur. A visit to the same community on a Sunday morning, with so many people in Mecca, might leave an unfamiliar person lost among the pilgrims.

The Charismatic Restorationists claim that the appearance of abundant charismatic gifts in their congregations evinces the power of the Spirit that is the harbinger of the Kingdom of God. The theology often associated with Charismatic Restorationism is the “Kingdom Theology” first articulated by George Eldon Ladd^{38,39} in *The Gospel of the Kingdom* (1958). Yet, it seems to me, that a peculiar thing happened when Ladd’s “Kingdom Theology” was translated into some charismatic communities. The intensely apocalyptic pre-millennial Kingdom Theology about which Ladd, a Baptist, wrote morphed into the “Kingdom Now” theology that is taught in the third-wave restoration movement. Kingdom Now theology emphasizes the “already and the not yet,” a both/and proposition that allows its proponents to lay claim to the workings of the Holy Spirit in **the** restored Church as the “signs and wonders” that evince the foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Earl Paulk, former senior pastor at the Cathedral at Chapel Hill, a major theological force

³⁸ George Eldon Ladd (1922-1982) was Professor of New Testament exegesis and theology at Fuller Theological Seminary. His 1974 publication, *A Theology of the New Testament* has served a generation of seminary students. Ladd also advocated a strong historic pre-millennialist position, a position consistent with his grammatico-historical exegesis of relevant New Testament scriptures.

³⁹ Garry Dale Nation traces the current theological currents in the charismatic restoration wave to Ladd’s Kingdom Theology, noting that “the Restorationists are more comfortable, however, quoting the late New Testament theology professor G. Eldon Ladd of Fuller Theological Seminary – when they quote someone at all besides the Bible” (Nation, 1992, 29). See also his “The Hermeneutics of Pentecostal-Charismatic Restoration Theology: A Critical Analysis,” unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, December, 1990.

in Kingdom Now teaching, has asserted that, “The “Kingdom now” concept focuses on God as ever-present and at work in our lives today. (God) has been at work in the past, and (God) will be at work in the future ... This concept has a first fruit dimension. As we allow that dimension to grow in us, it becomes a greater witness to the reality of the Kingdom to come” (Paulk, 1986, 178). No mistake about it, Kingdom now theology is inextricably linked to third-wave restorationism, which has even been called “End-Times Restorationism.”

Third-wave restorationists, being charismatics, worship in ways unique to them. The communal narrative of third-wave restoration embraces a renewal of forms of worship that purportedly occurred in David’s Tabernacle, declared by the prophet Amos to be an integral factor in God’s plan of restoration (Amos 9: 11-13) and by the Apostle James to be a sign of the fulfillment and maturity of the Church (Acts 15: 13-18). Davidic worship forms include, among others things: shouting, clapping, bowing, dancing, and “singing in the Spirit.” These worship forms appear to have developed ecclesial practices that centralize charismatic spirituality that is an emotional and experiential engagement with the wonder, reality, love and power of God in Jesus Christ (Cartledge, 2004). These worship forms assume a radical openness to God speaking and acting in this world, “so the gifts of prophecy and wisdom are expected, as well as inspired praise, prayer and testimony” (Cartledge, 2004, 180). Ammerman (1991) describes the worship at Chapel Hill as “a mixture of charismatic enthusiasm, high polished music and art, and prophetic announcements about Christian duty” (53). Similarly, worship at Total Grace is a sensory adventure, where the charismatic enthusiasm has gone high tech, magnifying the emotional

worship experience. Highly polished body movements by trained liturgical dancers are featured behind prayers, and praise experiences, magnifying the Lord, are completely ecstatic. Prophetic and interactive preaching is, likewise, a feature at Total Grace.

There are no official statistics on this collection of congregations, as they are aligned only in sharing a common theology and some, though hardly all, common worship practices. The two communities I studied here are, however, two of the larger congregations in Atlanta, with the Cathedral at Chapel Hill Harvester Church boasting 12,000 members in 1999⁴⁰ and Total Grace Christian Center, even in its adolescence, claiming 5,000, with satellite churches in Clayton and Gwinnett Counties. Ammerman (1991) documents that during her observations in the community, the voice of Earl Paulk was welcomed into a network of affiliated churches around the world and Paulk, himself, speaks of how his Christian Broadcast Network ministry, television programs, and publications are received around the world (Paulk, 1986).

Just to orient the discussion to the scope of third-wave restoration, also associated with the Charismatic Restoration Movement are The Vineyard churches of which John Wimber (1934-1997) was a founding member. Wimber was a specialist in the church growth movement and a director of the Fuller (Seminary) Institute for Evangelism and Church Growth from 1974 to 1978. The House Church he started in his home during his years at Fuller grew into the Vineyard Movement, which

⁴⁰ Since Archbishop Earl Paulk's departure from the Cathedral at Chapel Hill amid a swirl of legal problems and allegations of immoral behavior, the membership in this community has likely dropped. I do not have any recent figures about church membership, though I have seen attendance in February 2008 documented at "a few hundred."

established some 600+⁴¹ Vineyard churches in the U.S. and around the world. The church-planting effort claims to have assisted in the development of 1500 churches, along with a publishing house and a music production company.⁴² The Vineyard model emphasizes preaching extensively from the gospels and that the life of Jesus is the ultimate model for Christian behavior and religious practice. Accordingly, “signs and wonders” factor heavily in Vineyard worship and they teach that the priesthood of all believers endows every Christian with the ability to prophesy and heal the sick. Vineyard also teaches that the Kingdom of God does not simply await us in the future but “produces currents throughout history by the presence and power of Holy Spirit.”^{43,44}

Why this is a “Fundamentalist” New Religious Movement (fNRM)

In the strict sense of the term, the charismatic restoration congregations qualify as a “New” Religious Movement (NRM) in that they grew out of the neo-charismatic or third wave charismatics of the 1960s, 70s and ‘80s. As a movement, they are a late 20th century phenomenon. As a matter of their theology, however, they claim to be connected to the first century church as a restored version of that New Testament community. Restorationism embraces a theology that contends that God is in the process of restoring to the true **ekklesia**, the gifts of the first century Church,

⁴¹ This number was taken from the official Vineyard Movement website, at <http://www.vineyardusa.org/>, retrieved on June 15, 2008.

⁴² Taken from the Vineyard Movement website at <http://www.vineyardusa.org/about/history.aspx>, retrieved June 17, 2008.

⁴³ Taken from the Vineyard Movement website at <http://www.vineyardusa.org/about/logo.aspx>, retrieved June 17, 2008.

⁴⁴ The Charismatic Restoration Movement in the U.K., led by Arthur Wallis, David Lillie and Cecil Cousen has grown to a very large movement with thousands of adherents worldwide. British sociologists (of religion) have tracked the movement; most notable among them is Andrew Walker in his *Restoring the Kingdom* (1988) and its subsequent revisions.

long lost in the Dark Ages. The fivefold ministry, the offices of evangelist, pastor and teacher, along with apostle and prophet, was a part of the first century Church and is a part of God's plan for uniting the restored 21st century Church. The Cessation Doctrine accounts for the loss of the offices of apostle and prophet when the Bishop of Rome usurped their authority. The declared end of charismatic gifts, such as glossolalia, is also a part of the Cessation Doctrine. Augustine (d. 430), gave the Church the view that glossolalia was spoken in the early Church as an indicator of the spread of the Gospel throughout the earth. In his view, the "tongues" accounts in Acts are symbolic of the Church and its spread to people of every tongue. Pope Leo I took up this view, and in a Pentecost sermon called "The Spirit of Truth," he wrote that the gift of "speaking in tongues" was a sign of the gift of the Spirit to every nation (Fahlbush, 1999).

The end of the apostolic era and of the early Church's charismatic gifts become official doctrine, Restorationists say, when the Papal Bull **Unum Sanctum** (1302) that "everything created in the human universe is subject to the Roman Pontiff." Paulk (1986) argues that restorationism is a response to a Cessation doctrine that exclaims, "You don't need revelation!" because Cessationists have effectively closed off the Kingdom and blocked knowledge of the Truth (215).

These new restorationists, much like the 19th century group, are adamant about theirs being a movement to unite all believers in a restoration of New Testament church. From *The Wounded Body of Christ* (1985), Earl Paulk writes:

"At stake is the unity within the Body of Christ. To build upon anything less than the true Rock, the only lasting foundation, would be only to see the entire building fall. Paul made it clear that the Cornerstone had been 'rejected by the builders.' The only solution was

to bring forth new builders - whom Paul defined as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers - to build up a people fitly joined together whose head is Jesus Christ Himself. We are further given the warnings as to how we build on this foundation. To talk of unity without truth is to build with wood, hay and stubble (I Corinthians 3)” (Paulk, 1985, 7).

These congregations espouse the belief in unity of all believers, even as their practices reflect a type of privileged presence in possessing the “gifts of the Spirit” where other traditions and individuals may not. Their sectarianism, at this moment in the charismatic movement’s history, is what makes this group ripe for study as an NRM at the beginning of the 21st century. These sectarian tendencies are displayed in their often preached claim to be the only true body of Christ and in their insistence theirs are the only and correct practices and gifts of true believers.

Third-wave restoration congregations tend to be highly self-involved and introverted. These two congregations are focused on religious socialization and confining much of their social relationships to within the congregation. Ammerman (1991) mentions 12 geographically based “covenant communities” within the Chapel Hill congregation, with the members of these sub-groups assisting one another to find jobs, childcare and monitor community affairs. They also enjoy large, energetic and ambitious new members’ ministries, stress constant church attendance and bringing others into the church. One insider confided in me, “If you’re not careful, they’ll have you coming to church every night of the week!” They express a range of attitudes toward the institutional Church and “the denominations,” from ambivalence to a position that is closer to anti- rather than non- denominational.

Paulk taught that in the Church, “God offers His covenant people a place of safety amid destruction” (Paulk, 1896, 200). While he did not teach total escapism

from society, he did say, “God needs the Church to tell people what to do about uncontrolled anger, violence” but especially how to “be obedient to those who are over you in the Lord” (Paulk, 1986, 196, 218). He advocated evangelism to a world that has lost its way; he preached that the Babylon present in world governments would end when the people in government come into the Church. While it is not a separatist view, it is a sectarian one, privileging those who “worship God in Spirit and in Truth” (Paulk, 2006, 46).

Despite their self-involvement, so to speak, these two congregations do have strong and visible outreach ministries. The Chapel Hill congregation is known nationwide for its ministries to the homeless and hungry. The Total Grace congregation is known throughout Decatur for its “All Things In Common,” a one a month giveaway extravaganza, and Angel Food Ministries, packaged foods for a month reflecting a balanced diet of vegetables, dry milk, meat, eggs, and items such as tortillas and fajitas for a price of \$30. Grace Ministries can even accept food stamps.

Like other NRMs, these congregations tend to be countercultural. Since they are a body of believers in, for the most part, disconnected congregations, it is impossible to make a claim that this movement is completely one way or another. The only tie that binds the group is a common loyalty to the principles of the restoration of New Testament Christianity, particularly as they find it in the Acts of the Apostles, their belief in the fivefold ministry, and a shared experience of life, and *ekklesia*, filled with the Spirit.

The thrust of their beliefs, teachings and practices, they believe, are based on maintaining the New Testament mandates with literal precision while allowing for God's work in the Holy Spirit to be made evident. This involves a rather difficult hermeneutic -- one outsiders claim is no hermeneutic at all. A British practical theologian, Mark Stibbe⁴⁵, proposes that a charismatic hermeneutic reflects an attempt to mediate between the conservative position, the original meaning of the text, and a postmodern rendering, which is yielding to a reader response approach. A 'this' and 'that' approach, as proposed by Stibbe, allows for a "rich harmony" between the text and the present experience. It is centered on the person of Jesus Christ and his return. The affections as well as cognition are engaged, because this method honors the emotional intelligence of the congregation. It is a reading that is undertaken corporately, within and for the community of faith. This kind of reading is also oriented toward praxis as it yields several, important practical outcomes (Stibbe, 1998).

Even as one theologian contends the hermeneutic of the charismatic movement is "this and that," one Vineyard insider, Bob Fulton, the brother-in-law of Wimber and in charge of Vineyard's multicultural and international ministries, is reported to have said that the pastors of their large ministries were better able to exegete culture than they were Scripture (Miller, 2003). In the church growth business, there is little doubt that pastors are attending to hermeneutics as well as

⁴⁵ Stibbe is a Charismatic Anglican, who identifies with the third wave, and experiences the Holy Spirit in a prophetic anointing.

market and message. Possessing a fine-tuned message and a thorough understanding of secular culture is likely what attracts the large numbers of people into these congregations. Yet, their practices embrace life lived with literal precision, validated by the presence of charismatic gifts. In that spirit of literality, the third-wave restoration becomes sectarian, outside of secular culture, placing itself over and above people who live “in the world.”

New Religious Movements tend to be founded by a charismatic church leader, who is sometimes also highly authoritarian. In free churches, the “cult of personality” is easily nurtured and in the case of both of these congregations, the leadership is very strong, very visible, very charismatic and very much adored by the ministers, leaders, staff and members of their congregations.

As the very first of the fundamental beliefs held by these two Churches and likely all of the neo-charismatic movement, that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and the source for a standard of all of life, places this group squarely within the definition of fundamentalist NRM. The Bishop and Dr. Toni Alvarado at Total Grace Christian Center have both assented to this as their first article in their Statement of Faith:

THE SCRIPTURE INSPIRED: We believe that both the Old and the New Testament are verbally inspired by God and are inerrant in the original writings. The Bible being the revealed Word of God is the ground and foundation from which all claims of truth shall be substantiated. (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:21).

Third-wave restoration, like its 19th century counterpart, teaches that the New Testament is the unchanging standard for right conduct and moral behavior. Unlike

the 19th century version, third-wave restoration insists that proper conduct and morality must move from the personal to a corporate application. Right conduct and morality is bound up with the “witness of the Kingdom of God,” which itself rests in the unity of love and faith of the Church. Says Paulk, “the family is the first place where submission is demonstrated in the Kingdom. If a woman cannot submit to a spiritual husband, she should not expect to be able to submit to authority in the Kingdom of God. If a young man or a young woman cannot submit to a Christian mother or father, they do not understand the first principles of the Kingdom of God” (Paulk, 1986, 218). A significant portion of the moral code in third-wave restoration is submission to the “God ordained” authority of the various callings in the Church.

The strict organization and firm boundaries around who is “in” and who is “out,” an implicit code of who is genuine and who is not, and the group’s sense of hierarchy of human relationships give them a sectarian appearance that makes them candidates for this study in fundamentalist NRMs. Lending itself to this conclusion also is the movement’s reading of the New Testament that stands in firm opposition to Christian orthodoxy, such as preaching human victory over sin (Ammerman, 1991) and Paulk’s assertion that “the Church today is the incarnation of God in the world” (Paulk, 1986, 52).

The third-wave restoration congregations fit the criteria for fundamentalist NRMs. They are among a rapidly growing network of congregations in the world community. Challenges they face for the 21st century will, no doubt, revolve around their understanding of Christian unity vs. sectarianism, and how they will relate to and interact with secular culture. They will also likely wrestle with their biblical

hermeneutical practices, particularly as they relate to the challenge of developing a theology to sustain them over a long period of time.

Sociologist Max Weber, writing at the turn of the twentieth century, argued that the death of a charismatic leader is often the end of the current form of free religious movements, making them a one-generation phenomenon. After the departure of the charismatic leader, the options of the congregation are to either, become a part of a denominational structure, routinize its “free” practice, become more sectarian, or disperse (Weber, 1957). With the departure of Bishop Earl Paulk, amid his legal and ethical problems, from the Chapel Hill congregation, this is one such moment for that group. Not only must this congregation determine its direction, but also it must be questioning how to address the lack of accountability that fueled Paulk’s apparent abuse of his Church office. It is not for this study to render a determination there. For now, the task at hand requires understanding the context, history, theology and practices of this and other similar congregations.

History

A history of third-wave restorationism begins with the first, so-called, wave of the Charismatic Movement. The basic claim of charismatic Christians is that God has started something new with a fresh influx of God’s Spirit that will soon sweep the globe.

The Azusa Street (Los Angeles) revival of 1906-13 ignited this fire of Pentecostal renewal. Featured prominently in this outpouring of revival of the Pentecostal experience was “baptism with the Holy Spirit.” This “baptism by fire” was experienced following receiving Christ in baptism by water, and it is signaled by

glossolalia, or “speaking in tongues,” as revealed in the second chapter of the book of Acts.

The Azuza Street story actually begins some years earlier, in 1901, in Topeka, Kansas. There, at Charles Parham’s Bethel Bible School, a young female student, Agnes Ozman, spoke in tongues. Some weeks later, Parham himself was moved to where he had the same experience, and began to preach and teach that believers who sincerely desired to experience the Spirit would be blessed with the gift of tongues. In 1905, an African American Holiness preacher named William J. Seymour encountered Parham in Alvin, just outside of Houston, Texas. Seymour received the tongues experience and took it to Azuza Street in Los Angeles. Parham and Seymour both preached the revival of an apostolic doctrine, namely “baptism by the Holy Spirit,” as evidenced by speaking in tongues. The Azuza Street Revival events cut across denominational, ethnic, racial, and national lines, and with the incredible number of occurrences among various types of people, the revival was felt across the world. Inspired by the revival, smaller Spirit-filled groups sprang up across the U.S., as people began to take notice the phenomenon.

During the Azuza Street Revivals, Parham also taught that Jesus would return on the heels of a worldwide “latter rain” movement, from Joel 2:23, a time when the Holy Spirit would pour out miraculous gifts just before a great end-time harvest (Nation, 1992). This teaching lay dormant for several decades as Pentecostalism and Pentecostal denominations sprang up around the world. Direct ancestors of the third-wave restorationists, however, retained Parham’s teaching about the “latter rain” which would be signaled by a renewal of the spiritual gifts of the apostolic age. Then

in Saskatchewan, Canada, in 1948, another revival, featuring mass workings of the Spirit, received worldwide attention. Calling itself the “Latter Rain Movement,” this series of revivals was marked by prophesying, miraculous healings, the laying on of hands, and singing of Psalms and Scriptures set to music called “singing in the Spirit.” Baptism by fire and “laying on hands,” from Hebrews 6: 1-2, were taken quite literally in these revivals. The Latter Rain movement was fiercely anti-denominational and identified itself as profoundly different from “apostatized” Pentecostals.

At mid-century, Deliverance (healing) Revivals swept the United States. At the forefront of the deliverance days, from 1947 -1958, were people such as Oral Roberts, Williams Branham, and Gordon Lindsay. Branham’s teachings also influenced the Latter Rain Movement. Both the Latter Rain and Deliverance revivals taught the “laying on hands” was proof of a restoration of apostolic power in their theological circles, and that God was doing something special through them. Both revivals, the Latter Rain and the Deliverance, were fervently denounced by established Pentecostal denominations, such as the Assemblies of God. Rejected, for the most part, around the world, both revivals were dismissed as “fanaticism,” and continue to be denounced by many to this day. Both groups of adherents scattered as their movements faded away, but some of the preachers associated with these groups moved toward mainstream and remained visible into the 1960s.

From the FDI with Jane (pseudonym), a member of the third-wave restoration community:

P: My mother and stepfather were big into that and the way I was raised they were absolutely perfect men. Benny Hinn was the man of

God, Kenneth Copeland very big to them. Oral Roberts ... R. W. Shamrock they were into more of the fringe compared to what you see now on T.V. R.W. Shamrock, E.W. Kenyon ... they talked about raising people from the dead, and divine healing, and money.

Jane (pseudonym), remembered deliverance and healing revivals broadcast on television, during her childhood. In her interview, she shared that watching charismatic healing revivals was a part of the devotional routine in her family of origin.

Nation (1992) noted that many of the men who embraced the Latter Rain Movement in their early years, appeared on the scene again as part of the third wave of the charismatic movement that began in the 1960s and 70s. In this third wave, restorationism assumed a more prominent presence than it had before.

Third wave charismatics understood themselves as returning to the “full gospel” of the first century Church, complete with restored “signs and wonders,” that were a product of God’s blessing. They believed that God is in the process of restoring the Church to its true character as in the first century. Restoration’s corollary, the recovery of “true” worship, is the teaching that God’s manifested presence is evident by the display of spiritual gifts. “True” worship involves signing in tongues, clapping, shouting, singing prophecies and praise dancing and other forms of emotive, experiential practice. The Fivefold Ministry, the teaching that God is restoring apostles and prophets to the church, along with the commonly practiced offices of evangelists, pastors and teachers, as in Ephesians 4:11, is also being restored. The Laying on of Hands, the practice where church leaders particularly gifted with an anointing of the Holy Spirit for healing, perform this ritual to bestow

spiritual blessings and gifts on others. The gift of Prophecy, the practice of personal prophecy is said to have been restored to the Church in this wave. Finally, ‘unity of faith’ is a doctrine that teaches the Church will attain a global unity in faith just before Christ returns. This doctrine connects uniting the Church with the apocalypse and makes its completion especially urgent.

Moving toward the background in the third wave of the Charismatic Movement is the teaching of “baptism by fire” with its accompanying glossolalia. While it is not unusual to hear of “baptism by fire” in these congregations, the experience of glossolalia is not normative for or necessary to this subsequent baptism. My sense is that the third wave’s emphasis on the spiritual gifts of the *ekklesia*, places less emphasis on the gifts of the individual. In an interview with Subject 153, a 39-year-old man who was a member of and strong advocate for third-wave restoration religious expression, he spoke of the (older) requirement of glossolalia, stating that “... those faith movements that teach that you have to speak in tongues before you can get to heaven have it wrong.”

Dick Iverson’s *Present Day Truths* (1975) is considered “a classic manifesto in restorationism” (Nation, 1992, 29). Iverson, the senior pastor at Bible Temple in Portland, Oregon, has been called an influential player in the Restorationist movement, and Bible Temple Publishing, their books, tracts, and music have gained wide distribution through internet, mail order and Bible bookstores. Its Portland Bible College offers two- and four- year programs. Bible Temple also supports a grade school and a high school in Portland. Joining Iverson’s as a classic text is

Larry Tomczak's *Clap Your Hands, written in 1978* and revised and updated in 1988. Tomczak is also editor and founder of *People of Destiny* magazine.

Andrew Walker, a scholar trained in sociology and theology, and an ordained Anglican priest, began tracking the third-wave restorationists in England in the 1980s. Third-wave restorationist groups in the U.K. were known as the Plymouth Brethren and the Catholic Apostolic Church (Nation, 1992). The Plymouth Brethren group morphed into a "house church" movement in England, the phenomenon first tracked by Walker in the 1980's. In the first of what became a longitudinal study of the sociological phenomenon of "house churches," Walker observed that these restoration churches tended to fall into two groups. The first group, which he called R-1, tended to be more doctrinaire, emphasizing the restoration of primitive forms of worship as the basis for unity of the Church. The second group, R-2, stressed unity as the means by which the restoration of the early Church is accomplished (Nation, 1992).

In the second and subsequent phases of Walker's longitudinal study, he found that the R-1 and R-2 categories did not hold. The "house churches" had either divided, diversified, realigned, or diffused beyond his recognition, and he was clearly unable to track which group was which. Calling the house churches of England a movement that was once "radical," Walker speculates that the R-1 group, the more doctrinaire group, has incorporated some new features, such as the prosperity gospel and is now favoring large churches. Walker also suspects that, sociologically, third-wave restorationism is well on its way to becoming just another religious expression or even a denomination. Nevertheless, Walker estimated that the Restorationists

have nearly 10,000 adherents in England alone, making them a large chunk of the charismatic constituency there (Walker, 1998).

Back here in the U.S., however, third-wave restorationism is more of a theological pillar than it is a sociological phenomenon. In Atlanta in particular, the theological phenomenon has influenced the ministry of Earl Paulk of the Chapel Hill Harvester Church. The now 81-year-old Paulk, who attended Candler School of Theology and said to be the first person from a Pentecostal background to have done so, started his pastoral ministry at Hemphill Avenue Church of God in Atlanta. He founded the Harvester Ministry in 1960 with his wife, brother Don and his sister-in-law Clariece in the Little Five Points area of Atlanta. In 1972, the church moved to Decatur, Georgia, and became known as the Chapel Hill Harvester Church. They eventually built the K-Center, a large, almost Gothic building off Interstate 285. The newer building features a Christian shopping mall, and students from the nearby school, the Cathedral Academy and the Clariece Paulk Performing Arts Center, schooling students from all across metro Atlanta (Ammerman, 1991).

Paulk wrote *Ultimate Kingdom* in 1984 with a revised edition that appeared in 1986 and *Thy Kingdom Come* in 1988, both of which resound with Restorationist theological themes. Paulk's strongest chord is struck with his fundamental belief that until the Church accomplishes its mission to bring about "the unity of all believers," Jesus will not return to earth (1986). Paulk's books, and his ministry carried on the Christian Broadcasting Network, carried his restorationist message to tens of thousands of people every day. Paulk has written some 11 additional books, published by the congregation's K Dimension, or Kingdom, Publishers. Those books

include: *Satan unmasked* (1984), *Held in the heavens until* (1985), *Sex is God's idea* (1985), *To whom is God betrothed. The wounded body of Christ* (1985), *Thrust in the sickle and reap* (2nd ed.)(1986), *That the world may know* (1987), *Spiritual megatrends* (1988), *The prophetic community: God answers the prayer of his son* (1995), *One blood: healing the nation divided* (1996), *Your Pentecostal neighbor* (1958), *Forward in faith sermons* (1960). Paulk's biography, published also on the congregation's K Dimension Publishers, is Weeks, T., *The provoker: biography of Bishop Earl Paulk*.

Total Grace Christian Center credits its beginnings “in the heart of a young elementary school teacher and musician – Johnathan Elliot Alvarado” who sought out the spiritual cover and counsel of his “spiritual father” Apostle LaFayette Scales in Columbus, Ohio. Total Grace was commissioned by Apostle Scales and the eldership of the Rhema Christian Center in Columbus, starting out with three adults and nine teens (Total Grace Christian Center, 2008). The Rhema Christian Center, as the commissioning community for Total Grace, claims the following as its mission for its alliance of churches:

The purpose of **The Network of Local Churches, Inc.** is to provide Spiritual covering, support and covenant fellowship among Pastors, Five-Fold Ministers, and Churches that desire to build the Kingdom of God, through the Spirit of unity, *regardless of educational achievements, race or gender.*

Considering themselves still in adolescence, the Total Grace community articulates a “vision to be a Spirit-filled, multicultural community, developing people into Christian disciples” by great Biblical teaching and anointed worship (Total Grace Christian Center, 2008). Their ministries include collections of help, outreach, and

student groups. Worship involves, as they say, Biblical teaching and passionate, anointed worship, including liturgical dancers and special guest Psalmists, indicating their emphasis on Davidic worship forms.

Worship practices at Total Grace, like the Cathedral at Chapel Hill, are similar to those of many charismatic communities and of third-wave restorationism. In addition to the experiential, embodied practices associated with charismatic experience, their practices include reading aloud from the Scriptures, completing Scriptural references as they are started, giving testimonies, congregational praying, and sharing prophecies.

The third-wave restorationism teaches that they have no doctrine and carry no creeds. The main points of their theology are:

1. The Kingdom of God is happening now.
2. God is restoring the tabernacle of David.
3. The Church has fallen, but God is restoring her.
4. The re-emergence of the Fivefold Ministry.
5. The church is governed by elders (but the pastors are King and Queen). (Nation, 1992).
6. The “sons of God” will emerge.

These will be discussed in detail in “Theological Context” below.

Outside View

Sociological Context

Of these four styles or orientations proposed by Roozen, McKinney, and Carroll (1984) – activist, civic, sanctuary, and evangelistic – the sanctuary orientation most adequately describes these two Charismatic Restorationist congregations. To these Charismatic Restorationists, however, issues of politics, economics, and other civic concerns are “monitored” (Ammerman, 1991) as they keep their eyes on world

and community events for signs of “false religion,” the coming fall of Babylon, pervasive injustice and hypocrisy, and other indicators of the “last days.” These congregations are ever mindful that they are at war with the powers of Satan. War metaphors shape their language and victory in Christ is their goal. Accordingly, these congregations prefer their members to socialize among themselves, but teach that every adherent should be able to read “the signs of the times.” To quote Paulk, “blessed are they who know that in the midst of warfare, when Satan’s attack is strongest, Jesus Christ will return to rule and reign” (Paulk, 1986, 114). These congregations teach that these are dangerous and perilous times in which we live, and they encourage members to remain under the spiritual cover of the Church. Worship, then, is a celebration of the God in Christ who will triumph over evil, and a foretaste victory banquet of heaven.

To sum up, features of the sanctuary worldview important to these two congregations of third-wave restoration are:

- (future) or other worldly in their outlook (the Kingdom of God is here for those who can “see” and “experience”);
- these congregations provide a safe sanctuary for lost souls in a world that is extremely dangerous;
- a requirement to read the signs of the times and remain under the spiritual cover of the Church, fostering “introversion” and a sectarian/separation perspective, and,
- features a worldview constructed over and against that of a secular governments and false religions viewed as “Babylon” --- misguided,

These congregations are decidedly evangelistic, but they are very clear that they are at war with the powers of evil and falsity. They are not simply trying to transform the world; they are awaiting their moment to conquer the world with Christ.

Other sociological features of this NRM include Exclusive, Salvationistic, and Transformational. In most cases, these features are a consequence of the sanctuary worldview, in which adherents see their lives as caught up in the cosmic struggle of good versus evil.

Exclusivism. I have suggested that the radical “introversion” of these congregations stems from its concerns about the pervasiveness of evil and of God’s judgment upon the unrighteous. To quote from Paulk’s study of the book of Revelation:

“The ten horns in Revelation 17:12 represent ten humanistic kingdoms with the whore produced. Although the list might vary, I believe the following ten false gods of humanism will be included: first, the kingdom of the arts; second, the kingdom of education which began when God told Adam and Eve to abstain from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; third, the kingdom of commerce; fourth, the kingdom of industry; fifth, the kingdom of government; sixth, the kingdom of sports. The seventh false god is religions, including atheism, astrology, and the occult” (Paulk, 1986, 133).

Is anything left from which to withhold suspicion? Even people and family relationships are suspect, as Paulk has also said, “We must understand that when we arrive at the stage of immortality, we will view judgment upon the wicked as God views it. Righteous judgment is never viewed from the perspective of natural relationships (Paulk, 1986, 111).

Salvationistic. Third-wave restoration teaches that they are messengers to a dying world. They invite the world to join the mighty army of God to march over evil and triumph over sin (Ammerman, 1991). God is gathering a group of people to demonstrate God's "Kingdom now," as an alternative to the deceptions of humanism, such as the arts, education, and "false religions." As such, the salvation that third-wave restoration preaches is not just individualistic but corporate as well. Joining the army is not to save oneself; it is tantamount to saving the world.

Transformational. Like salvation, transformation is also corporate. Third-wave restoration argues that when the work of the Church, in its unity of purpose, finally exceeds the evil of the world, the Kingdom of God will be a manifested reality on earth. Creation is aching for transformation as it is wounded and sore from the work of Satan. The restoration of God's prophets in the Fivefold Ministry allows the Church to receive God's remedy for the evils of the world in fresh revelation for these perilous times. Without the restoration of the Fivefold Ministry and unity of the Church, judgment will fall individually in people's lives as well as collectively on entire nations. Thus, world transformation depends on the unity of the Church and the restoration of the Fivefold Ministry and other gifts of the first century Church.

A world-rejecting movement. Harkening back to Wallis' definition of a world rejecting NRM, world-rejecting movements are antagonistic to conventional society and requires that adherents distance themselves from mainstream social life. This group rejects the world to the extent that it is cloaked in armor and preparing for war with evil, which evident everywhere in the world. Third-wave restoration teaches that the world is irreparably corrupted by Satan and is doomed to judgment and finally,

destruction. This third-wave restoration form of world-rejection often becomes militaristic, invoking images of “Joel’s Army” and conquering the world for Christ.

Indeed, elements of Kingdom Now theology can teach that:

1. Satan usurped humanity's dominion over the earth through the temptation of Adam and Eve;
2. The unified and restored Church is God's instrument to bind Satan and grow closer to fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. “The Church is like a prophetic army. That army must have definable generals – apostles and prophets – who speak direction. The army will always have new recruits through the ministry of the evangelists and it will provide “basic training” through pastors and teachers. Victory in warfare depends on the efficiency of the army. Discernment distinguishes the differences between the Church of God and the harlot church” (Paulk, 1986, 130); finally,
3. Jesus cannot or will not return until the Church has surpassed the kingdoms of the world by gaining control of the earth's governmental and social institutions (the 10 false kingdoms of Revelation 17:12).

Third-wave restoration movements teach that the world is a frightening place, with the spiritual cover of the Church being the individual’s sole protection from evil. The power of a united Church, restored with the powers of the apostolic Church, can bind the force of evil and prepare the world for the Kingdom of God. Therefore, this NRM displays the following sociological characteristics: they are a sanctuary orientation movement, exclusivist, salvationistic, transformational, and world-rejecting. Sociological study of this NRM is much needed as the movement grows and leaderships change over the next generation. The future of this NRM will be most interesting to watch.

Theological Context

To extract a theology of these two congregations, I rely heavily on the published works of Earl Paulk, especially *Ultimate Kingdom*, published in 1984 and revised in 1986.

The major theological teachings that are unique to third-wave restorationism are:

1. The Kingdom of God is here.

“Kingdom now” theology begins with the teaching that God gave Adam and Eve freedom of choice, but through their new knowledge and freedom, they introduced sin into the world. At our time in history, through the restoration of apostles and prophets to the offices of the Church, and with the revelations these people have shared with the Church, God is restoring the Church to re-establish control over the world. God has revealed a plan that through a united, restored and mature Church, social institutions (including governments and laws) will be brought under God's authority.

The Church is presently involved in the battle of Armageddon (Paulk, 1986, 85). Humanity is also in the “millennial reign of Christ” now, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and united in spiritual oneness in Christ. Even now, the millennial reign of Christ dwells within us today. With Christ, humanity can rule and reign with Christ by the Word of God.

The “sons of God” are especially called to witness to the presence of the Kingdom in our time. When the Church has matured, unified and conquered the powers of evil in Armageddon, Christ can return. Conversely, “Jesus Christ cannot

return except for a mature, prepared bride without spot or wrinkle, who has authority through unity of faith and knowledge of the Bridegroom. The preparation of the Bride is the mission of the Church now” (Paulk, 1986, 143).

The restoration of the Church, therefore, is an eschatological necessity. There must be individual and corporate acceptance of God’s revealed truth. The Church requires every individual to submit to knowledge of the Truth, and worship of God is inseparable from knowledge of the Truth. The Church must also unveil the structure of the new Kingdom as the foundation of God’s rule and reign over the hearts of all of humanity. Therefore, the Second Advent of Christ is dependent upon the individual and Church witness to the Kingdom as it rests in the unity of love and faith (Paulk, 1986, 181).

This is a summary of Paulk’s Kingdom now theology. The Total Grace Community specifically affirms the “pre-millennial return of our Lord,” but also teaches that the individual and Church witness to the coming Kingdom reveals God’s redemptive plan to humanity.

2. God is restoring the tabernacle of David.

Restorationists assume a biblically prescribed order of worship and charismatics Christians look to the Book of Acts. Acts 15:16, restorationists say, has James referring to Amos 9:11, to worship in the tent erected by David for the Ark of the Covenant when the latter brought it to Jerusalem. Davidic liturgy foreshadowed worship in the New Covenant and is the perfect pattern for the New Testament Church, so third-wave restoration says it should be studied and copied. God is restoring new worship forms to the Church, and these newly restored forms of music

and praise, have the power to energize the Church in its warfare with Satan. Theater and dance appear as part of restorationist worship and special musicians bring forth prophetic worship through musical media.

Hand clapping, bowing, prophesying, “singing in the Spirit” are all forms of praise to ready for spiritual warfare. In addition, God loves the praise of God’s people. Says Paulk (1986), “When we sing in the Spirit, we join in worship, it sounds like many tongues and many voices. God enjoys that! Mingled voices in worship represent people from every social and political order of the world” (34). The restoration of Davidic worship forms is one of the ways in which third-wave restoration asserts that God is restoring and unifying the Church through their congregations.

3. The Church has fallen, but God is restoring her.

According to the third-wave restoration theology, those who preach a Cessation Doctrine (the age for spiritual gifts has ended), teach a futuristic eschatology, denominations, and false religions have broken, splintered, and hidden the Kingdom of God from human view. With Martin Luther and the reforming traditions of the 16th century, more and more light of God has come into human view such that, with the emergence of new apostles and prophets, humanity now has a clear view of what is needed to see Christ in glory in the Second Advent. Humanity now has this clear view because, at last, some witnesses to the Kingdom of God have told us that the reality of the Kingdom arrives when we enter Truth. Truth is achieved by allowing the work of the Holy Spirit into our lives and we must open ourselves to receive new revelations from God. When individuals open their minds to allow in the Spirit of

God to speak to us, we learn that God is restoring the Church in powerful new ways. The restored Church is in our midst and within our grasp -- individuals must unite into a Body of Christ that worships God in Truth. The gifts of the spirit and the restoration of the office of apostle and prophet who reveal God's new work to humanity proves that God is restoring the maturing, united, and true Church. According to Paulk (1986), "God is waiting for a demonstration of His power on earth. God awaits a people who will become His witnesses so that He can say to the world, "Now you see that my plan will work" (138).

Paulk's ecclesiology includes a very clear message that the Church is the incarnation of God in the world, a position that dovetails with his assertion that God requires humanity to unite in the Church before Jesus can return.

4. The re-emergence of the Fivefold Ministry.

The Fivefold Ministry refers to an ecclesiological system which argues for a system of church organization that reflects at least five roles in Christian community. Those five roles are those found in Ephesians 4:11-13, as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Restored to this list are the roles of apostles and prophets, offices that, according the charismatic church history, were lost during the Dark Ages of the Church. Thus, the term 'Fivefold Ministry' is usually a shorthand reference to the restored offices of apostle and prophet.

The term 'apostle' has re-emerged in the last three decades. How does the office of apostle look in the 21st century Church? The now Bishop Alvarado of Total Grace Christian Center was "the Apostle" prior to his 2006 consecration as bishop. He was commissioned by the Apostle Scales to start the ministry of Total Grace

Christian Center. These two men appear to serve the office of apostle as one who “founds and oversees local churches” (Goll, 2001, 290). Jim Goll (2001) defines the apostle’s role in restoring the first century church as “one called and sent by Christ to have the spiritual authority, character, gifts and abilities to reach and establish people in Kingdom truth and order” (ibid., 290). Apostles, therefore, organize the gifted people of God in such a way as to bear witness to the Kingdom now on earth.

In 1983, Bill Hamon received a revelation that God would raise up a series of end-time prophets to restore the ancient offices of apostles and prophets. Hamon, regarded by insiders as a modern prophet says in his book, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*:

“God is preparing His Church to become an invincible, unstoppable, unconquerable, overcoming Army of the Lord that subdues everything under Christ's feet. There will be a sovereign restorational move of God to activate all that is needed for His army to be and do what He has eternally purposed. The generals who will lead this army will be those who have progressively been prepared by incorporating every restorational truth into their life and ministry” (Hamon, 1997).

Hamon identifies those generals as prophets, who guide the work of spiritual warfare. The prophetic voice appears paramount in the spiritual battle at hand, because, in Paulk’s words, “the prophet is the only means God has of communicating to the world” (Paulk, 1983, 30). Through the words of prophecy, Paulk asserts that he and others have been advised that mysteries are unfolding today that have never been understood in the life of the Church. To a series of end-time prophets, a group with which Paulk identifies, “many things that were not recorded are now being revealed unto the sons of God by the power of the Holy Spirit” (1986, 6).

Clearly, the restored offices of apostle and prophet are associated with the presence of the Kingdom of God, the war with evil, as well as the end times. Prophecy opens the congregation to new revelation, insight and innovation and, according to restorationists, is an eschatological necessity in God's plan to redeem humanity.

5. The church is governed by elders (but the pastors are King and Queen).

With the restoration of the Fivefold Ministry, where does that leave elders in the 21st century restoration of the first century church? Both the congregations studied herein recognize the office of "elders." Their work and role is rather fuzzy, very different from the 19th century restorationist view of elders as the governing authority, second only to Christ. It is likely that the 21st century version appeals to the elder role in James 5:14: "is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." If this is the case, the office of elder is a ministry of service in third-wave restorationism. Further, the charismatic restorationist priority is on the ecclesial organization of the Fivefold Ministry as an eschatological necessity for the "Kingdom now." It may be that they believe the governing function of elder is secondary to the task of preparing the way for the Kingdom.

Viola (2008) has pointed out an over-emphasis on Fivefold Ministry in third-wave restorationism, which leads to obscuring the priesthood of all believers. "Charismatic clericalism," as he calls it, reinforces the "sit and soak" mentality that plagues the Body of Christ. A corollary to the "sit and soak" is a thinly veiled adoration of the charismatic congregational leaders. After worship at Total Grace, the

senior pastor and his wife assume their positions in tall, plush chairs just outside the doors of the worship space. The worshippers must file by the ministers to leave the worship space, with the exchange appearing less like the pastors greeting the congregation and more like the congregation showering praise upon its the ministers. Likewise, at the Cathedral at Chapel Hill, Earl Paulk conceded in one of his sermons that people grew upset at him if he did not visit the sick. His retort was, “call an elder! Part of the pursuit of the Kingdom is respecting the structure God has instituted.” Not infrequently did I hear that the senior leadership in both congregations was inaccessible. I also found that to be the case when I tried to contact the ministers by phone and email.

6. The “Sons of God” will emerge.

This “sons of God” teaching is, likely, the most criticized and controversial of all the restoration teachings. Paulk (1986) consistently uses the phrase, “manifestation of the sons of God.” In so doing, he talks of a generation in which the “baptism by fire” will burn away the chaff, and that we are now living in the chafing generation because the fruits of the Spirit have never before been poured out to the extent it has at this point in history. The “burning away” is God’s method of revealing, that is, manifesting, the “sons of God.”

For Paulk, the manifestation of the sons of God means the Word of God lived out as a witness in the lives of God’s people. In the world in which we live, one punctuated by constant “testings of God” (Paulk, 1986, 108) and the pervasiveness of evil, believers require the following provisions: God’s Word, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, spiritual covering through life in the Church, and an understanding of spiritual

authority (Paulk, 1986, 109). Only those people thoroughly established in spiritual truth will survive and thus, become the manifested as “sons of God.”

What this teaching does imply is a type of exclusivism whereby only believers who have experienced baptism of the Holy Spirit, are members of third-wave restoration congregations, and who acknowledge and/or practice Fivefold Ministry will survive the trial by fire from God. This suggests a certain arbitrariness on God’s part, by “testings,” and points to a blind legalistic practice on the part of the restored and unified Church.

Aside from the non-inclusive language in the phrase and those points noted above, the most audible criticism of Paulk’s “manifestation of the sons of God” is its close similarity to a teaching from the Latter Rain Revivals of the 1940s, called the “Manifest Sons of God.” With many historians of the charismatic movement suggesting that the Latter Rain Revivals are an ancestor of third-wave restorationism, there is small wonder why the two teachings are conflated.

Bullerwell (1987), a professor at Eastern Pentecostal Bible College, has identified five points at which the Latter Rain Movement was set apart from Pentecostal orthodoxy. They include: the impartation of gifts of the Spirit through prophecy; restoration of the offices of apostles and prophets to the church; claims of having received “eternal physical life;” espousing the idea of immortality; a claim to much singing in the Spirit; and, claiming that they alone were the Body of Christ.

Of particular interest to this discussion is the point about having received “eternal physical life.” The Manifest Sons of God teaching in the Latter Rain Movement asserted that they alone would be perfected by the Holy Spirit that, when

Christ returns, they would not pass through the grave (Bullerwell, 1987). I was not able to locate a primary source for the Latter Rain teachings, but deduction suggests that the adherents of the Latter Rain Revivals and its subsequent movement believed themselves to be living in the last days, and thus, some of them would not die before the return of Christ. This certainly reflects an inflated view of humanity and an exclusivist sense that only they “knew the signs.” Nevertheless, the overlap between Latter Rain and Paulk’s teachings may not be as significant as some of his critics suggest.

Paulk flirts with the idea of human perfectionism when he suggests that God requires humanity to perfect the Church so that Jesus can return. Says, Paulk,

Adam and Eve were placed in the world as the seed and expression of God. Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little gods. Seed remains true to its nature, bearing its own kind. When God said, "Let us make man in our image," He created us as little gods, but we have trouble comprehending this truth. We see ourselves as "little people" with very little power and dominion. Until we comprehend that we are little gods and we begin to act like little gods, we cannot manifest the Kingdom of God (Paulk, 1984, 96-97).

Even in his talk of perfectionism, there is no hint of a suggestion of immortality consistent with the Manifest Sons of God teaching.

The Total Grace Community has affirmed much of the outline above for themselves, as a part of their “Beliefs and Values.” Its ministers often preach a Kingdom now theology, but their “Beliefs and Values” statement directly references the “pre-millennial return of our Lord”:

SPECIAL CREATION: We believe the triune God created the universe apart from preexisting material and without any evolutionary process. We believe in the historicity of the first eleven chapters of Genesis.

SATAN: We believe that Satan was originally created a perfect being. He rebelled against God. As a result he became depraved, the devil and adversary of God and His people, the leader of a host of angels who fell with him. Satan has been judged and defeated at the cross and awaits his ultimate doom at the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9; 1 Thessalonians 3:5; Ephesians 2:2).

THE HOLY TRINITY: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit; coexistent, eternal, omniscient, omnipresent, all powerful. (Deut. 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Luke 1:35; John 1:14).

BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: There is for every believer whose heart has been cleansed, an endowment of "Power from on High." The Pentecostal baptism with the Holy Spirit, accompanied with speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. (Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-48; 15:8; 19:1-5; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 14:22).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS: If we abide in Him, and "follow on to know the Lord," it is possible to have the "signs" that are promised to follow believers in Mark 16:17-20 and the "spiritual gifts" spoken of in the twelfth chapter of 1 Corinthians in operation in our Assemblies, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ".

HEALING IN THE ATONEMENT: "Jesus Himself took our infirmities and our sicknesses" (Matthew 8:17), and "with his stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5). It is our blessed privilege to "lay hands on the sick" and to "anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord," and the "prayer of faith shall save the sick." (Mark 16:18; James 5:14-16).

THE PRE-MILLENNIAL RETURN OF OUR LORD: The rapture of the prepared and waiting saints, the great tribulation, the return of our Lord with His saints and the holy angels in power and great glory to reign on earth a thousand years. (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17; Matthew 25:31; Acts 1:11; Revelation 20:4; Jude 14-15).

ORDINANCES: We observe the Lord's Supper, (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23 - 26) and water baptism by immersion "In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19; Matthew 3:15, 17; Acts 2:38; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12). (Total Grace Christian Center, 2008).

The Total Grace community values spiritual gifts as “signs” promised to believers for perfecting the saints and edifying the Body of Christ. Worship is participation in God’s redemption of all believers and victory over evil. Personal salvation from individual sin is secondary to the victory of evil and redemption of the world. The insider’s view will make this more evident.

Inside View: Ethnography

The World Headquarters of Total Grace Christian Center (TGCC) is located on Covington Highway in the southern section of Decatur, Georgia. Grace Fellowship Ministries boasts two other locations in Gwinnett and Clayton counties. The World Headquarters is located in a former Target retail space, so there are acres of parking spaces outside its building of tens of thousands of square footage. Two worship services take place at the World Headquarters; one at 7:30 and another at 11:30 AM. Even so, the 11:30 worship consumes most of the space allotted it. A praise team begins the worship at 11:30 and, when they have completed their praise and glory to God, the worship space has usually filled. Many members must plan to arrive at noon, after the morning praise session.

If entering the main doors to the Headquarters Building, as insiders call it, the entrance to the worship space, with its majestic purple doors and plush purple drapery and upholstered chairs, is off just on the right. Straight ahead of me is a fixed, U-shaped information desk, where lay stacks of information on the many ministries associated with Grace Fellowship. Behind the desk are two uniformed security guards, who smile at people entering the space and seem to help people help

themselves to the stacks of information. On this particular Sunday, I find information about the Grace Fellowship Synod, and the flier tells me that this gathering is a:

Two day conclave to discuss matters of leadership, habit, discipline, government and doctrine pertinent to our church and to our fellowship. We have a myriad of ministry gifts that will share with us, imparting information, grace and wisdom to our Pastoral Staff, Ministers, Department Leaders, and Ministry Workers.

I found it very interesting that this charismatic community would call its two-day meeting a “synod.” Of equal interest to me at this information center, which I soon learned is called the “welcome desk” in the foyer, was the upcoming series of Sunday discipleship classes. Called the “Great Debate,” “this class will teach Christians how to give reasons for their hope by three kinds of apologetics: proof-presenting a rational basis for faith, defense-answering objections or unbelief, and offense-exposing the foolishness of unbelieving thought.” Another discipleship class, called “Spiritual Gifts,” promised to help its students to “discover new things about yourself and see why you act and think the way you do by learning seven motivational gifts and completing an extensive Spiritual Gifts Assessment. The class will also help you discover your place here at Total Grace.”

Behind the welcome desk, I spotted two offices with glass doors. The one office directly, but still some distance, behind the welcome desk featured double doors with apparent smaller offices off a wide central corridor. The entrance to this suite of offices read “Grace Lifelong Learning Center.” Just outside the Learning Center, I noticed another flier, detailing the upcoming Wednesday Christian Formation classes. The flier indicated that these classes would impact my life and would be addressing “Ephesians Chapter 6: The believer’s call to spiritual warfare.”

Adding more detail, the flier spoke of “the basics of spiritual warfare, the actions involved in spiritual warfare, and the armor of the warrior.” In addition, I learned that the Lifelong Learning Center routinely offered G.E.D. and E.S.L. classes that ran the course of a few months, computer literacy training, and this particular 8 weeks would offer a Spanish 101 and Total Fitness, an 8-week fitness and wellness boot camp.

Still outside the Learning Center and in the foyer, on my left is the entrance to the bookstore. In addition, a glass-walled large office, the Grace Ministries Bookstore featured a very large poster like image of Dr. Toni Alvarado, one that was likely 2.5 feet wide and 4 feet tall. (Seriously, the poster was almost as tall as I was.) Through the glass, I could see the many books in the store located mostly in one section and a wall that featured CDs and DVDs. Inside the store for closer inspection, I notice the CDs and DVDs are of the Grace Choirs and specially boxed sets of Bishop and Dr. Alvarado’s many sermons on a particular theme. Prominently displayed were Bishop Alvarado’s series on “The Gifts of the Spirit” and Dr. Alvarado’s “The Response Principle.”

Moving into the worship space, it is set up amphitheater style, with chairs fanning out and surrounding an elevated stage on three of four sides. I noted that the monthly prayer focus is “Praying for the Nations,” Ps. 22:27-28. The six-member praise team is already on the elevated stage. The full band with guitarists, drummers, and string instruments is already playing, the liturgical dancers, dressed in white, are already in movement. Hundreds of fairly plush, upholstered individual chairs are set up for worshippers and overhead four monitors are featuring close-ups of the individual band members as they play. There is no singing just yet, there is only

movement. The praise team is moving to the music, as are the liturgical dancers. I count eight dancers that seem to move between collecting as a group in front of the platform and fanning out into each of the eight aisles that divide the groups of chairs. Banners are set up around the semi-circular auditorium --- tall, large and colorful, those I can read say “All Nations”, “Majesty,” and “Come, Let Us Worship.” The burgundy chairs, the purple doors, the banners, the flags of purple/gold and white/gold the liturgical dancers carry on occasion – the atmosphere is majestic. This most certainly is a praise and celebration moment. It is a glorious opportunity to worship God.

The praise team begins to sing and the rapidly filling auditorium joins in song. Many of the worshippers are on their feet. They are waving their hands, shouting, praying. Likely, the quietest worshipper in the little corner where I found myself was me. The praise team leader said, “Can you do this?” as he moved his arm. “Can you do this?” and he raised his leg. “If so,” he says, “then God’s been good to you. Get on your feet and praise his name!” (Was he talking to me? It certainly felt as though he was ...)

From my interviews, I knew that congregation members wrote some of the music in both worship and praise time. I did not recognize any of the songs, though that does not necessarily mean that they were written locally. The monitors overhead displayed the lyrics to the song to which most of the people in the auditorium were standing:

Be glorified in the Heavens
Be glorified in the Earth
Be glorified in the Temple
Jesus, Jesus

Be Thou Glorified.

The cadence of the music changed with “Be Thou Glorified,” from a relatively quick paced beat to more of a 3/2, giving worshippers an opportunity to lift voice and arms “heavenward” as the praise leader said. From there, the praise team blended into “Oh Lord, We Magnify Your Name,” over which the praise leader said, “Jehovah is your battle this morning ... Jehovah God is your battle this morning! ... Jehovah is your battle this morning!” All of which drew an emotional response from some members of the audience. Ushers moved into each of the eight aisles with boxes of facial tissues, then quickly moved away to allow space for the liturgical dancers.

There was no worship bulletin. All the words an outsider needed to know would appear on the monitor. It occurred to me, however, that what an outsider does not know is that that is “scripted” on the bodies of these people who are members of this community. They know when and where to stand, when to move, when to sing, when to move their arms, when to look for tissues, when to greet their neighbors, when to pray, and so on. I was lost in the “embodied liturgy” of this community and it was obvious to me and everyone, who noticed, around me .

The praise and worship leader is saying “Give Him your unrehearsed song this morning (I’m thinking, “oh no, what am I supposed to do now?”) ... Let Him reside in you as you worship Him.”

I knew at this point it was time for me to find a space near the back of the auditorium so that I could do a little more observing and a little less (attempting to) participate. I moved toward the aisle to move to the back of the room and met a

snarling usher. I motioned to her to let assure her that I was not leaving, and was only moving to another seat.

I had also read that praise time functions in the liturgy as a kind of psychological warm-up, and I suspected that the command to “Give Him your unrehearsed song” was going to ignite some ecstatic praise. I wanted to be in a position to see it when it erupted.

It seems my move was premature. I saw no spontaneous ecstatic expression in that moment. The praise leader started with another song as the auditorium appeared nearly full (or perhaps I could better see the auditorium from my new vantage point in the back). The words to this newer song were “Your presence, Your glory, You’re welcome here. All honor, Dominion, Lord please be near.” One of the liturgical dancers appeared (from where I do not know) with a, maybe two foot square, cushion, upon which was perched a magnificent gold crown studded with purple, burgundy and green. I saw the crown’s details as the cameras followed it around as the dancer danced with it. The swirling (from the dance) crown appeared on the monitor. “All honor, Dominion ...” the praise team and the congregation sang. “We want you, we need you, we want to glorify your name.” That song did it (as far as I can tell).

A number of spontaneous eruptions began. An older woman, maybe 60-ish, began the round of response to the song. She stood and pushed her arms behind her, as if she would catch herself if she fell. Then she did fall, and in so doing burst into intermittent gasps and shouts of “glory! glory! glory!” The praise leader seemed to pick up that point --- “If you exist to glorify Him, just raise your hand!” A second

woman, likely the same age as the first, also began to erupt in emotion. She stomped, leaned forward, and stomped some more. The praise leader continued, “The name is exalted over all other...” The dancer with the crown continued to dance her swirl, seemingly unfettered by the ecstatic events. I found the dancer’s focus was amazing, given that she did not look over 19. Other dancers remained in the aisles, ushers darted in with their tissue boxes as needed, worshippers raised their hands for tissues and, aside from the emotional praise eruptions, everyone seemed to work in concert with everything that was going on in the auditorium.

A chaplain began the invocation and, for the first time, many, though not all worshippers sat down. I could see the platform for the first time since worship began. The chaplain started to pray even before the emotionality ceased --- she seemed to echoed it and, perhaps, reinforced it, “we believe you, we trust you, we love you, we need you ... we believe you, we trust you, we love you, we need you ... we believe you, we trust you, we love you, we need you ...” Again, some worshippers were moved to emotion. Some walked down to the front of the auditorium, in front of the lectern, which was a third tiered wonder with the purple and gold Total Grace crest of victory in a center glass panel. Only now am I realizing that the Total Grace logo looks something like a warrior’s shield. The two outside panels of this lectern were highlighted with white smoky glass. In front of the lectern were magnificent floral arrangements. To the right of the lectern were six, high back upholstered chairs, done in purple and burgundy. I saw small tables set up among the six chairs that held pitchers of water and two glasses. Today’s ministers were obviously set up in these chairs. The six-member praise team was on

the left of the stage and I recognized that the praise team leader was also the worship (music) leader.

A good sized group of worshippers had gathered in front of the lectern during the prayer, and as the congregational prayer ended, there appeared to be some time set aside of individual prayer concerns and needs. The worship leader simply started another song, with the praise team joining in, as the chaplain addressed the prayer concerns for the group gathered down front. This time, either the song was not intended to be congregational, or the priority during the invocation is placed on those individuals “at the altar.” The monitors did not display any song lyrics, rather, the cameras were fixed on the faces in prayer. Tears, faces of angst, joy, relief: the monitors displayed the faces of emotion among that small group, during their prayer time.

On this day, the ministry leaders appeared to be the worship (praise) leader, the chaplain, who handles pastoral care concerns, the senior pastor and pastor, Bishop and Dr. Alvarado, a guest, who was a Missionary Baptist preacher, and two other the ministers of the church. After introductions, announcements, and introduction of visitors, one of the Total Grace ministers on the platform raised the tithes and offering for the day. Among the many things he said, he indicated that the burgundy donation envelopes were for Episcopal support. Bishop Alvarado accepts no salary for his “labor of love at Total Grace” and lives completely on “love gifts.” I did notice that a number of burgundy envelopes were ready to go into the offering, because at Total Grace, worshippers take their donations and lay them in baskets in front of the lectern and the ministers (for everyone to see). After the

tithing events, which must have last 15 minutes, everyone took their seats, including the praise team, musicians, and dancers.

The morning message was taken from John 3:1-7, the Nicodemus exchange with Jesus. Of particular interest on this day was verse 5 that states: Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Bishop Alvarado, the afternoon preacher said: "Two people are in this exchange; the first person is Jesus. John couches it in the larger context of Jesus' public ministry and the Passover season. It calls attention to the auspicious greatness of our Christ as he turns water into wine, cleanses the temple, foretells His own death and resurrection, and teaches spiritual realities to religious people. The second person is Nicodemus: He was a ruler of the Jews. This means that he was a religious leader, a Pharisee, one who taught others about God. Because of his status in the religious community and reputation, he approached Jesus after dark. Nicodemus had either seen or heard of the miracles that Jesus performed and it was the miraculous that had drawn him to seek out Jesus. He had seen the signs and affirmed that God was with Him."

"Jesus said to Nicodemus, "unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The reality is that one must have a spiritual encounter in order to see clearly or to see the whole of what God desires to do in (one's) life. Though Nicodemus was a man of training and a man of some means, he had failed to recognize what life was all about. He had failed to recognize who this Jesus was in the human drama."

“He was being made vividly aware that without a spiritual encounter that leads to a born again experience one would never perceive the spiritual realities that were all around him. Jesus drew an interesting parallel between being born again and seeing the Kingdom of God. He insisted that if we did not experience one, the other was not a possibility. Some realities of life are not revealed to the uninitiated or dead in spirit. Those things could be “spiritual” in nature or “natural” events or courses of life. Jesus gave to Nicodemus the ultimate key to life temporal and eternal, spiritual and natural, theological and practical, that key was to be born again by the Spirit.”

“To Nicodemus, Jesus presented an understanding of existence in two realms, two planes, or two worlds. When one is born of the water, it means that one comes alive to the natural, temporal, or fleshly world around him. When one is born of the Spirit, it means that one comes alive to the supernatural realities that surround us in the everyday. Jesus connects being born of water and being born of Spirit. He connects the two because the born again experience involves and affects both realms. Both planes, both worlds. Do not separate the carnal or natural realm and the “spiritual” or heavenly realm. The born again experience impacts and influences both.”

“Finally, being born again is as much a journey as it is a particular moment in time. It is a repetition of the crisis or events in our spiritual life repeatedly in every other aspect of our lives. It is dead to the old and open to the new, again and again. Therefore, we are literally being born again, again, again, and again.”

“There are human ideas or intellectual inhibitions that can keep you from receiving the truth about God, yourself, your sin, or salvation? Being born again is an authentic spiritual encounter that makes other spiritual realities knowable. Without being born of water and Spirit, there is no seeing the Kingdom of God.”

I was immediately struck by what I would call the “charismatic” influences in that sermon. My background would have led me to read this text to be about baptism, at which time one dies to the world and receives the gift of the Holy Spirit, very much a one-time event. Here, the emphasis is on a spiritual encounter, presumably with the Holy Spirit, in which one is born anew and is aware of the supernatural and spiritual around her. One can then “see the signs,” the Bishop said at one point. Being born of water, which I assume is water baptism, and being born of Spirit, which I assume is baptism by the Spirit, are very much separated, though the two are connected.

My suspicions were correct. In wrapping up and offering discipleship to visitors, Bishop Alvarado mentions that “water baptism” is held every first Sunday at Headquarters and every second Sunday in Clayton county.

Challenges and Questions for This Community

The question of accountability immediately comes to mind as I consider the models for moral and faith development in these congregations. With a theology that teaches new revelation from God, how does the congregation view and receive new revelation? Does it hold the same authority as Biblical revelation? Where and how does context play into understanding new revelation? With the restoration of apostles and prophets, where is there accountability, when the office of “elder” is

diluted and the senior ministers are consecrated bishops? What is the role of the priesthood of all believers in these communities?

Another issue that troubles me is the adoration paid to the individuals who manifest the presence of spiritual gifts. If the gifted ones become inaccessible to the congregation, how do their gifts serve their respective communities?

I suspect that over the course of time, biblical hermeneutics will be a major question for these communities. For instance, is the passage at Acts 15:16 (below), in which James quotes Amos 9:11, a passage about worship? Is it a passage about the restoration of the House of David? Does this, in fact, reference new musical forms in worship? Is it appropriate to use these texts to sanction particular new worship forms as restored worship forms?

(Acts 15:16) After these things I will return, And I will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen; And I will build again the ruins thereof, And I will set it up:

(Amos 9:11) In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be.

Third-wave restoration communities enjoy the benefits of new kinds of worship forms that attract many of their members. One of the interviewees from these communities stated that he chose his worshipping community largely because of its expressed worship and musical forms. He was looking for, in his words, a “fresh expression” of God. My question is less about whether or not some fresh revelation is in play in these new musical forms, as it is one of assessing genuine movement of God, through a serious wrestling with the Bible, within the Church.

These communities interpret Scripture literally, but they also do so dogmatically. Outsiders and differences in opinions are met with suspicion, and small

wonder, with the emphasis on the congregations' war with the powers of evil. The emphasis on embodiment practices, with no written guides or instructions, is validated by these communities' charismatic biblical hermeneutic. As such, Knowers are easily distinguished from non-Knowers. Do Knowers in these communities know in more sophisticated ways because of their participation in these communities? Results of the DIT-2, FDI, and narrative analyses will be presented in the next chapter.

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Chapter 8: Results and Conclusions Across Five fNRMs

At the outset of this study, I defined my purpose here as a challenge to the “logics” of modern scientific inquiry, which I suspect may marginalize the adherents of fNRMs, by suggesting an accompanying practical theology that honors the persons who inhabit the cultures of these groups. In the past five chapters, I have attempted to lift to these pages, the story of this embodied researcher entering a living community, honoring the subjectivities of its adherents, and emerging with the community’s embedded narratives, challenges, histories, and a sense of its rituals. I have done so to develop the background for a continued qualitative inquiry into the practical wisdom taught within these communities.

This chapter, then, presents the results of the parallel studies of fNRMs, detailing a snapshot of the nature of each group’s quantitative developmental processes along with the qualitative, practical theological interpretations of representative narratives from each of these communities. Just as each community was earlier surveyed for its respective understandings of the normative and descriptive questions about the structure and contents of religious Knowing, the narrative analysis will ask similar questions of individuals from those groups. With Browning (1991), I anticipate that individuals constitute embodiments of practical theology and that their respective narratives will display the ways in which they understand their community’s practical wisdom as understood in its symbols, histories, stories, and rituals.

Quantitative Results

This study originated as a study of deconverts from fundamentalist NRMs. The data below include DIT-2 scores and FDI scores from deconverts, people who had recently left their respective traditions. Among the many hypotheses of the original “Deconverts” study was one that Deconverts would display higher FDI scores than their counterparts still in community.

This study, however, being more concerned with the FDI and DIT-2 scores of people from five fundamentalist NRMs, did not consider the “deconvert” data, other than to track them as distinct from the in-tradition members. The differences in the “deconvert” data and that for in-tradition members were not practically or statistically significantly different, suggesting that moral and faith development in those who left and those who remain in their respective traditions were not large and that it is appropriate to include them as one sample. Since the deconverts were also members, at least in the recent past, of the same religious community, their scores are included in the mean DIT-2 and FDI scores.

Results from DIT-2

The results of the 20 respondents’ P-scores, the measure that reflects their reliance on postconventional thinking, along with the Personal Interests Schema (S23), Maintaining Norms (S4) and Postconventional Schema (S56), are charted below.

Case Summaries

			Post Conventional (P score)	schema23	schema4	schema56
Five Religious Groups	H K	1	22.00	13.00	17.00	11.00
		2	42.50	8.00	11.00	17.00
		3	40.00	6.00	15.00	16.00
		4	57.50	4.00	13.00	23.00
		Total Mean	40.5000	7.7500	14.0000	16.7500
	Jeh W	1	56.00	14.00	8.00	28.00
		2	30.00	11.00	23.00	15.00
		3	66.00	2.00	15.00	33.00
		4	41.30	6.00	21.00	19.00
		Total Mean	48.3261	8.2500	16.7500	23.7500
	SDA	1	14.89	28.00	6.00	7.00
		2	38.00	14.00	13.00	19.00
		3	36.00	9.00	20.00	18.00
		4	44.00	14.00	14.00	22.00
		Total Mean	33.2234	16.2500	13.2500	16.5000
	coC	1	46.00	5.00	22.00	23.00
		2	31.03	7.00	13.00	9.00
		3	38.78	9.00	19.00	19.00
		4	64.00	4.00	10.00	32.00
		Total Mean	44.9525	6.2500	16.0000	20.7500
Charism	1	28.00	12.00	15.00	14.00	
	2	45.65	8.00	16.00	21.00	
	3	54.00	1.00	18.00	27.00	
	4	40.00	11.00	15.00	20.00	
	Total Mean	41.9130	8.0000	16.0000	20.5000	
Total	Mean	41.7830	9.3000	15.2000	19.6500	

Figure 1: Summary of Five NRMs by P- and Schema Scores

P-scores for the average adult are around 45 (Rest et al., 1999). Junior High students average in the 20s, Senior High students in the 30s, college students in the 40s, and professional school graduates in the 50s.

P-scores are the sum of scores from Kohlbergian Stages 5A, 5B, and 6 converted to a percentage. DIT P-scores are significantly correlated with developmental capacity measures of moral comprehension, recall and reconstruction and resolution of high stage arguments and other measures of cognitive development. The P-scores reflects a structural functional measure. For comparison, it is interesting

to look at the individual schema scores, to get a snapshot of the types of thinking that take place in these fNRM communities.

Schema scores are listed as S23 (Personal Interest), S4 (Maintaining Norms) and S56 (Postconventional).

The mean P- and three schema scores are graphed below.

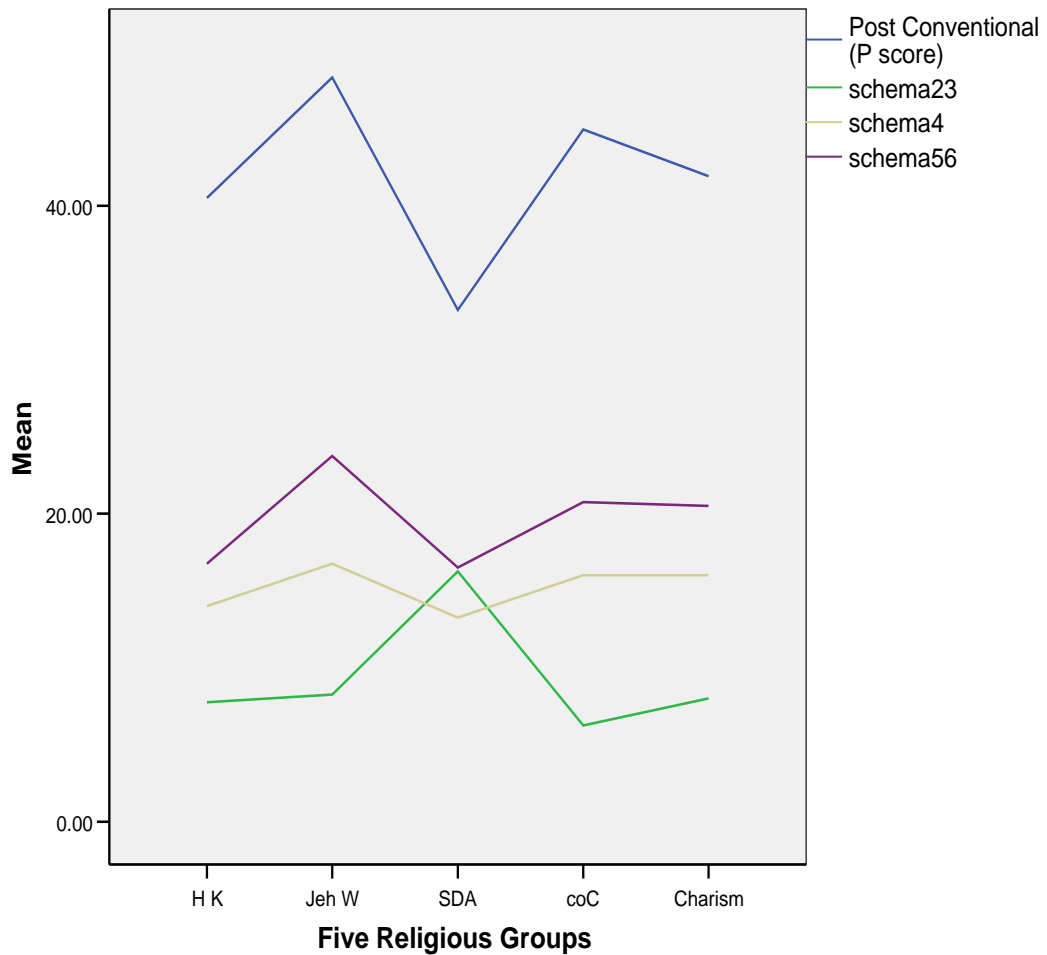


Figure 2: Mean P-scores with Schema Scores for 5 Religious Groups

Immediately, we can note the reliance upon S23 (Personal Interest) schema among Group 3, Seventh-day Adventist members, nearly to the same extent as their use of S56 (Postconventional) cognitive structures. In all other cases, the mean scores for S56 use exceeded S4 use, which in turn, exceeded the use of S23.

Results of FDI Classic Structural Analysis

The results of the FDI classic structural analysis are tabled below. The one way analysis of variance test comparing the mean FDI scores for the five religious groups showed no significant differences between the means of the FDI scores between groups ($F(4, 0.758) = 0.568, p=NS$). Post hoc analysis, LSD and Duncan, likewise, produced insignificant differences between groups.

Listed in the table are the subjects by group identification number, as well as the pseudonym by which they will be presented in the narrative analyses. Only those subjects profiled by narrative are given pseudonyms.

NRM	Subject ID	Pseudonym	FDI Cont. Score
1.00 H -Krishna	201		2.64
1.00	208	Ravi	2.47
1.00	239		3.00
1.00	263	Amrit	2.57
MEAN			2.67
2.00 Jeh W	170		2.49
2.00	177	Sarah	3.86
2.00	273	Paul	3.82
2.00	274		2.83
MEAN			3.25
3.00 SDA	037		2.85
3.00	237	Stephen	3.25
3.00	241	Maria	2.07
3.00	243		2.31
MEAN			2.62
4.00 Ch of Christ	086		2.81
4.00	286	Demarcus	2.00
4.00	287		3.45
4.00	288	Michelle	2.95
MEAN			2.80
5.00 Charisma	087	Duane	3.50
5.00	141		2.00
5.00	146	Jane	4.00
5.00	153		2.81
MEAN			3.07

Five Group Mean = 2.88

Figure 3: FDI Continuous Scores By Group ID and Membership

In looking for trends among these data, graphing is helpful. The graphs of the trends found among the five religious groups from their FDI continuous scores, the sum of all aspect scores, and their P-scores, S4, and S23 scores are noted below.

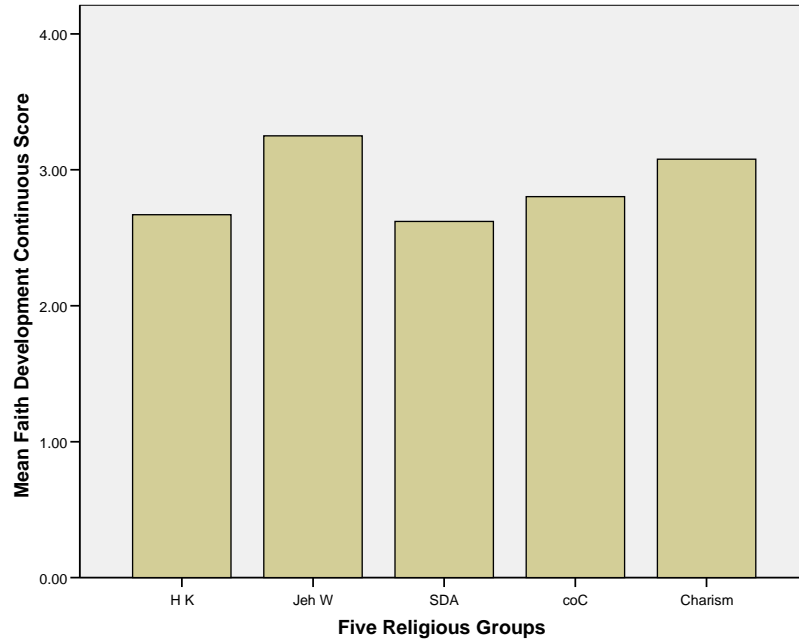


Figure 4: FDI Continuous Scores for 5 NRMs

Look at the mean P-Scores, representing Stage 5, 5B, and 6 type of postconventional thinking, for the 5 NRMs:

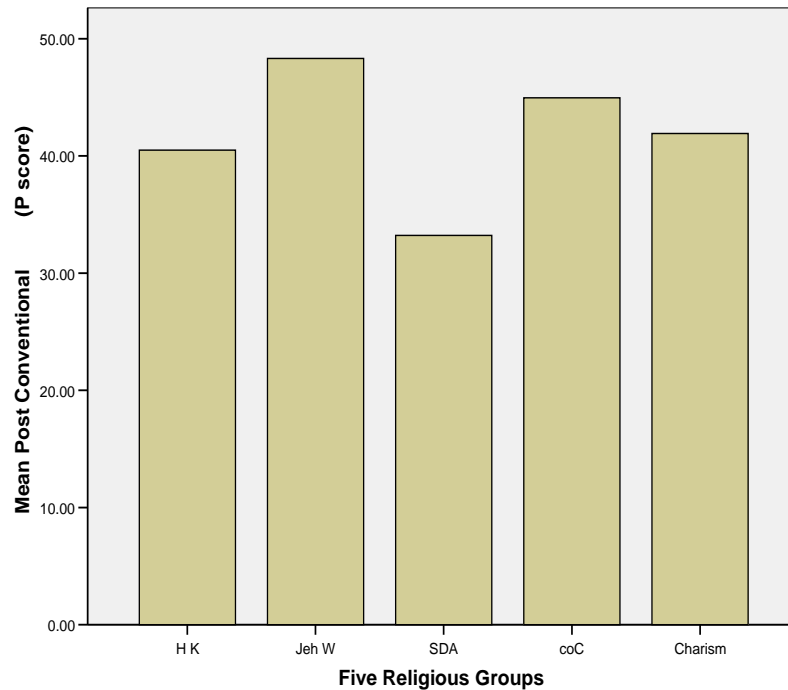


Figure 5: Mean P-Scores for 5 NRMs

We can spot one trend in the data for mean FDIs and P-scores. Groups 2, Jehovah's Witnesses, scored highest in both measures with Group 3, Seventh-day Adventists, scoring lowest in both measures. The ecstatic Hindus, the Hare Krishnas, Group 1, and the Charismatic Christians, Group 5, mean P-scores were about the same.

Perhaps the mean FDI scores for these groups, all of which scored in the Stage 3 range, suggest that the DIT-2 activates schemas other than those in the postconventional, S56, group. A look at the five group scores with the other schemas will be helpful.

With the five group scores on the FDI settling at about the Stage 3 Synthetic-Conventional level, this implies certain conventional thinking within these fNRMs.

Here is a look at the graph for the mean scores for S4, the Maintaining Norms schema.

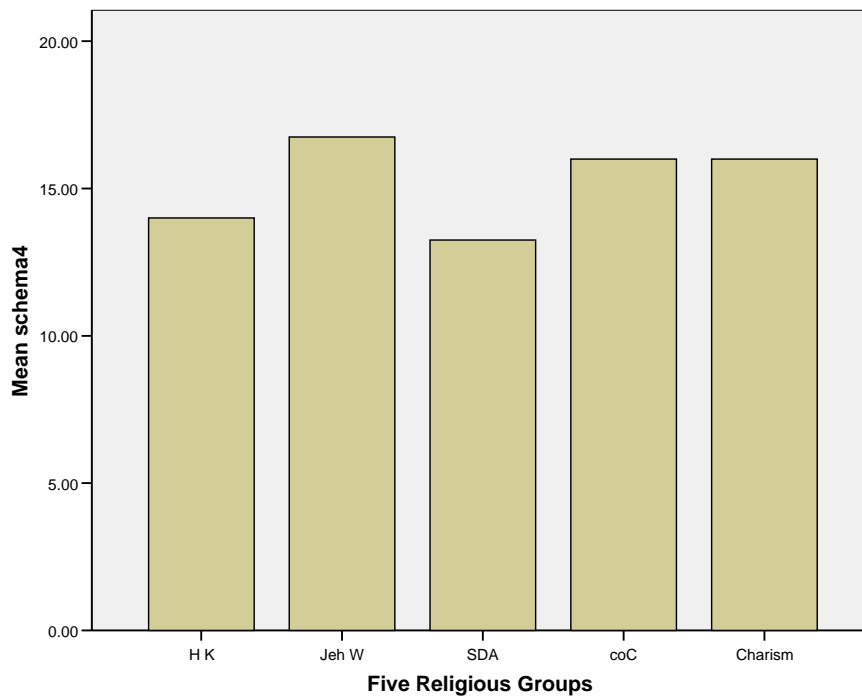


Figure 6: Mean Schema 4 Scores for 5 NRMs

This pattern more closely duplicates that of the FDI mean scores for each of the five groups. Reading across the FDI scores and the S4, Maintaining Norms schema, we find that Jehovah's Witnesses, Group 2 produced the highest scores and Seventh-day Adventists, Group 3, the lowest. Groups 4 and 5, members of the churches of Christ and the Third-Wave Restorationists, performed about the same in both the FDI and S4 measures.

What about the Personal Interest Schema, the S23 and the FDI scores? Recall that the Personal Interest Schema (S23) does not account for society as a whole. Indeed, in Kohlbergian theory, the stage 2 or 3 individual has yet to take account for the social groups, institutions, and interrelations of person and the larger world.

Consequently, the S23 schema does not consider issues with regard to society-wide cooperation and does not think through issues at a macro level of shared cooperation between groups, institutions, societies, etc. (Narvaez & Mitchell, 1999, 4).

It is fair to anticipate low Personal Interest (S23) scores in this group of 20 adults. Since S23 thinking is displaced by the development of more adequate reasoning at Maintaining Norms (S4) or Postconventional (S56), groups likely using the Personal Interest Schema (S23) more often might be predicted by the P-scores. If it is true that S4 and S56 displace S23, then it is likely that Group 3, Seventh-day Adventists are using S23 more than are the other groups.

That is in fact what these data revealed:

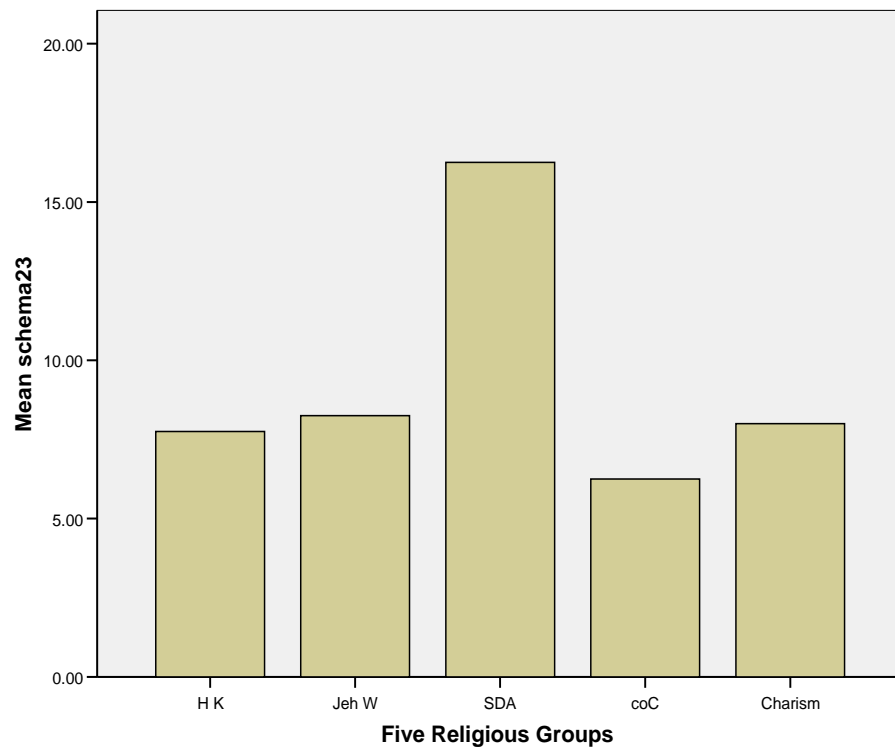


Figure 7: Mean Schema 23 Scores for 5 NRMs

Faith Development Theory and Religious Fundamentalism

Robert Shinn, in his article *Fundamentalism as a Case of Arrested Development*, applies Faith Development Theory to religious fundamentalism and suggests that fundamentalism is a manifestation of Fowler's Stage 3, Synthetic-Conventional faith (Shinn, 1984, 92; Adam, 2007, 7). Stage 3 typically arises in adolescence but can become a place of equilibrium for many adults, as well. It structures the ultimate environment in interpersonal terms and does not yet possess the autonomous judgment to construct and maintain an independent perspective. At Stage 3, a person has an "ideology," a more or less consistent cognitive structure of values and beliefs, but the individual has not objectified that worldview for examination. Differences in outlook are viewed as differences in the nature of other individuals (Fowler, 1981).

Consistent with Shinn's findings, the mean FDI scores for each of the five fNRM did not exceed 3.25 or a stage score of 3, with the overall group mean score at 2.88, hovering right around the Stage 3 level. The mean age for the entire sample is 41.45, ranging from the youngest group mean age of 37.35 (mean FDI = 3.07) for the charismatic Christians to the oldest group mean age of 44.25 (mean FDI = 2.80) in the members of the churches of Christ. Of Fowler's original sample of 359, he noted the frequency of Stage 3 at 9.4% in adults from 41-50. Conversely stated, the mean FDI scores for adults aged 41-50 settled at a Stage 4 (Fowler, 1981, 318).

Fowler's structural-developmental model would seem to imply, therefore, that the contents of fundamentalism, even in NRMs in both Christian and Hindu contexts, structure cognitive operations in such a way as to manifest themselves as a

conforming perspective, incapable of objectifying its own process, beliefs, values and symbol systems. In other words, Shinn's assertion that the cognitive form of fundamentalism represents a stage, an adolescent stage, in the development of more adequate methods of structuring religious experience is validated by the data collected in this study.

That cannot be the end of the story, however. The stated intent of triangulating methodologies for this study was precisely to side step the shortcomings of structural developmental theory's assumption that all Knowers are disembodied, autonomous, absolute and universal. The task involves accounting for the domain of the interpersonal, the psychodynamic, and cultural milieus involved in the transforming power of religious experience.

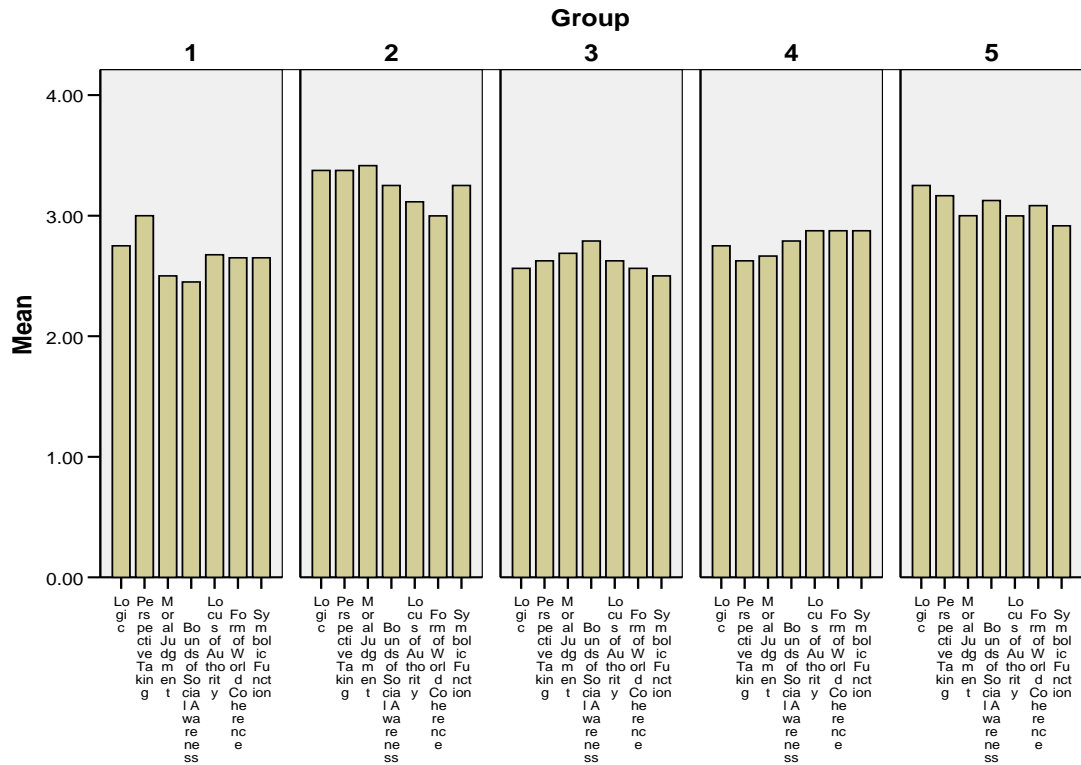
Streib's (2001, 2003) research with participants from fundamentalist faith traditions documents a shortcoming of the structural developmental theory to adequately describe what he suggests may be individual fundamentalist revivals of religious reasoning from earlier life stages. If FDI scoring procedures remain unmodified, Streib argues, cognitive structural theories of development with their structural, hierarchical, sequential and irreversible logic "cannot provide us with an explanatory framework for understanding fundamentalism" (205, 114).

In traditional faith development research, the researcher codes particular structures in the interview text to begin to construct an overall stage score in faith development. Though Faith Development Theory claims to incorporate more affective, behavioral and emotional factors, which had been minimized by Piaget, the practice of classical faith development research still marginalizes content, function,

emotion and life history (Streib, 2005, 104). Streib thus proposes a revised strategy for faith development research that occurs in three steps: structure (as classically described by Faith Development Theory and the Faith Development Interview), content and narrativity.

Since in “classical” faith development research each aspect is scored as part of the basis for an overall stage assignment, no further evaluative measures are employed using the individual aspects. Finding this disregard “problematic” for accounting for the diversity of faith structures, Streib (2005) suggests that keeping aspects (and scores) separate would allow researchers to consider various religious styles or differences in developmental niveaus (102). For instance, it may be worthy of note for research purposes if an individual displays a “worldly” perspective in aspects such as “perspective taking” or “locus of authority” but assumes a more existential or explicitly religious focus in “form of world coherence” or “symbolic function”. Streib notes that aspect-specific coding and scoring may be particularly relevant for research with fundamentalist individuals, as is the current study, especially as it is hypothesized that the fundamentalist orientation is an earlier religious stage or a return to “earlier styles that co-exist with later developmental achievements” (102-3).

Here is a graphical look at the five fundamentalist NRMs by their seven aspect scores: It may be helpful to look for trends among these aspects



- Legend**
Group 1 – Hare Krishna
Group 2 – Jehovah’s Witnesses
Group 3 – Seventh-day Adventists
Group 4 – churches of Christ
Group 5 – Charismatic Restorationists

Figure 8: Means of Seven Aspect Scores by Groups

Viewed by aspect scores, we gain another perspective on the fNRMs, one that may be accounted for by considering religious styles as suggested by aspect scores. More information on religious styles is in the “Discussion” section below. From the sociological literature review in Chapter 3, Shinn (1989) suggested that maturing in faith as a Hare Krishna would likely occur along the aspects of Form of World Coherence (Aspect F) and Symbolic Function (Aspect G). He cautioned, however, that FDT might not be the most adequate criteria by which to assess religious maturity of ISKCON devotees. With the four devotees Hare Krishnas in this study,

on average, the Form of World Coherence and Symbolic Function were both in the middle tier of the seven aspects. Their highest aspect score was Perspective Taking, which suggests their intense evangelistic practices, what they call “preaching” efforts, facilitate or require some degree of religious maturity in social perspective taking. Likewise for the Jehovah’s Witnesses, for whom witnessing to the world is an integral component of their religious identity and worldview. For Witnesses, their perspective taking abilities were exceeded only by their moral judgment. This finding actually mirrors what we have already seen in their P- and schema use scores.

Of the five groups, the mean Prospective Taking aspect score was the lowest among the members of the churches of Christ. From their history, the churches of Christ went through a period of “legalism,” where they taught that only they were worshipping and practicing New Testament Church correctly. Perhaps this attitude or worldview contributes to the low score here because this aspect reflects the ability to see the self in others and to put oneself in the other’s perspective.

Results of Narrative Analysis

With a hope of capturing Fowler’s “self-in-narrative” in the FDI and taking seriously Streib’s (2005) concerns about only scoring the structural elements of the FDI, narrative analysis offers another perspective on each of the study subjects.

Narratives have formal properties and each narrative has a function. A fully developed narrative ideally contains six common elements: an abstract (summary of the substance of the narrative), orientation (time, place, situation, participants), complicating action (sequence of events), evaluation (significance and meaning of the action, attitude of the narrator), resolution (what finally happened) and coda (returns

to the perspective of the present) (Labov, 1982). Attending to the structure of a narrative in this way reveals the means by which the teller-subject constructs stories from primary experiences, interprets their significance and evaluates them in light of the present (Riessman, 1993), 19).

Narrativization illustrates not only past actions but also constructs meaning, making it particularly useful with faith development theory. The Labovian structures is that teller-subjects state, in their evaluation clauses, how they want the narrative to be understood and offer, themselves, that narrative's intended meaning (Labov, 1982).

Using the Labovian structures outlined above, Attanucci (1991) demonstrates how multiple interpretations of the same teacher/parent related moral dilemma are revealed. She nicely described how the Labovian categories frame a subject's story from primary experience to significance, while teasing out embedded actions and values in that primary story (Attanucci, 1991). Attanucci used narrative analysis of real-life dilemmas and determined a parallel between 'classic' Labovian narrative structure and the types of narrative told in less structured interviews. Acknowledging that 'telling' is always an unfolding process between interviewer and participant, narratives with fewer questions reveal more in the participant's forms and terms (Attanucci, 1991, 318). Reading in the participants' forms allows us to better understand subjectivity captured in racialized, ethnic and gendered forms. It also allows the researcher to better understand participants' meaning making in their respective social worlds.

To this process of “overhearing” the telling of narrative, a few words should be stated about fundamentalist cultures. Hood et.al. (2005) notes that fundamentalist cultures are “intra-textual,” that is, their thinking is structured by the text. To this definition, I suspect that Hare Krishnas are thinking by/through the words of the guru or their founder-*acarya*, Prabhupada, whose voice and instruction has been internalized by the entire worldwide community.

When telling stories, it is anticipated that the subjects will reflect fundamentalist culture and discursive forms consistent with binary logical operations. The application of binary logic in fundamentalist culture allows the religious discourse to create sense out of an otherwise murky and ambiguous world. There are binary divisions between people (righteous/unrighteous), behaviors (good/evil), cosmologies (God/Satan), and post-mortal destinations (heaven/hell) (Adam, 2007, 5). Therefore, the “us” and “them” categories become abundantly clear, reinforcing a style of thinking that affirms itself and is reluctant to step outside its own boundaries to take perspective.

The FDI’s life tapestry exercise, while more of a guided interview than that used by Attanucci, offers two loosely structured narrative spaces, around aspect B (Perspective Taking) and aspect D (Social Awareness). Indeed, while scoring a coded interview, according to the 2004 Manual for Faith Development Research, pages of interview text are left unscored because they fail to contain answers to specific answers keyed to the aspect questions. From the otherwise overlooked pages of text, I will re-view the subjective narratives of 10 of the study participants, using a practical theological re-scripting as suggested by Cartledge (2007). This re-view

follows my ethnographic view of the study participants in their webs of connection in religious community. Understanding their religious context and through their narratives, I hope to better understand their personal constructions of faith and moral development.

Cartledge (2007) has modeled what he calls a “practical theological” re-scripting of religious experiences. In understanding such accounts, the practical theological task is to consider the implicit as well as the explicit theological content, how these experiences are articulated and, knowing more than just a little about our subjects’ theological context, advance the narratives forward to uncover new meaning. Following Cartledge (2007), to the following accounts of religious narratives and moral dilemmas, several interpretive frameworks will be brought to bear. These frameworks are among many tools in the toolbox, with some being a better fit for some narratives than others are.

The first framework will be philosophical, inspired by Caroline Franks Davis’ *The Evidential Force of Religious Experience*. Franks Davis observes that elements of the ‘non-cognitive’ and the ‘cognitive’ fuse together in religious experience. The ‘non-cognitive’ elements assume that there is such thing as naked experience, devoid of any interpretive content, where interpretive frameworks appear to be “tacked on” to the end of the narrative segment. ‘Cognitive’ elements, by contrast, assumes a critical realist position in relating the narrative, and understands experience as being mediated between models and metaphors, which are themselves cognitive functions. The cognitively derived models and metaphors are “reality depicting,” that is, over time they are grounded in communal narratives and histories (Cartledge, 2007, 25;

Franks Davis, 1989, 13). There are, then, reciprocal and facilitating relationships between concepts, beliefs, events, reflection, creative imagination and other cognitive and affective factors (Franks Davis, 1989, 147). For religious experience, Franks Davis offers the following interrelated categories:

1. Interpretive experiences are those that are viewed or spoken about from within a prior religious interpretive framework.
2. Quasi-sensory experiences are ones in which the presenting element is a physical sensation, or associated with one or more of the senses, e.g. visions, voices, sounds or tastes.
3. Revelatory experiences, those in which the individual acquires new convictions, inspiration, enlightenment or flashes of insight.
4. Regenerative experiences are those that a person's faith is renewed experiences improved spiritual health.
5. Numinous experiences are those in which the individual experiences profound "creature-consciousness," the "speck in the universe" feeling connected with feelings of awe and/or dread, viewing the *numen* as transcendent.
6. Mystical experiences are those that provide a sense of having apprehended an ultimate reality, but an awareness of freedom with the limitations of time, space and the self; may accompany a sense of oneness, bliss or serenity. (Cartledge, 26; Franks Davis, 33-65).

As with Cartledge and Franks Davis, our first task in considering an account of a religious experience or a moral dilemma is to look for clues to suggest the experience as some relationship with an interpretive framework (Cartledge, 2007, 27). We will then proceed through the Franks Davis typologies to attempt to match the experience with a typology.

Our second lens, helpful to use after the Franks Davis typologies, is the anthropological, dynamic ritual theory of Victor Turner outlined in his *The Ritual Process*. Turner views societal groups, as well as human personalities, as fluid and dynamic entities, moving between the fixed structures of normal routine and spheres of action that can be categorized as "liminal" or "betwixt and between" (1969, 94).

Liminal spaces, the in between spaces, allow for something else to occur. In the juxtaposition of the “normal” and the “in between,” individuals alter structures from the past, negotiate new identities, fuse fragmented selves, mend broken relationships, and connect with new realities. Ritual is one of the spheres of action that can provide individuals with liminal spaces and “in-between” moments by which to negotiate new selves, relationships, and so forth.

When the subject is “liminal”, she is in a stage in which the subject passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the previous or the coming state. Ambiguity in these liminal stages has the effect of prolonging development and hindering the negotiation of new identities, relationships and, in short, “moving on.” In this regard, ritual can facilitate the construction of new selves and relationships by providing the epistemic spaces for open, emotional, experiential, liminality to developmentally advance.

Our third lens will offer a sociological view. If dynamic ritual theory gives us a way to understand how a subject is negotiating new constructions of self and others, what is the impact of the new social arrangement that arises subsequent to liminal experiences? What are the elements of the social context in which a narrative of religious experience or moral dilemma is related? Are there any clues from fundamentalist or the NRM culture that should be brought to inform the sociological context?

Finally, this practical theological re-scripting would not serve our purposes if we failed to consider the experiential and cultural constructions related to our “ultimate concern,” in Tillich’s words, to the oral and performative dimensions of the

God-speak we call theology. With what we have come to know about the religious context in which these subjects are constructing themselves and their thinking about life, what can we say about how they have come to understand life in *ekklesia* and sociomoral issues?

In summary, this practical theological re-scripting is an attempt to take seriously the subjectivity of the participants of this study and, through their narratives, better understand their personal constructions of faith and moral development.

Group 1: Hare Krishnas

Primary Lesson: Ritual Constructions of “Right” Relationships

Ritual is at the center of daily life for the Hare Krishna devotee. Morning program, or *mangala aroti*, promptly begins every morning at 4:30AM, believed to be a most auspicious time of day. For temple devotees, *mangala aroti* is non-negotiable, as the temple room will be alive with ecstatic dance and song to wake even the sleepest devotee. Some *brahmacaris* and *brahmacarinis*, those who have taken a second initiation to a more saintly lifestyle, awaken at 3:00AM, to prepare for “deity service,” of waking the deities and serving their milk sweets to them.

The Hare Krishna interviewees, each intensely involved in the tradition’s ritual practices in one capacity or another, were two women and two men. One of the women, a white woman in her early 30s, grew up in the tradition and the other, in her late 20s, adopted the tradition just after she “walked out of Bosnia during the war.” Of the two men, one was African American, in his late 40s, and the other was a white man in his late 50s. The two men, Ravi and Amrit, are profiled below. First is a “helicopter view” of their respective FDI scores followed by their profiles.

The overall results of the FDI, the seven aspect and the overall continuous scores, for Ravi are as follows:

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
3.0	3.0	2.0	2.3	2.6	2.3	2.0	2.47

Figure 9: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Ravi (208)

The overall results of the FDI scores for Amrit are as follows:

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
3.0	3.0	2.0	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.57

Figure 10: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Amrit (263)

Ravi

Subject 208, given the pseudonym, “Ravi,” was introduced in the literature review of the Hare Krishna movement in Chapter 3, sharing his story of the shock of learning to wake at 4AM to begin the day in religious ritual. Ravi is an African American man in his late 40s, who moved into the ISKCON temple after his college freshman year Thanksgiving break. Ravi is now a householder who lives in the community, he is married to an equally visible white devotee, and they have some number of children. His adult daughter is also a very visible member of the Atlanta temple community. (In fact, his daughter was one of the few women I saw lead the Sunday Program *aroti*.) As a member of ISKCON for nearly 30 years, temple devotees call him “*prabhu*” (master or lord in Hindi) but he is also referred to as “*sadhu*” (reserved for ascetics and strong spiritual practitioners).

Ravi related some of his childhood religious experiences, growing up in a Baptist church. He actually related these questions to me several times on the various occasions I would see him at the Hare Krishna Temple: “why can’t we see God?” ... I was thinking, “Well, what’s the use in believing in Him? Why do we have a God that is hiding from you? If there is a God then why is He hiding and nobody knows what He looks like?” Therefore, Ravi became a part of a religious tradition in which God is immediate, visible and palpable; for Hare Krishnas, God is made of clay and wood, because they believe that Krishna is in the three-dimensional clay and wood images.

His narrative picks up in response to the question, “how can religious conflicts be resolved?”

I: If people disagree about a religious issue, how can such a religious conflict get resolved?

P: Ultimately, you would have to look back at the Scripture. First of course, their (religious) bodies have to accept that Scripture [as authoritative]. Otherwise, if you are arguing, I don’t know, I mean really if you look at Bible, *Bhagavad-gita*, and Bible and Qu’ran, the essence of them all is the same. We accept Jesus as the Son of God. You may say he is God. Yes, we want to argue with that, because He is in power of God.

I: Sure.

P: Therefore, we can say he is the Son of God. Even Allah mentioned he is also. God sends his love to us ... So he comes at particular times to establish *satya* or truth in living. If you look at all those Scriptures, the essence is there. Love is to serve God. The only way people are going to solve these religious conflicts is for people to accept these established religious Scriptures. You have to accept it from authority, too. Therefore, you have the proof; here is the example and here is the example. Otherwise, it is just mental separation and there are no results. You cannot interpret or write Scripture. It has to come from God Himself.

The answer to the question about religious conflict poses a moral dilemma for subjects and is scored in the classic FDI under Moral Judgment, Aspect C. If the

sociological elements of Ravi's response are considered first, i.e., the elements and social context, the literality of Ravi's religious tradition comes to the foreground. Vaisnavism, being a textual tradition, holds that scripture cannot be interpreted – it must be accepted “as is” and as authoritative. Prabhupada's translation of the *Gita* is named, *Bhagavad-gita As It Is*, for a reason.

The interpretive framework Ravi has in place appears to be his Baptist Christian upbringing, perhaps coupled with some assumptions about the interviewer (“You may say He (Jesus) is God”). His textually based Vaisnava perspective foregrounds, and defends itself, against this Christian background. Applying the Labovian structures: the abstract (religious conflicts are solved by looking at scriptures), orientation (a conversation of world religions from Vaisnavism), complicating action (Scriptures are the same but we might argue with your saying that Jesus is God), evaluation (as a demonstration that the essence of Bhagavad-gita, Bible and Qu'ran are the same, “we accept Jesus is the Son of God.” We accept that because “He is in the power of God”. “Even Allah says so”), resolution (“here is the example” and “here is the example”) and coda (if people don't accept the authority of scripture, there is mental separation and they will never see it together; it comes from God) (Labov, 1982).

When considering the content of this narrative, the thread most immediately apparent is Ravi's awareness of other religious cultures and where they interface with his own. “The nature of religious conflict, the essence of Bible, Bhagavad-gita and Qu'ran are the same,” offers Ravi. It is not a naïve assumption that “we are all the same,” because he gives us the complicating factor that “we (Vaisnavas) might argue

with your saying Jesus is God.” Rather, this narrative offers an acknowledgement that people maintain a variety of positions based on their respective traditions and of the authorities within those traditions. Ravi’s view of religious authority is not monolithic, nor is it “like mine.” This openness is due, in part, to the Hindu as well as Vaisnava teachings that religion is inclusive, because it views all of humanity as a reflection of God. Yet another part of this narrative suggests something stronger than a mere nod to humanity as a reflection of God. His statement, “Even Allah says so” is an affirmation statement, one that follows the simple argument form of “premise therefore conclusion.” In Ravi’s words, “... because He is in the power of God, therefore, He is the son of God.” Because he seems to connect “power of God” and “being God’s son,” the inference is that his is not a literal interpretation of the phrase “Son of God.” Perhaps he is not about bound by literal meanings as it would first appear.

In his second narrative segment, Ravi begins to construct the premise that God’s love comes to us (in our time), periodically, as God comes to establish truth. He states that “all of those” Scriptures (Qu’ran, Bhagavad-gita, Bible) say it is so. Once again, Ravi has acknowledged that Truth in God has taken many forms, understood differently in each religious culture. He then switches from his “God-talk” to question what it is to love God (perhaps in response to God’s love coming to us). Love is to serve God, he asserts, and with that stated, the narrative seems to shift toward its original problem solving stage.

Ravi states “people must accept these established religious scriptures,” determining the norms for making judgments, without which there will always be

“mental separation with no results.” The norms of every religious community must be their own scriptures, leading to the implicit conclusion, previously explicitly stated, that they are, in essence, the same. This likely connects back with the assertion that “God’s love comes to us to establish truth in living,” by suggesting that every religious community embraces its own story of Truth. “Here is an example” in one religious community; “and here is an example” in another community.

The statement “we have to accept it from authority, too” is likely the end of a sentence construction similar to one of, in his linguistic, “people have to accept these established religious scriptures” ... “and they have to accept it from authority, too.” The “it” of the second part of phrase, I believe, refers to the implicit norms received from authority, along with the norms of scriptures. It is a very clear deference to authority, but it also concedes that other religious authorities should be heard by the people in their respective traditions and that the people who practice those traditions should listen to their religious authorities.

The two sentences “you can’t interpret or write scripture” and “it has to come from God Himself” present the major problem for interpreting this moral dilemma. Despite his awareness that different religious groups hold different values and opinions, and despite his acknowledging the authority of other traditions’ authority, Ravi’s unmasked literalism forcefully ends the narrative segment just as he began it. Connecting his last two sentences with those that precede it, I believe, is the implication that the norms of scripture and of religious authority come from God, since people, “(you) can’t interpret or write scripture.”

This is a classic “fundamentalist” dilemma, presenting something of a moral dilemma in itself for the person who must interpret this narrative. In many ways, this subject’s response of privileging literality is a function of the religious system in which he has voluntarily spent 30 years. Consequently, I would argue from knowing the community and based on a narrative content analysis, that this subject displays elements of conventional moral thinking. He clearly defers to religious “laws” and to religious authorities, but clearly advocates adhering to norms and authority to religious community as essential to maintaining order and avoiding conflict.

When scoring this dilemma as a classic FDI interview, however, the content of reasoning is not nearly as important as its structure. All Faith Development Interviews (FDIs) were scored by an expert scorer and co-author of Fowler’s (1993) *Manual for Faith Development Research*. That expert’s detailed scoring comments for this narrative in this aspect were as follows: “focus is on literal scripture – concrete – resists the notion of interpreting scripture.” The expert scored this moral judgment aspect as a Stage 2 (Mythic-Literal). In my role as participant observer, I would have difficulty asserting that this subject “resists” the notion of interpreting scripture. My assessment would be that he inhabits a religious worldview that teaches that scripture, regardless of the community, is the inerrant and inspired Word of God. He is not a religious Knower detached from the stories and normative stance of his chosen community. The question becomes whether or not classic FDI scoring can account for Knowers who know differently than suggested in the manual.

One more example may be helpful here. The same aspect, moral judgment, is considered in the question “how do you explain the presence of evil in the world?”

Ravi answered, “My definition of evil is: Either you are serving God or you are serving the illusion that man is his body.” (Vaisnava theology maintains that humans are not their bodies, they are spirit souls.) He picks up, “there is nothing you can do to hurt the soul. You can’t physically hurt the soul ... identified with this body, therefore, you see pain, evil and all these other things. You do this (identify with this body) and something bad happens to you.”

Fowler’s expert scorer’s comment on this final statement was, “reciprocity,” validated by scoring criteria that reads, “based on instrumental reciprocity and they usually involve concrete consequences.” That person scored this section of narrative at a Stage 2. My sense of this statement, being placed just after one about the soul, is that Ravi was articulating the law of karma. I have heard His Holiness Bir Krishna maharaja, who is from a Jewish background, define karma by saying “in the tradition I grew up in, we said, “you reap what you sow.” The Atlanta Hare Krishna community, in which Ravi is very active, defines it this way on its web site, “Every action has its equal or greater reaction - this is a simple definition of karma. Whatever activity we do, good or bad, brings us good or bad reactions” (atlantaharekrishnas.org, 2008). Here again, Ravi simply articulates the values of his chosen community; he shares his religious sensibilities as he has been constructing the world, in his chosen community of faith, for over 30 years.

The expert scored Ravi’s interview at 2.47. Ravi’s P-score, the summary of neo-Kohlbergian Stage 5, 5B and 6 responses on the DIT2 was 42.50, exactly where one would expect a college educated man to score --- in his 40s.

Amrit

Subject 263, given the pseudonym “Amrit,” was a 57-year-old white male at the time of his interview. He lived in the temple *ashrama*, but in a small set of quarters all his own, likely being the oldest resident of the Atlanta temple at the time he was interviewed. He seemed to be a rather quiet man, so my interaction with and observations of him were far less frequent than the very public, visible, and gregarious Ravi. Amrit was, however, a significant Western voice, if you will, in the Sunday Program (*aroti* and *prasadam*), alongside the African American temple president. Therefore, though he was rather quiet, I suspect that he was not at all shy. From his interview, I learned that he had been divorced twice, grew up in a Catholic background, and joined the Hare Krishnas in his 30s. He was also a former instructor in and student of psychology, having pursued graduate study in clinical psychology, but did not complete a dissertation to receive his Ph.D. During his graduate studies, he connected with the Hare Krishna movement and became a rather serious disciple of the late Srila Prabhupada and one of the (living) *sannyasi* in particular.

Because the answers to his questions related to Moral Judgment, Aspect C, are so remarkably similar to those of Ravi, I will simply report them here along with very few remarks. Following those remarks, this narrative analysis will advance to other sections of the narrative to look at other aspects of the FDI.

I: How do you explain the presence of evil in the world?

P: Well, for that you could go into the easiest way to explain it from an eastern point of view is by reincarnation: to say that all actions have consequences. Like the Christians say, “well it’s a big mystery why there is evil here because this is all just sin; why would people suffer in such terrible ways? For example, like babies cripple or die, or children who are raped and murdered which happens on the side of the road. The concept of reincarnation means

that we bring the consequences of our past life into our next life. Another way of looking at it -- there are certain lessons that we have to learn to purify ourselves before we can get closer to God. We can not approach God in a dirty state or an unclear state. He gives us those opportunities to purify through suffering, basically, or corrections. Suppose in a past life a person murdered someone that means that there has to be some consequences to that action; maybe in that life that consequence doesn't come so it will come later. Maybe that person that murdered someone in the past life is reborn and their infant is murdered by a crazy girlfriend or a woman who is trying to get this baby to stop crying and beats his head out.

Here, Amrit offers a fuller explanation of karma and explains it in relation to the transmigration of the soul. That he used the word "reincarnation" reflects his sensitivity to speaking with a "karmie," who might not understand transmigration. Theologically speaking, however, the soul is neither incarnated nor reincarnated. The soul migrates from body to body depending upon the consequences of the past lives' actions.

I: One final question. If people disagree about a religious issue, how can such a religious conflict be resolved?

P: Communication, understanding. I went to an interfaith program the other night and Laurie Patton, a professor, head of the [religion] department actually, at Emory, thought up an interesting thing. She said, "you know" ... (she is Jewish she was raised in the Jewish tradition; that is still a dominant religion that's the reason she practices it), but she is an expert on Hindu religion. She is saying, "what has been very useful for me is to take a second religion. You have this one religion that is your primary religion and we also study and you practice and we go to services in another tradition, so that you may find something that's useful for you in that other tradition that doesn't exist in your own." People have to have the openness to say, "okay, now what I would call the essence of all religions have some truth to them and they are all passed back to the Lord. Maybe some are taking the local express or the local train and others are on the express train, but they all end up at the same place if you follow the practices. If you really want to move along a little faster and you want to find out a little more information, investigate some other system. Especially systems for God realization, they're a little more

involved than a real good religion, which is just on Sunday shaking hands with the person next to you.

I: So it is like internalization of the religion not just the social or internal action?

P: I know quite a bit about the Muslim religion because I read the Qu'ran. There is nothing in the Muslim religion that justifies these terror attacks. They may say they are fundamentalists and they are following the work of God, but there is nothing in the Qu'ran that says that. This whole terrorist tradition thing that is really big in the news and claims they started raising up in other parts of the Middle East are bogus. I think it is real that some Muslim clerics that claim to speak for Islam and their followers at the top say what they say, too. But the prophet would never testify to such a thing.

Amrit, like Ravi earlier, claims some truth in all religions and a common source of all religion being the same God. What is a little different from Ravi is that Amrit grounds authenticity in faithfully following the practices of religion, rather than following the religious authorities.

The expert's scoring of the first narrative, the "sin" segment, reads "Stage 2, sin is seen in terms of consequences to the self." On the second section of the narrative, the religious conflicts question, the comments read "Stage 2, he translates conflicts to failure to properly understand the scripture" (referring to the section on the Qu'ran). Again, from ethnographic observation of this community, I see Amrit looking to some central core of Islam, to the teachings of the prophet Mohammad, to understand the faithful execution of Islamic beliefs. He appears to be adjudicating truth claims ("some clerics who claim to speak for Islam" and those of "the prophet") based on the norms established in the Qu'ran. For Amrit, everything else, i.e., Islamic belief systems outside the norms established in the Qu'ran, are "bogus."

The following narrative section is based on the question coded in the Form of World Coherence, Aspect F:

I: Do you consider yourself a religious person, and what does that mean to you?

P: Depending, you know, there are like two ways in talking about spirituality or religion. I would say more spiritual than religious. Because religion, to me, implies like rituals, congregation and going to maybe a certain church and there is a certain amount of that in my life with the higher consciousness Krishna community. But I'm not kind of dedicated to traditions and rituals so much as I am to the spiritual practices. Practices that allow us to become more and more like God and God's image. The four regulatory principles -- like being a vegetarian, no use of sex, no intoxication, no gambling -- these practices. I mean that is a negative way of looking at things, but keeping those kind of like darker things out of our lives. Then chanting in higher Krishna consciousness, because that sound vibration in this tradition means that sound is the same as God. So when you hear that sound on your lips you are like—whether you feel it or not there is some communication there between you and the higher power.

The interpretive framework of this narrative juxtaposes the heavily ritualized Vaisnava worship, so central to the life of a devotee living in a temple *ashrama*, against the personal and meditative spiritual practices he appears to prefer. Applying the Labovian structures to this narrative: the abstract (the purpose of spiritual practice is to become more and more like God's image), orientation (a devotee living in the *ashrama*, where there are expectations to a highly ritualized lifestyle), complicating action ("I'm not so dedicated to traditions and rituals"), evaluation (as a spiritual person, I prefer the practices that allow me to communicate with a higher power), resolution (spiritual practices keep the "darker things out of our lives") and coda (chanting sound vibrations are much like communication with the higher power) (Labov, 1982).

By separating religion from spirituality in the way that Amrit does, he seems to make distinctions between communal and personal practices. “Religion, to me, implies ... rituals and going to church.” Rituals in Krishna consciousness are not the things to which he is dedicated. Amrit grounds his spiritual life in the personal practices of Krishna consciousness, using the adjective “higher” on three occasions in this one paragraph. His first use of “higher” refers to the spiritual consciousness of the Krishna devotee, signaling the beginning of a conversational thread we could call “practices that elevate us to communicate with God.”

In the first instance of “higher” consciousness, Amrit describes the purpose of the Four Regulatory Principles, to which every devotee vows during her first initiation into ISKCON. The purpose of these principles, says Amrit, even though they are stated in negative dogmatic terms (i.e., “don’t eat meat, “do not have sex outside of marriage,” “don’t gamble,” “don’t use drugs”), is to become more and more Godlike. Observing the foods one takes into the body and the manner in which the body engages the world is profoundly important for Krishna consciousness. Food should not only be vegetarian, but it should first be sanctified to Krishna as *prasadam*. It was Amrit who, in the context of the Sunday program ritual, would announce the dates of the next spiritual fasting days called *Ekadasi* (observed on the eleventh day of the fortnight of every lunar month, so most devotees awaited the announcement of the dates). The first regulatory principle implies a whole host of practices around food --“correct foods,” proper food preparation, and by whom food could be prepared -- all of which are observed to maintain the devotee’s personal

relationship with God. In Amrit's words, the food and three other regulatory principles exist "to keep the darker things out of our lives."

With Amrit's statement about the regulatory principles keeping "darker things" out of sight, he displays a capacity to analyze the effect of ritual, or in his words, spiritual practice, in constructing the identity of the self and especially the self-in-relationship with God. He sets apart a special role for chanting among his spiritual practices, narrating first, the Vaisnava theological position that Krishna is in the sound vibrations of chanting, and second, his experience of communication with the higher power while chanting "whether you feel it or not."

Even though it is not explicitly articulated, an experience of Turner-style liminality is implied in Amrit's words. "When you hear that sound on your lips you are like – ("betwixt and between," (Turner, 1969)) whether you feel it or not there is some communication ...". Chanting is allotted an hour and a half during the morning *aroti*, and for an advanced devotee who chants quickly, another few rounds is about another half hour of chanting to complete the basic requirement for the day. In the extensive daily time given to chanting, the Krishna devotee subject becomes liminal, passing through that crucial stage that shares no context with the past or the future states (Turner, 1969, 91). In the daily chanting ritual, done so aloud, the experience with Krishna in the sound is intensified, the experience of liminality heightened, the devotee self and the self with Krishna deepened and solidified. The anthropological result is a stronger identity in Krishna consciousness and a deeper bond with the wood and clay deities of the temple. In emotional terms, it is, as Amrit states,

“communication between you and the higher power” that is experiential as well, because it happens “whether you feel it or not.”

The Faith Development expert’s assessment of this narrative under Aspect F, from a structural perspective, is that the subject is “able to interpret but defers to the external authority,” scoring it at a Stage 3. The expert’s FDI continuous score for this subject was 2.67. From understanding his religious community, I would say this subject is capable of articulating an explicit system, e.g., “that’s a negative way to look at things (i.e., the Four Regulatory Principles)” and “I’m not dedicated to the traditions and rituals ...” Amrit’s P-score, the summary of neo-Kohlbergian Stage 5, 5B and 6 responses on the DIT2 was 40. Amrit, who is a college graduate and who had successfully completed several years of graduate training, scored lower than one would expect for his age and training.

Group 2: Jehovah’s Witnesses

Primary Lesson Learned: The Linguistic Construction of Moral and Religious Worlds

The strong central theocracy at the center of the Watch Tower Society of Jehovah’s Witnesses literally hands the content of its teachings to adherents through the publication of the Watchtower magazine and in its Bible studies and public talks. Among the issues negotiated by each Witness are religious identities within the context of the organization and the individual’s relationship with this theocracy.

The Jehovah’s Witness interviewees were three men and one woman. Two of the men were in their 40s. One of the men in their 40s was born in Germany and immigrated to the United States as a young adult. Another man was in his early 30s, a second-generation Jehovah’s Witness with biracial (black/white) parents. He had

lived outside of the United States with his parents, who were active Special Pioneers in the Watch Tower Society. The narratives below are from the woman in the group, Sarah, and the man, Paul, in his early 40s. In both narratives, the individual's relationship to the Watch Tower theocracy forms a central issue.

The bird's eye view of the FDI aspect and overall scores for Paul and Sarah are as follows:

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.5	3.25	4.0	3.82

Figure 11: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Paul (273)

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.3	3.75	4.0	3.86

Figure 12: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Sarah (177)

Paul

Subject 273 was given the pseudonym "Paul." He was a white 41-year-old elder in a Jehovah's Witness meeting at the time of his interview. Married with two children, Paul was a middle management executive in one of the Atlanta based Fortune 500 companies. He grew up in a family of Jehovah's Witnesses, was baptized as a Jehovah's Witness in high school, "but not before (he) had determined those key doctrinal issues" in which he was in agreement. Some of that determination was found in his research into, as a 12 year old, "that question on hell" in the Witness's New World Translation, a King James Version, the Living Bible and

an American Standard Version. He relates that later than same year, he looked to the same sources for answers about the Trinity, finding he “understood their line of reasoning and understood the statements, but couldn’t find the support (for the doctrine).”

After college, Paul spent a year as a volunteer at the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of New York’s main headquarters. It is this “full immersion” into the Watch Tower organization that Paul references in his narrative below:

I: Reflecting back on what we have just talked about, are there any marker events that are especially important to you?

P: That stay up in New York was a marker event. I have come to terms with the way you go about an organization. Are you a follower of an organization, or are you a follower of Jesus. You know you may work with these people because they are your brothers and you love them, but you don’t follow an organization. I mean, I don’t know of any corporation that ever loved anybody.

I: Right, yeah.

P: I have never met a corporation that did anything nice for anybody. Now I knew people who were members of the corporation, or who worked for the company who had fellow feelings, humanity. I think that for me that has been something that I have come to terms with. I hope that I’m right. I sure feel like I am because it seems like it hurts people not to feel that way. If you start viewing an organization as being foremost before people, then that’s the wrong thing to do. I don’t know if Jehovah Witnesses have ever gone that route where they felt like the way we were organized was more important than the people. If they do, I hope they come to terms with it, too. Because people will kind of come forward with my devotion to Jesus and Jehovah that has to come first. I sure don’t want to misplace my priorities by starting to put institutions above people.

This section of narrative is scored under the Bounds of Social Awareness, Aspect D, in the classic FDI. The growing edge for Paul is his identity as a Jehovah’s Witness and his position in the corporation for which he works. He is also an elder in

his Witness meeting group, thereby being in a position to observe the work of the Watch Tower theocracy, which literally provides scripted formats for every Sunday meeting, Bible studies and discussion groups. This growing edge and familiarity with the theocracy forms the interpretive framework from which this narrative emerges.

Applying the Labovian structures to this narrative: the abstract here is (because of my devotion to Jesus and Jehovah, people have priority over organization), orientation (both as a young man at Watch Tower after college and as the man he currently is, working for a corporation), complicating action (“I don’t know if ever...Watch Tower organization became more important than people?”), evaluation (if Watch Tower ever becomes more important than people, I hope they come to terms with that), resolution (“I hope that I’m right”) and coda (“I don’t want to misplace my priorities in putting institutions over people”).

Paul’s opening narration locates the tensions he experiences in his world arena and in the Watchtower organization. “The stay in New York” at Watchtower “was a marker event” because he had to come to terms with the organization. That he is talking about Watch Tower here is evidenced by the next sentence, “are you a follower of an organization or a follower of Jesus?” “Coming to terms” implies that there was some cognitive dissonance between what he observed in the organization and in being a “follower of Jesus.” “You may work for “these people” (the organization) as brothers (exclusive language, his) and love them, but one doesn’t follow an organization,” he states with concern. This narration was from the perspective of the young man who volunteered a year of his life to the Watch Tower Society.

The last sentence of the first narrative segment comes back to the perspective of the present. The linguistic style shifts as Paul changes his focus from the organization to the corporation. “The corporation” (has) “never loved anybody” and “never did anything nice for anybody.” This is a narrative about this work situation: “I knew people who worked for a company and had feelings, humanity.” Paul, however, has had to come to terms with how the corporation can be inhuman and have no “fellow feelings or humanity” just as he had to come to terms, as a young man, with the Watchtower organization being as it is. So it is the corporate setting in which he hopes he is correct, because “it seems like it hurts people not to feel” for humanity.

Again, Paul shifts his attention toward “the (Watch Tower) organization” immediately followed by a sentence questioning whether the Watch Tower Society has (ever) become more important than its people. The bridge between “the corporation” and “the organization,” lies in the sentence that states, “if you start viewing an organization as first and foremost ... is the wrong thing to do.” Paul repeats the “come to terms” word sequence just after referencing the Jehovah’s Witness organization a second time. I read his sentence “people will kind of come forward with my devotion to Jesus and Jehovah and that has to come first” to mean, “I prioritize Jesus and Jehovah first, and then people.” His coda, or resolution to the parallel tensions in religious organization and workplace becomes “I sure don’t want to misplace my priorities.”

Paul explicitly articulates concerns about the Watch Tower organization, although he “doesn’t know” if there has ever been a genuine reason for concern

about the theocracy assuming priority over its people. He implicitly relates having had some hesitations while working in New York, something with which he had to “come to terms.” He is also quite capable separating his moral judgments “people before organization” from the workings and positions of the Watch Tower Society, and may even be prepared to hold them accountable for placing people before group as its central concern, e.g., “I hope they come to terms with it, too.” He is equally capable of critiquing his work culture and appears as a countercultural presence to a corporate world that is willing hurt people by not displaying feelings of humanity.

The scoring expert’s objective, structural assessment of this narrative section was at a Stage 4, individuating-reflective, where the notes indicate “can critique JW ideology but only within its limited framework.” From an inside and more subjective view, however, I see Paul’s critique extending beyond the limited Jehovah’s Witness framework, identifying social and moral inequities that are inherent in any type of organization “I have to come to terms with the way you run an organization.” Using the coding and scoring criteria that reads “statements take the perspective of the person’s social group, though critically appropriated (Fowler, et.al., 2004, 46) may prove a problematic criteria for narratives such as this. Paul finds a neutral territory from which to question his religious organization, aligning himself as a “follower of Jehovah and Jesus” first. This may well be a case of content revealing a more sophisticated system of meaning that could be achieved from scoring structure and form.

The FDI scores from the expert placed Paul at a Stage 4, with a 3.82 overall score. Paul's P-score was 41.30, just where one would expect for a college graduate.

Sarah

Subject 177, given the pseudonym "Sarah," was interviewed as a 53-year-old white, female, college educated nurse, who had been disabled in a car accident the year before and was unable to continue her nursing career. She was divorced and her adult daughter and grandchildren lived with her. She grew up Methodist in a family with material comforts but emotional troubles. She became a Jehovah's Witness in early adulthood and married a Witness as well (it is not an acceptable practice to marry outside the tradition). She survived a stormy marriage but was helped by the "brothers" of the congregation in getting back on her feet. While she did not share her survival story with me, she did share details of many other women for whom help by "the brothers" altered the course of their lives.

Shortly after our interview, I received a letter from Sarah. She wrote, among other things, "Yeah, the DIT was interesting to fill out!" When I visited with her, she shared a *Watchtower* publication with me, called *Evolution vs. Creation* and was checking in with me to see what I thought of it. She wrote, "It has been my experience in speaking with people about faith in God and the Bible that this erroneous, unscientific and illogical doctrine, the 'sacred cow' of the so-called 'scientific community' is one of the most effective tolls used to break apart any real foundation for faith for the average 'church-goer.'" Well, you just let me know how you enjoy reading it!" She signed it, "may God bless all your efforts to come to a

better understanding of Him and His provisions in the psychology behind the building up of our faith, with warm Christian regards ...”

Sarah’s narrative begins with her responding to a comment I made about people leaving after the Sunday morning public talk and before the *Watchtower* Bible study. She, like Paul, helps me to understand the Watch Tower organization. Fowler’s scoring expert coded and scored this section under Aspect A, Form of Logic.

P: We have a very active program and emm, something that, that you said that where people get up and they leave after the public part.

I: Ehm.

P: Because they really don’t wanna be there for the .. *Watchtower* reading. The Bible-based talk is .. very specific and as you’ve noticed, we’ve marked up the Bible. It’s not in, not in ... many, many ... not in a lot of churches where they read like we do.

I: Right.

P: maybe the whole ... sermon of an hour or forty-five minutes is based on maybe three scriptures. We use 15, 20, sometimes 30 or 40 scriptures. Sometimes more than that in a talk. Because we don’t say anything we can’t we can’t prove. The *Watchtower* is the same way. .. *Watchtower* is exactly the same way. They don’t make an assertion .. in a paragraph in the *Watchtower* they can’t prove. So you usually got a minimum of one and sometimes five or six scriptures for every itty-bitty paragraph in that magazine. Soo they’re both .. Bible topics. And .. it’s important to realize that when .. the Watchtower Society puts out an article and says “okay” -- and this is one of the things I admire about this organization -- that is that they can adjust an understanding. And within a couple weeks the whole organization, 6 whatever million people all over the earth, have made that adjustment.

I: Can you give me an example of that?

P: Well, yeah. Back in ... 1994, I remember there was a ridiculous piece on the news about how Jehovah’s Witnesses weren’t predicting the end of the world anymore. Well, Jehovah’s Witnesses never predicted the end of the world. What they said was .. that in 1914, and we can show you through the Bible, that the period of the time called .. ah, the times of the Gentiles and that we are now in, “the last days.” That’s what we said. .. Aahm, it’s true, then back in .. 60s and 70s they were really thinking something significant was gonna happen in 1975. But I remember the ‘74 and ‘73 *Watchtowers* that said “You

guys .. things may not happen .. the way you may personally be expecting.” So .. don’t get your panties in a wad.” I’m sure that’s not how they said it. But you know, (all are laughing) [...] But they were saying “Don’t get unrealistic expectations. We know this is a significant year. But we’re not really sure what’s gonna happen.” Well, some individuals got really excited, you know. And, and they were upset that things did not happen the way they wanted them to back then. Well, in .. the interim years .. ahm, there were times that they felt that the term “generation”... When I say “they” I mean congregational members. Because I personally never had this understanding. But individuals may have ... banked a lot of ... a lot of personal investments, emotional investment, in the idea that generation was a destination of some twenty years.

P: Twenty- twenty-five years. Ahm, and .. that that’s what generation meant. And therefore, this is the one we’re living in and all the hardship and everything could possibly last beyond [all night?] tonight. Or .. this was individualized. Individuals in the congregation. My feeling is this is not what the Watchtower Society taught. When we came out, I think in 1994, with a magazine that said, “Okay guys, a generation .. is not a designation of time. It’s not a time increment. It’s a contemporary measure with the things that happened .. in that period of time. Those who were contemporary with Jesus were that generation. So generation is not an increment of time.” It is by its very nature limited somewhat. By time. For instance, I am contemporary with my grandmother. But I am not contemporary with everything that my grandmother was contemporary with because that was her generation. This is mine. And they give a very complete, thorough explanation. For those people who were really banking on things being over soon. Those individuals .. who were kinda going their own place mentally anyway, got a little upset about that. They did the articles. The articles took ... probably a week, .. maybe two, to go across the globe, you know. This day Sunday, that day Sunday.

I: Uhm.

P: I think they had different articles, I think in the eastern hemisphere and the western hemisphere. So that information was disseminated within a couple of weeks. And the whole organization understood now, “Okay guys, generation is not that -- is not an increment of time. It means contemporary nexus.” That’s what it means. That’s what is always meant. ... You know. And, (laughing) you know, sooo, that was one of the times, when the whole organization changed its thinking in, in one .. very short period of time. You don’t find this--

First, just one point of clarification: Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the International Bible Students, in his *Studies in the Scriptures*, initially published in

1891, makes the claim “that the deliverance of the saints must take place some time before 1914 ... just how long before 1914 the last living members of the body of Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed (Russell, 1910, vol. III, 228). Following Russell’s death, his successor, J.F. “Judge” Rutherford amended that statement, so that the 1923 edition of *Studies* read “that the deliverance of the saints must take place very soon after 1914 is manifest ... Just how long after 1914 Christ will be glorified, we are not directly informed” (Russell, 1924, vol. III, 228). Therefore, while Sarah asserted, “Jehovah’s Witnesses never predicted the end of the world,” it is true, but only in the legal terms that the International Bible Students did not become “Jehovah’s Witnesses” until 1931. I suspect, however, that she argues the organization did not predict the end of the world in 1914 from her reading/understanding of Rutherford’s 1923 *Studies in Scriptures*, which suggests that “the last days” are sometime after 1914.

I was not about to argue, however, with a woman who had so graciously consented to an interview. Her point was well taken, that the Watch Tower organization was capable of adjusting their positions and, therefore, the beliefs of “6 whatever million” Jehovah’s Witnesses, within a couple of publication cycles in as many weeks. This section of Sarah’s narrative also demonstrates what sociologist Beckford calls the mission of the Watch Tower Society – “the production and reproduction of people who are dedicated to the task of disseminating the group’s evangelical message through direct contact with the public” (Beckford, 1976, 173).

Sarah rationally defends the Watch Tower organization as a more effective method for Bible study than “a lot of churches” and the theocracy as something, she

says in a later section, “you don’t find in other religions.” The theocracy vs. “a lot of churches” and “this organization” over “other religions” forms the interpretive frame for this narrative. In my notes of this transcribed interview, I scribbled “a person of the book,” though I’m not sure whether I meant the Bible or the *Watchtower*. Sometimes the Watch Tower (Society) is referred to as “they,” e.g., “They don’t make an assertion ... in the Watchtower they can’t prove.” Sometimes the Watch Tower is “we,” e.g., “When we came out ... with a magazine that said ...”

Applying the Labovian structures to this narrative, they are: abstract (the Watch Tower Society is biblically based instruction that provides proof and complete explanations for Witnesses who will take it seriously), orientation (she is a rationally based, dutiful *Watchtower* reader and unofficial historian), complicating action (as an “accidental” *Watchtower* historian she has to account for the occasions the Watch Tower Society has been wrong in predicting the end of the world), evaluation (those who don’t follow the complete and thorough Watch Tower Society explanation “were kinda going their own place anyway”), resolution (“*Watchtower* did the articles”) and coda (“The correct information is disseminated with in a couple of weeks and the whole organization understood).

This narrative began as of a theocratic adjustment in response to a “ridiculous piece on the news” about Jehovah’s Witnesses and ended up being a statement of frustration with certain “congregational members” who were “kinda going their own place mentally anyway.” In between, Sarah considers the many definitions of “generation,” the term that, according to her, caused the confusion in the predictions of Armageddon. According to Sarah’s history and analysis, generation could refer to

a certain time increment and is often understood in terms of 20-25 years. Generation could also be understood in individualized terms, but the final word from the theocracy, according to Sarah, is that a generation “means contemporary nexus. ... that’s what it always meant.” That the “whole organization” refined its definition and could do so in a “very short period of time” is an impressive feat for Sarah, one that makes the Watch Tower unlike other organizations.

Scoring the structure of this argument, one is drawn to Sarah’s rationally constructed thesis and its methodical and systematic execution. Looking at the content of Sarah’s argument, her denial of the Watch Tower Society’s prophetic failure is striking. Not only did she deny the major prediction failure of 1914, but she also denies the more recent prophetic glitch in 1975. Penton,⁴⁶ a former Jehovah’s Witness and an historian of the movement, calls the prediction failure of 1975 a “significant event.” He documents a speech by Frederick Franz, the fourth president of the Watch Tower Society, who, in the spring of 1976 said, “Do you know why nothing happened in 1975? It is because *you* expected something to happen!” Franz placed the blame for the 1975 fiasco on the everyday-Witness community, diverting responsibility away from the unnamed leaders of the theocracy who had initially set the date and started the countdown on the clock of anticipation (Penton, 1997, 99-100). Sarah’s rationally based argument, then, echoes the stance of the Watch Tower Society post-1975, “well, some individuals got really excited, you know ... and they were upset that things didn’t happen the way they wanted them to.”

⁴⁶ M. James Penton was a third-generation Jehovah’s Witness and professor of history and religious studies at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, when his research into the Watch Tower Society, and the events of 1975, led to his being disfellowshipped from the organization. Penton’s history of the movement, *Apocalypse Delayed*, appeared in 1985; a second edition was published in 1997.

Sarah remembers *Watchtower* magazines in “’74 and ’73 that said, “you guys, things may not happen the way you may personally be expecting.”” Penton, on the other hand, indicates that the primary study tool for making new converts, *The Truth that Leads to Eternal Life*, published in 1968, not only highlighted the 1975 date, but also limited Bible studies for prospective converts to six months. “Time was so limited,” it suggested, “if people did not want ‘the Truth’ within that time, others should be given the chance before it was too late” (Penton, 1977, 94).

The FDI expert’s objective, structural analysis of this narrative scored this narrative segment under Form of Logic and at Stage 4, individuative-reflective. The expert commented, “Biblical analysis, reflective and definitive.” My insider peek, on the other hand, understands this narrative from its content, its history and its religious context. Sarah’s is a recollection of history of the Watch Tower Society, as told by the Watch Tower Society. The subject alternatively moves between “they” and “we” language, implying some level of being embedded within the narrative itself. At stake is Sarah’s worldview, about which she may be emotionally defensive, but she beautifully and rationally defends it by use of the evolving hermeneutical understanding of “generation.” Given the chance, I would likely code this, therefore, under Bounds of Social Awareness, aspect D.

The expert, viewing this as a Form of Logic narrative under aspect A, commented as follows on Sarah’s score sheet: “The JW ideology appears to teach Stage 2-level unquestioning obedience to their rules – but her close ties with community and ability to evaluate the rules and use as she sees fit maker her more of

a Stage 4.” Sarah’s FDI continuous score was 3.86. Sarah’s DIT P-score was 66, very high given that the average for college educated adults in the 40s.

Group 3: Seventh-day Adventists

Primary Lesson Learned: The Ritual Construction of Relationship with the Divine

Seventh-day Adventist communities, their practices, and teachings engender a strong relationship with the Divine and, more precisely, a strong sense of the nature of God’s character as evinced in humanity. Many of these teachings are unique to the tradition, so listening to their narratives becomes an exercise in understanding Adventist theology as it is demonstrated in the everyday lives of its adherents.

The Seventh-day Adventist interviewees were the most ethnically diverse group of the five in this study. Two were Latina, one in her 20s the other in her 30s, one was an African American man in his 40s and the other a European-American man in his late 50s. The latter was a graduate of a two-year college, the African American man held a master’s degree, and the two women were college graduates. The two interviewees profiled here, Maria and Stephen, illuminate the embodied practices and the theological narrative constructions typical of Adventists. Separating religious meanings from the practical rationality that undergirds these narratives allows us to see, all the better, their cognitive and affective structures at work (Browning, 1991).

The quick view of Maria and Stephen’s FDI aspect and global scores are as follows:

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
2.0	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.07

Figure 13: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Maria (241)

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
3.25	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.25

Figure 14: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Stephen (237)

Maria

Subject 241, given the pseudonym Maria, was, at the time of the interview, a 25-year-old Latina, a college graduate from the Southern Adventist University in Collegedale, Tennessee and had been married for two years. English is not her first language; she routinely speaks, as she said, “Spanglish.” She also complained, several times, of being bored with the interview; on a couple of occasions, she resisted answering some of the questions. This could have very well stemmed from the language issues.

Maria was baptized as an infant into Catholicism and attended parochial schools for many years. She joined the Seventh-day Adventist church after moving to Tennessee from Central America during her 8th grade year. When she entered public school that year, her English skills were still at an elementary level. She related, in her interview, stories of understanding only the math classes her first year in high school.

A significant marker event in Maria's teenage years was the loss of her cousin, D., who died as a small child. This section of her narrative speaks to death as understood in the Seventh-day Adventist tradition, which holds that the dead are unconscious until the righteous are resurrected at the Second Advent of Christ.

I: What does death means to you?

P: What does death means to me? It depends on how you live your life. Of course, I believe in God and I believe that there is going to be an end to this world. I don't believe that you die and go to heaven. When God comes back for whoever has followed his path He is going to wake-up everybody. All this time if you believe in God and you are thinking — I can't imagine we are not of his image any more. What we see is people have gotten worse. He can look like light; He would look like a tree. He doesn't look like those pictures. We are like a flurry of sin after all these years, according to what I read sometimes.

My aunt has the hope that she will see [my cousin]... again. If she stays true to her God, the one we are suppose to be like... If she follows him, because he [my cousin] is asleep right now. The one thing she is going to get to see him again because it says in the Bible that your husband is going to be able to come to you and children are going to be able to come to their parents. That's in the Bible. You are going to be reunited with your loved ones. If you were really close to your parents and you believe, everybody is going to wake up and everybody is going to visit God. That's why other religions work so hard at it. They don't see it, but it's the same belief it's just that it's different. When you know you have studied something in your religion it's the same thing. Everybody is supposed to see God and to be in God's perfect world that is supposed to be perfect. Everybody is going to wake-up and everybody going to get to see God. That's the only hope you have to this life. My aunt, she can't really say you know like now she is visiting a little, little church but I think her faith has been effective. It's amazing that the faith they have because they always say, "we are going to see [my cousin]." They will, because it says in the Bible that children will be with their parents.

Maria worked very hard at her explanation of the meaning of death, a question scored under the Form of World Coherence aspect. She conveyed her, perhaps, 25-year-old sense of not having worked through the meaning of death, despite the loss of her young cousin. The interpretive frame for this narrative must be what she understands as a difference in the theology of Seventh-day Adventism — "I believe

that there is going to be an end to this world ... I don't believe that you die and go to heaven.”

The Labovian structures here are: abstract (either everyone or the righteous will wake from their death slumber to be with their loved ones and with God), orientation (during the Second Advent), complicating action (one must stay true to God and live the “right” way), evaluation (my cousin’s mother’s faith has helped her understand she will see my cousin again), resolution (my cousin’s family’s faith is amazing) and coda (the Bible says that children will be with their parents) (Labov, 1982).

Maria begins her narrative by repeating the question: What does death mean to me? She then began to construct an answer along two trains of thought. One track answers the question of what happens to the righteous dead, “it depends on how you live your life” and “God comes back for whoever has followed his path.” The other track addresses the harsh separation of loved ones by death. By following that track, Maria comes close to expressing frustration with the reality of death by separation. On this track, she seems to perseverate, having no real answers and no evaluative system for grounding her assertion. Her only line of justification for her claim is a childlike appeal to fundamentalist literality -- “it says in the Bible,” “that’s in the Bible,” “because it says in the Bible.”

Maria’s first train of thought is more reflective than the latter. She starts to consider righteousness and its connections to the individual’s post-mortal outcome. Her first sentence here is “it depends on how you live your life,” immediately followed by “of course I believe in God and that there is going to be an end to this

world.” Maria lands herself squarely into the narratives of the Adventist tradition, and reinforces herself, digs her heels into the soil of that religious location in saying “I don’t believe you die and go to heaven.” Continuing her narrative, spoken as a young Adventist, Maria, concludes her thought with “when God comes back for whoever has followed his path...” The reflection for track one begins at the break in the narrative, with the insertion of “I can’t imagine we are not of His image any more ... people have gotten worse.” Indeed, it is much as if Maria goes elsewhere, recalling the “Great Controversy” of Adventism

The Great Controversy posits that all humanity is involved in an ongoing cosmic struggle of good and evil, in which the character of God, God’s law and sovereignty over the universe are in constant trial. Human sin is a distortion of the image of God in humanity, with the result being that the world is the setting for this universal conflict of good and evil (General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 2008). When Maria strays in her narrative, with the words, “I can’t imagine we are not in his image any more,” she is recalling the Great Controversy” and apparently seeks to square that with “what (she) reads sometimes.” This theme of the Great Controversy is repeated, later in the narrative, by the statement, “if she stays true to her God, the one we are supposed to be like.” Perhaps in this narrative segment Maria is working through theodicy questions such as “Why do we die? Why is there suffering in separation from loved ones?” Adventist teaching holds that the Great Controversy explains the reality of heartbreaking pain in the world by painting Satan as the author of cruelty and suffering. Perhaps she is recalling Adventist teachings “out loud,” not having processed them into her own thoughts and words. Eventually,

however, as if recalling the original question, “what happens when we die,” Maria begins track two.

Track two repeats the same answer to the one question that is causing Maria so much trouble. Her answer is “[My cousin], who is dead, will wake up, be united with his parents, and be with God in God’s perfect world.” Two other bits of information, offered in this narrative, do not fit this “wake up” formula. They are, “this is the only hope you have to this life,” and, despite their hard work (to be different?), other religions embrace the same belief in different ways.

Parenthetically speaking, it is an interesting exercise to hear how the Great Controversy sounds in the words of a 40-something Adventist in contrast to one of 25 years. The following interviewee brought up the Great Controversy, and named it as such, in response to the question “what is the purpose of human life?”

I: What do you think is the purpose of human life?

P: For me the purpose of human life is kind of two-fold. On the large perspective, if you look at it from God’s perspective, I think God has something at stake for humanity. My understanding of what is going on is called the Great Controversy between God and Satan. Satan in heaven, in Revelation, made some accusations about God’s character and about the order of heaven. There was a war in heaven. Angels like him were thrown out. It goes around the center of “Is God a benevolent God that does not limit one’s ability and creativity and being [...] as opposed to being stringent, dictatorial, and capricious.” Humanity’s purpose was to show and vindicate God’s character. God is fair and loving, kind and God is using humanity to show that type thing. In the process, will replenish heaven, to restore what has been destroyed. I think that is the purpose of human life on that level.

I: That is a cosmic level.

P: .On my level, I think the purpose of human life is to live in a way and in a manner that brings joy and happiness and alleviates as much pain and suffering, to do that for yourself and for others.

This interviewee thoroughly understood his tradition, its teaching, and was making meaning of the purpose of human life as a two-fold process, one human and one divine. For him, these two levels of process interface at one particular point: “humanity’s purpose is to show and vindicate God’s character.”

Unlike the above interviewee, that Maria is tied to the literal traditions of Adventism cannot be disputed. The expert’s score for this narrative was Stage 2, noted alongside the simple comment “literal.” The expert’s additional comments were “only people in therapy function at this low a level, but she seems to be doing okay.” Yet, Maria’s DIT P-score was 38, only slightly lower than one would expect for a college-educated woman. This P-score is inconsistent with that of an individual functioning at a level consistent with a child-like faith.

Stephen

Subject 237, whom I will call “Stephen,” was a married, white, male, 54-year-old at the time of his interview. An “Air Force brat,” in his words, Stephen was born in Germany, where he spoke German in the home of his family of origin and as his first language. He was a graduate of a two-year college and served in the Navy for many years. His faith interview produced a series of stories about his joining many different faith traditions, often in different parts of the world, before he settled back in the U.S. and in the Adventist church. During his interview, Stephen not only frequently quoted the Bible, he also quoted Ellen White, the charismatic voice of the 19th and early 20th century group. He has an almost fascination with the “last days,” often describing his relationships with others in terms of whether or not they believe

in the rapture or that we are living in the “last days.” When asked about “marker events,” he summarized his journey through the many faith traditions, alongside some of his own ideological viewpoints.

I: What would you identify as marker events that stand out?

P: I guess in a spiritual sense I consider the different churches I went to as stepping-stones. I went from Catholic thinking to the Lutheran church instead of learning about Jesus and then I went to the Pentecostal church when I learned about Jesus coming soon; and He loves you. It was kind of a free uneducated viewpoint of Jesus coming. When I got to the Baptists, it became more educated, another stepping stone up. It became, like, most organized in the thinking. When I joined the Adventist church, I feel like I have reached pretty much the top. I haven't seen anything higher than that yet. I feel I have reached the top as far as the understanding of scripture than any church I know. The interpretation of scripture is more perfected, literal, and spiritual in most of the areas; where the other ones were kind of missing.

...

But there is a time of judgment. It's kind of like it's is being started with all the dead. He's looking at all the dead and now we are living in a time where he is judging the living. Because when Jesus comes judgment has already been declared. It's not like he's coming going to rapture his people and then he going through the judgment scene. Judgment has already taken place. He has already decided who's going to be in heaven and who's going to be down below. Or is deciding I should say. Here is the problem with the churches -- the greater earthquake, the sun was black with sackcloth with hair and the moon became blood the stars were heavy and fell off on the earth. They have set dates for this the great earthquake. It was in November, 1753. Then, he said the sun became dark that happened in May 19, 1780. The whole sky lit up that was November 13, 1833. Now these all happened before the judgment scene. They take things symbolically. Sister White tells us that in the last days there is going to be a great shaking in the church. This is all talking about the church. The problem I have with these churches is that they take all of these symbolically.

In the classic FDI scoring, often times the narratives about marker events are not scored. Stephen's life experiences and marker events are quite rich, and this narrative section begged for inclusion. His interpretive frame is his series of steps toward a “perfected” church experience, which Stephen seems to define as the literal

interpretation of scripture coupled with a significant spiritual orientation. His steps, in this outline, are: Catholic → Lutheran → (then he “found Jesus”) → Pentecostal → (where he learned about the rapture and that Jesus loved him). The Pentecostal, in his case, the Church of God, viewpoint was “free and uneducated” position on the Second Advent. His time with the Baptists was another step up for Stephen, as they were “more organized” and “more educated.” Baptists → Adventism: his last destination, Adventism, leaves him feeling that he’s “reached the top,” because he has yet to spot anything “higher.” He finds Adventist interpretation of scripture the “most perfected, literal and spiritual in most of the area.”

Stephen justifies his decision of Adventism as the “highest” of the traditions in which he has been a part, by explaining, in part, the Adventist Sanctuary Doctrine. The Sanctuary Doctrine maintains that Jesus entered the inner apartment of the Sanctuary in heaven on October 22, 1844, where he pleads for the salvation of humanity annually on the Day of Atonement. Therefore, at the time of the Second Advent, the decisions about the salvation of every human soul were made on the previous Day of Atonement. Stephen describes the Sanctuary Doctrine thus:

... now we are living in a time where he is judging the living. Because when Jesus comes, judgment has already been declared. It’s not like he’s coming going to rapture his people and then he going through the judgment scene. Judgment has already taken place. He has already decided who’s going to be in heaven and who’s going to be down below. Or is deciding I should say.

Because the Sanctuary Doctrine resonates so strongly with Stephen, he can easily make the assessments he does in the first narrative sequence. “The Pentecostal knew about the “last days” but were “uneducated” in their related doctrine. The Baptists were “more educated,” understanding more about the “last days,” but in not

embracing dates as do Adventists, they are symbolically interpreting scripture so that Stephen has a “problem with the churches.” In his view, Ellen White’s prediction of the “shaking of the church,”... an earthquake shakes; it divides, it splits, buildings fall down. It’s a shaking thing so if you look at it that way, you say this is happening after an investigated judgment after 1844.” For Stephen, all points, and all logic, lead to a literal interpretation of scripture, a position he validates with the writings of Ellen White. His logic also leads him to conclude that “the churches” and their symbolic interpretations are incorrect, versus his Adventist tradition that is “more perfected,” structured, educated and organized.

This content analysis reveals Stephen to be a defensive literalist, but capable of constructing an argument to support his own belief systems. It is a mythic-literal system that is rationally justified, rendering it more complicated than simplistic Stage 2 thinking. This narrative segment suggests that Stephen carried around a set of beliefs about the last days through all the traditions of which he was a part, and only later found what he required of religious community in the Adventist tradition and in the charismatic spirituality of Ellen White.

Before interviewing Seventh-day Adventists, I had developed an informal set of questions for the community. I wondered if, as Teel (1995) suggested, Adventists were truly grappling with a set of “apocalyptic ethics,” if there really was an eschatologically urgent voice in current-day Adventism or if that voice had been silenced by group institutionalism. I suspect that I found something of that eschatological urgency in Stephen’s narrative. What is more, Teel (1995), an Adventist theologian, with Lawson (1995), a sociologist, agree that Adventism will

likely remain, intentionally so, on the periphery of contemporary society and the American religious mainstream. Stephen's narration, "the problem I have with the churches," rather than the "other churches," situates Stephen in the remnant institution that waits on the periphery for the return of Christ. In the meantime, with what he has learned from "Sister White" to guide him, his really is a voice crying out in the wilderness.

On the first narrative sequence, the "stepping stones to perfection," the expert scored a Stage 4, the Individuative-Reflective stage. The written comment was "ideological reference points." Stephen's response to the "groups" questions was scored at a Stage 3, producing a 3.5 score under the Bounds of Social Awareness, Aspect D. His overall FDI score, however, was 3.25 or a Stage 3. Stephen's DIT P-score was a respectable 44, slightly above the expected score for a man with his educational level.

Group 4: The churches of Christ Congregations

Primary Lesson Learned: The Rational Construction of Moral and Religious Instruction

From the ethnographic, sociological, and historical study of the churches of Christ, their rational construction of theology to practice becomes evident. Equally evident when the ethnographic study moves into narrative considerations is the way in which individual adherents rationally express the contents of their faith and their rationally-based understandings of living through their faith commitments.

The four subjects from the churches of Christ congregations were a diverse group of people, from the 57-year-old white woman interviewed here in Atlanta, to

the two African American men from within the tradition, to the 41-year-old white woman interviewed in Chattanooga. The two interviewees profiled below are Demarcus and Michelle, both of whom appear to be engaging in a serious rational wrestling match with some of the central tenets of Christian tradition.

Here are their FDI aspect and continuous scores:

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbol	C. Score
2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0

Figure 15: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Demarcus (286)

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbol	C. Score
3.0	3.0	2.33	3.33	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.95

Figure 16: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Michelle (288)

Demarcus

Demarcus was a married, African American man in his late 30s, who was just short of adversarial during our interview. Though I am not certain of the reason for his hostility, I suspect that he was annoyed or somewhat offended by the language in the consent form that preceded the interview and administration of the DIT-2. Some of the language from the consent form he signed was as follows:

If you are now a member of the new religious or fundamentalist group, you may be asked to answer a series of questions in an interview. You will be asked to talk with me about your faith, about your background and religious experience, about your history with religion, mysticism or with the church group, and you'll be asked to participate in an interview we call a "faith development interview." You can expect to talk to me, Andrea Green, for about two (2) hours. I will tape record the interviews with you, but in no way will your name be attached to the tape or will the

tape be identified as you. I will assign a number to the tape so that no one will learn who is on the tape recording and so you can feel free to answer my questions openly and honestly.

After reading the consent form, Demarcus immediately launched into a polemic about how his tradition was not a new religious group nor was it fundamentalist, it was the proper worship for the Church, unlike “Catholics who worship a pope.” He went on the offensive even before the questions began, charging that I was confused in worshipping as I do (and he knew nothing about that), because his community had the benefit of understanding the New Testament and was living the fruits of life in the Lord. The interview, following these statements, was difficult.

From others, I had heard that Demarcus was one to claim that he will never die. This is consistent with the “manifest sons of God” teaching in the Charismatic Restoration Movement, rather than the churches of Christ that:

Before Christ can come again, praise must be fully restored It will be with high praise of God in our mouth that we will conquer all our enemies, even the last enemy — death . . . There will be a generation of people created in the last days who will break their appointment with death (Iverson, 1975, 8).

Demarcus did not explicitly make the immortality claim to me nor would he affirm that we are living in the “last days;” he simply danced around it. It is a curious claim in his otherwise consistent presentation and reflection of the teaching of the churches of Christ. The question, “what does death mean to you? What do you think happens when we die?” is scored under Aspect F, Form of World Coherence. This is where Demarcus’ narrative begins.

I: What does death mean to you? What happens to us when we die?

P: Death is the consequence of sin. The wages of sin is death. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Death and suffering are the consequence of living outside the will of God.

I: Living outside the will of God? Doesn't everyone die? What do you think happens when everyone dies?

P: The gift of God is eternal life. When we live within the will of the Father, we shall never die.

I: Are you saying that you will never die?

P. Right.

I: So what is eternal life?

P: Living among the Glory of God.

That Demarcus constructed his narrative in binary oppositions is obvious: sin=death; God=life. Perhaps the binaries functioned in such a way as to create the sense of hostility during the interview. He was right so I, therefore, had to be wrong and, perhaps, that is why he needed to tell me that I was confused. He had already placed me in the category of “wrong” when I named his tradition, by my request for the interview, as “fundamentalist.” In retrospect, I wished I had asked for his definition of “fundamentalist.”

Binary constructions are often simplistic, holistic and charged with value (Adam, 2007). They are simplistic in that they render the complex world into two diametrically opposed poles. They view the person holistically, affirming a person as a full human being, based on his or her beliefs; they are validating in that the whole person has been recognized as “saved” or “enlightened” in the community of faith. Fundamentalist binaries are charged with value in that “getting it wrong” carries consequences of eternal life or death, or being grouped with the lost Others of the

world who fail to grasp their respective communal knowledge as the final knowledge needed for spiritual survival.

I: What does it mean to you that you are a religious person?

P: It means that God is pleased with my life, if means that I am living inside the will of God, it means that the blood of Jesus covers me.

The binaries here are 1) God is pleased/opposed to displeased, 2) living inside the will of God/opposed to outside, 3) Jesus covers him/ as opposed to not covering him. Another possibility here is that he was constructing “he was covered by the blood of Jesus” and I was not, hence the hostility. By relating some of the cognitive-cultural contents of his fundamentalism in response to the question about being “a religious person,” Demarcus revealed that being a religious person involves structuring his cognitive world and aligning his cultural sensibilities in the “right” (side of the binary) way. Similarly, in an earlier moment in the interview, Demarcus, a county sheriff’s deputy, shared that he wanted to open a group home for “5 or 6 kids” currently in state custody. His plan was that “they need some home training, some structure. Some of them aren’t getting that at home” ... and “house them and provide them structure, get them to school, get them involved in sports, teach them about Jesus Christ – that will help get them on track.” This narrative reinforces a sense that for Demarcus, the “right” way to live is to be “on track,” which involves structuring life, relationships, and thoughts toward the proper side of the binary. The binary structure reinforces the integrity of this religious Knower, who can consistently find confirmation in his culture that he is “right.” That consistent reinforcement enables this religious Knower in his avoidance of ambiguity and thus,

will delay or prevent the spiritual crises that might propel his advancement into a more adequate way of structuring his religious worldview. The binaries function to keep him comfortable in Knowing in the way that he does.

Newberg (2001), has attempted to define a neurotheology, directing attention to the “binary operator” of the left parietal lobe of the brain. This brain center is a neural network that acts on sensory data to organize and modulate it in specific ways. The binary operator, therefore, facilitates the construction of binary opposites, such as good/evil, right/wrong, saved/saved. The binary operator is also particularly active in the generation and validation of myth. The contrast of these binary opposites, such as human/divine, predicts the cognitive constructions of the polar tensions that are typical of mythic story. “The mind/brain can then operate on a myth as it is elaborated by a particular culture, extracting explicit meanings from the myth and deducing various conclusions from elements of the myth” (Newberg, 2001). So if element ‘A’ of the myth is true, the mind concludes that ‘X’ must be the likely consequence for ‘A’ and ‘Y’ can be safely concluded as a result of ‘A.’ This sequence of logic and deduction, based on a worldview constructed from dualistic oppositions, generates the subjective sense of pure causality, the sense that causality is the single and only underlying principle of reality (D’Aquili & Newberg, 1999).

This sense of pure causality generated by the binary operator --- could it explain Demarcus’ apparent deduction that “death comes from sin; (I don’t sin); therefore I will not die?” Perhaps it is or is not. If Newberg is correct, then we might predict an FDI outcome suggesting Demarcus constructs his faith in mythic-literal ways. Newberg’s theory also helps illuminate how binary oppositions facilitate the

acceptance of the narratives of faith and story. What this theory does not do, however, is predict how Demarcus otherwise orders his thinking,

Demarcus' P-score from the DIT-2 was 46, where the average college-educated adult male is 45, and provides an interesting contrast to his simplistic, binary, and mythic religious expression. Demarcus attended but did not complete college. His FDI continuous score was 2.0, making him a Stage 2, Mythic-Literal Faith using Fowler's stages.

Michelle

Subject 288, called Michelle for this study, was a white woman in her early 40s and interviewed in Chattanooga. She was the first member of the churches of Christ interviewed for this study. The short exchange examined below is in response to the "ritual" question and would, under classic coding for faith development, fall under the Symbolic Function, Aspect G. I am proposing to re-read this exchange as a moral dilemma for Michelle. I believe this narrative offers several rich nuggets for moral insight when viewed from an "ethic of care."

Gilligan advanced a theory that the cultures of maleness and of femaleness engender different values and priorities in the lives of men and women. Where men, and thus Kohlberg's theory, value autonomy and independence, women, and Gilligan's theory, value caretaking and establishing equality in relationships. So women move from an initial position of caring for self, to responsibility to others, often at the expense of self, to a universal ethical position defined by an acceptance of the principle of care in the lives of others as well as ourselves (Gilligan, 1982).

What I am suggesting is that under the “ethic of care,” the following is a narration of a moral dilemma:

I: Are there any religious ideals similar to rituals that are important to you?

P: I enjoy taking the Lord’s Supper every Sunday, because of what it symbolizes for me.

I: What does it symbolize for you?

P: The incredible sacrifice that God made for us, with a child, with flesh of his flesh. It did not mean nearly as much to me until I became a parent. Actually, before I was baptized it was a stumbling block for me. I could not imagine why God would sacrifice His Son for somebody like me. I don’t know if I was intimidated or mystified. After I became a parent, you realize what unconditional love really is by that sacrifice.

There are some very clear clues here that this narrative has an interpretive framework. The abstract here is (I enjoy the ritual of remembering the sacrifice God made for me), orientation (reflection during childhood and in parenthood), complicating action (why would God sacrifice God’s Son for me?), evaluation (was I intimidated or mystified?), resolution (God unconditionally loves me) and coda (I now understand God’s unconditional love because I am a parent).

In reading for the “ethic of care,” there is a reading for Self-in-narrative, for the “me” voice. Michelle is saying “when I was a child and before I was baptized, I could not understand why God would sacrifice Jesus, God’s Son for me.” She wonders if she just could not understand (mystified) or if the idea that God would sacrifice God’s Son was too overwhelming for her to comprehend (intimidated). And why would God do that for “me,” where the “me” voice, in her earlier years, was struggling with whether or not she was worthy of God’s sacrifice. The dilemma here is what is at stake for the Self – that God sacrificed God’s Son, Jesus, with fears that

the Self may not be worth it. Implicit in this dilemma is the question to Self, “would I sacrifice a child, flesh of (my) flesh for others?”

In the reading for “care,” Michelle characterizes care as unconditional love. She implies that she has learned unconditional love in her relationships with her children and that she understands that unconditional love to be a part of the relationship God has with her. God’s unconditional love for her was prior to her awareness of understanding of it. Her care for God in God’s sacrifice is explicit; her care for Jesus in the unspoken mystery of His atonement is implicit in this narrative. There is also care for herself, as Michelle accepts that God loves her unconditionally and she enjoys observing the memorial that signifies that unconditional love.

Therefore, the moral dilemma for Michelle centered on the fairness of the death of Jesus and the implication of His death for her. In her maturity and through her relationships with her children, Michelle has embraced what God’s “unconditional love really is,” ... “the incredible sacrifice that God made for us, with a child, with flesh of His flesh.” She has also accepted that principled care for others, expressed in “unconditional love,” also includes the self. A short while later in the interview, Michelle remarked, “A ritual sounds like you have to do it. The Lord’s Supper is what I value as far as a symbol of the sacrifice that was made for me.” Gilligan would call this a postconventional position, with acceptance of the principal of care as a universal ethical principle.

Michelle’s P-score from the neo-Kohlbergian DIT-2, was 28. The average P-score for a college educated adult woman is 46 (Rest et al., 1999, 117). On the Moral

Judgment aspect of the FDI, Michelle scored a 2.33; on the Symbolic Function aspect, 3.00. Her continuous FDI score was 2.95, placing her in a Stage 3.

Group 5: Charismatic Restoration Movement

Primary Lesson Learned: Scripting Bodies with Moral and Religious Instruction

A central assumption of this study is that religious communities are carriers of religious knowledge. Central questions are: How are these communities carriers and implementers of religious knowledge? In what ways are these communities carriers of practical religious wisdom and what is it that this wisdom teaches? In third-wave-restoration charismatic communities, the imprint of ritual practice marks adherents as either validated Knowers and carriers of the tradition, or as non-Knowers and thus, unbelievers. The Knowers of these traditions understand, on a tacit level, they are the validated Ones, even as the contents of that knowledge are not always articulated as such.

Of the four persons interviewed from this tradition, one was a white woman and three were African American men. Jane, a woman in her early 30s, and Duane, in his late 30s, are profiled below. Both Jane and Duane express, in implicit terms, their awareness of their status as Knowers in this tradition as they stop, along the unfolding of their narratives, to clue in the researcher to their awareness of their status. The FDI scores for both Duane and Jane are highlighted below:

Logic	P -T	M-J	Social	Locus	W-C	Sym	Cont
4.0	3.6	3.0	3.5	3.33	3.33	3.6	3.5

Figure 17: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Duane (087)

Logic	P-Taking	Moral	Social	Locus	World	Symbolic	C. Score
4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0

Figure 18: FDI Aspect and Continuous Scores for Jane (146)

Duane

Duane was a single African American man in his late thirties, originally from the state of Washington. He went to college in Austin, Texas, where he joined a rather well known mega-church, and started a career in New Jersey before moving to Atlanta. He shared his significant religious experiences.

I: Do you have a significant religious experience to share?

P: Yes, I have as far as, receiving Jesus Christ as my savior. Receiving Jesus Christ.

I: How long ago was that?

P: I was eight years old when I received Jesus Christ and when I was baptized with the water of baptism, which we believe that it is an outward sign of an inward change. We don't do it for salvation, but we do it because Christ commanded us to do it and it identifies us with other believers.

Then the other important religious experience was being baptized in the Holy Spirit, which is a totally separate experience. When we say baptized in the Holy Spirit we mean filled with the Holy Spirit where we can directly communicate with God, we are more in tune with God because God is a Spirit. Being filled with the Holy Spirit we are able to communicate more directly with Him because we are filled with His spirit.

Last, being called to the ministry. I believe I received a call to the ministry at the age of seventeen. I remember that experience and a lot people just say "you just ate something." I remember having a dream and in this dream I was in an auditorium and I was on this stage and an individual was standing next to me, actually my friend was standing next to me, and he had this robe and something round like a crown. Well, this crown and this robe was put on me and I had a scepter in my hand, and when I interpreted the dream the scepter represented power in the heavenly from a spiritual perspective. The coat represented the priest like the cloak that they use to wear. What was happening I was being ordained to ministry, because a lot of times during an ordination you receive a robe, you receive authority of God by the Holy Spirit

which is power, then you receive crown which is knowledge and that is the Word. From that dream, I believe that was a call to the ministry. I've been working in that area as far as preparation for ministry. Since then I have actually ministered, and I want to go back to school for ministry.

In this narrative of religious experiences, there are very clear clues that this narrative has some interpretive framework. The abstract here is (I've had three significant religious experiences and I have been called to ministry), orientation (as an eight year old, some time later, and at 17), complicating action ("my friend said "you ate something"), evaluation (the scepter and crown were symbolic for Word and Holy Spirit), resolution (since then I've actually ministered) and coda (now I want to go back to school).

We know that water baptism and a separate baptism by the Holy Spirit are consistent with his communal beliefs. In his narration, he steps outside of his narration long enough to explain to me what he believes to be the theological significance of these events. He did not get baptized to be saved, he said, but to join the *ekklesia*, the community of other believers. Implicit in this statement is his contention that he was saved prior to baptism. In relating his baptism by the Spirit, he interprets the experience as being attuned to God, "filled with His spirit." Duane relates these two experiences as a demonstration of his relationship with God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the community of believers because he is "making a case" for his authentic call to ministry.

The "call" story is actually a narration of a dream, in which he believed himself called to ministry, a response to his relating the dream to others, and a final self-validation of his call, that since the dream he is "actually" ministered. In the

Franks Davis typologies, there are several interpretive frameworks at work. Central to this narrative is a majestic call to ministry, symbolized by the scepter, crown, and robe. This majestic call is consistent with his communal symbol systems. During the praise section of worship in his congregation, a crown, resting on a plush, plump, burgundy pillow, is introduced into the worship space as the congregation sings songs of majesty, dominion and victory. Had Duane received a call to humble, solitary, servant ministry coming from his ecclesial community, it would have been rather odd. On the periphery of this story is the voice of the interpreter-narrator, telling us “this dream is about ordination” ... “this is symbolic for the Word” and “this is symbolic for the cloak (did he mean “yoke”).” Further out still, and on the periphery of the story is “my friend” who actually held the robe and crown before it was “put on” Duane. Though the subject gave no clues as to how he interprets the significance of his friend’s presence in his “call” dream, we do know that “a lot of people” evidently responded to his narrative by saying “you just ate something.”

Nevertheless, it can be argued that the ritual of re-telling the “call” dream provides a liminal experience for Duane, allowing him to construct himself in transition from one of the “other believers” to one who has “actually ministered.” Though he may have “a lot of people” who doubt the authenticity of his call, the call dream also provides Duane with a direction for life and growth as a Christian. In that regard, this dream and the re-telling of his story may enable deeper worship, more authentic relationships in community, and greater participation in Christian life.

Duane scored a 3.50 in his FDI continuous score suggesting he is transitioning from Stage 3 to Stage 4. His highest aspect scores on the FDI were

those of logic and symbolic function. His P-score from the DIT-2 is 54, about ten points higher than for college educated persons.

Jane

“Jane,” Subject 146, was 30 years old at the time of our interview and had graduated from college just two years earlier. A short white woman standing no more than 5 feet tall, she had had a difficult life – a troubled childhood, traumatic adolescence, had been on her own since she was 18 years old. She married at 20 and when that marriage failed, she went back to college. She was in therapy at the time we interviewed, battling issues with anxiety and depression, but was kind enough to meet me at Cannon Chapel on a cold and rainy January night.

Her mother was herself very young when she gave birth to Jane. She had already been married and divorced when she conceived Jane. The narrative below relates first, a third grader, followed by a 15 year old’s relationship with her devoutly religious mother and her “second stepfather.” This narrative does not fit under any aspect of the FDI, but does provide significant insight into Jane’s social background and her ways of constructing her moral and religious worlds.

I: What kind of church were you going to at that point?

P: A non-denominational church. It was fun they did a lot of singing. I liked that. [Laugh] He was teaching me to ride my bike and if I didn’t do it right I would have to sit down and read three pages out of this E.W. Kenyon book. That’s a scholarly guy, E.W. Kenyon, to read for a third grader. I wasn’t happy. He was abusive verbally and physically. He was just a nasty person.

I: Your mom didn’t see him as a nasty person?

P: I guess so: she just saw the Jesus all over him. That’s what she used to say.

I: Really?

P: She was big into agape love, but I don't know how much or if you know what that is?

I: Yes.

P: I didn't want to think that you didn't, but a lot of people don't. Most third graders don't. [Laughs]

I: True. Tell me how would you define agape love?

P: The God kind of love. It is the love that God is supposed to love you with and it's above human ability and understanding because the place where they met was downtown Mobile (AL) where they all hung out and witnessed to the bars. Honestly, it was a Christian bar with no alcohol. It was called The Agape House and they did well; they would feed homeless people some times. That was probably a good memory I had. They would go and load up the car with homeless people and bring them over for Christmas dinner.

I: People would volunteer for a couple of days.

P: They would bring three, four, or five of them home and we would eat Christmas dinner. That was kind of nice.

I: You appreciated what they had done as a nine year old?

P: Yes. This was probably not the greatest idea, but some of them wanted to live with us for a little while.

I: How did you feel about that?

P: I actually liked it because he (the second step-father) was nicer when other people were around. So yeah, you can bring home anybody you want to.

I: How would you think about the way he was treating you? Did your mom know how he was treating you?

P: I would love to know. What were you thinking? The big one was "what's wrong with you?" I certainly, would not let anybody hurt my kids and a child that's not even his -- it seems like she didn't really think very much. It seems like she would put herself first, or maybe even God first. God wanted her to be with this man.

I: How do you put any of that into perspective, or did you, or did you try?

P: I don't really remember trying, I just pretty much saw him as all bad and I mean it was a stretch to remember the good stuff; like feeding the homeless.

Usually, with every good memory there is a bad one or there is something that is not good. Even like the homeless people; I liked them there because that means that he wouldn't blow up.

When I was 15 and he raped me. That's my interesting story with my mom. She tricked me into dropping charges so he could go to a mental institution instead of jail because that would be his third felony and he would go to jail for life. If I dropped the charges they said they would send him to the mental institution. I guess what she told me was that the job from the first accident they were giving him disability checks and she would go and pick them up and cash them. She said that they were going to press charges against her for cashing the checks. Logically, I'm a little fourteen or fifteen year old and you don't want your mommy to go to jail. I don't remember, but more than anything I just wanted to move out. They said that when he got out of the mental hospital I would be eighteen or nineteen and I could move out and stay with my grandfather. My grandmother was dead so that was a big drawback.

I: So you were home alone again with mom. How was that?

P: Chaotic. I was fifteen. All fifteen year olds are button heads anyway, but they need a mother in the room. We very well may have talked about it, but I just don't remember. I can remember getting my diaper changed at two, but I don't remember that.

There are many layers of moral dilemma in this section of narrative, but the main moral crisis remains "my interesting story with my Mom." In the first reading for understanding, the abstract here is (I've an "interesting story with my Mom"), orientation (as a third grader and as a 15 year old), complicating action (referred to only as "he," this stepfather was "verbally and physically" and sexually abusive while Mom was complicit), evaluation (grappling with the mother's complicity, "what were you thinking?" "What's wrong with you?"), resolution (my mother was not present – 15 year olds "need a mother in the room") and coda (I've repressed the memory; "I guess what she told me was ...").

The self, in this narrative, stands from a number of vantage points in relating the story. One perspective is trying to understand her mother's nature, saying she was

“into agape love” and combining the definition of God’s love for humanity with the way the mother met the second stepfather. (Agape is) “the love that God is supposed to love you with and it’s above human ability and understanding because the place where they met was ...” This perspective doesn’t sound much older than 9 years old, relating the story as it was, no doubt, told to her by her mother. The clue that the story about the mother meeting the stepfather has been related to Jane is in “I guess so (she didn’t see him as nasty): she just saw the Jesus all over him. That’s what she used to say.”

Again, it is the 9 year old who watches as her mother and stepfather bring home homeless people during the holidays. Yet, the 9 year old who found comfort in the presence of other people in the home yields to the adult woman who takes perspective of the situation and relates to me “I mean I saw him as all bad and I mean it was pretty much a stretch to remember the good stuff, like feeding the homeless.” The switch from the 9 year old to the adult woman is signified by the switch from the 3rd to the 2nd person:

“I actually liked it because he (the second step-father) was nicer when other people were around. So yeah, you can bring home anybody you want to.”

The adult self also questions the mother, again in the 2nd person: “What were you thinking?” “What’s wrong with you?” Adult 146 offers her own commentary on these questions by returning to the 3rd person:

“I certainly, would not let anybody hurt my kids and a child that’s not even his -- it seems like she didn’t really think very much. It seems like she would put herself first, or maybe even God first. God wanted her to be with this man.”

“God wanted her to be with this man” is curiously placed at the end of the sentence suggesting that it has some connection with the sentence spoken earlier, “It seems like she would put ... maybe even God first.” We can infer that it is an answer to that wonder, “maybe she put God first? Maybe God wanted to her be with this man?” Maybe it is an answer to the previous clause: “maybe she put herself first. Maybe (she thought) God wanted her to be with this man.”

The central drama, however, is that Jane “was tricked into dropping the (rape) charges ... I guess.” A closer inspection of the narrative segment suggests that there were two instances of charges alleged – one against the stepfather for rape and one against the mother for cashing the disability checks (when the step father was in the mental hospital?) The adult woman’s voice understands the stepfather’s multiple felony issue completely; this is the stepfather’s third felony and a conviction would send him to jail for life. The adult self rationally relates, “If I dropped the charges they said they would send him to the mental institution.” With that statement, this narrative segment appears to be complete. My deduction is that a young Jane relented to the mother’s insistence, likely under extreme duress from the realization of the mother’s complicity with her abuser, and the stepfather went to the mental institution.

The tentative “little 14 or 15 year old” returns in the next breath, almost, with another story “I guess what she told me was that the job from the first accident they were giving him disability checks and she would go and pick them up and cash them. She said that they were going to press charges against her for cashing the checks. Logically, I’m a little fourteen or fifteen year old and you don’t want your mommy to

go to jail.” If I am correct that this is a second incident subsequent to the one of dropping the charges of the stepfather, then for a second time, the narrative fails to state explicitly the outcome. Purely on conjecture, the mother may have argued that she and Subject 146 needed the stepfather’s disability checks to survive, thus, making her an agent to the mother’s deception. Explicitly, the subject indicates that she didn’t want her mother in jail, indicating that she held some responsibility for the outcome of the charges pending against her mother. Implicitly, however, it sounds as though Subject 146 acted in some way to prevent her mother’s going to jail since the narrative picks up again with the subject and her mother living alone once more.

Jane did leave her mother’s home at 18. She married a little over a year later, divorced, got on her feet, went to college and has since graduated. Looking at Gilligan’s three tiered scheme, this subject appears to have attained at least the conventional level of moral development, transacting decisions, as a 15 year old, that were responsible for the fates of her mother, her stepfather and herself. She also possessed the ego strength and the self-love and self-care to leave the situation when she was legally, physically and emotionally capable of so doing.

My argument is that the adult woman’s choices about how to relate to her mother, along with what to relate to others about her mother, constitute an ongoing moral dilemma for this subject’s self-in-relationship. This raises a whole host of questions for which this study has no answer. Depending upon the degree of trauma Jane suffered in her teenage years, her lack of safety when she was with her mother, that she understands she cannot trust her mother or her mother’s judgment – these all factor into the nature of the choices she has for relationship with her mother as an

adult. These questions may well factor into whether or not she now, as an adult, feels she has choices around relationship with her mother, if she has a relationship at all.

There is small wonder why this woman would be one of those who, as Viola stated “packed her bags for one of the Christian Meccas” of third-wave restoration Church (Viola, 2007). My sense is that there is safety in the structure, the emotive, experiential worship, and in the cognitive-culture formed of binary oppositions. The binary logic construed as matters of “heaven and hell” loom large for Jane, even as her life experience has afforded her the capacity to view objectively her fundamentalist religious system. Her interview reflects that the fundamentalist notion of Biblical inerrancy is implicit rather than explicit:

I: Are there certain beliefs that are important to you and, if so, how important are your beliefs and values to you?

P: I think they are very important because they are new for me. I feel like I got them for myself, they weren't spoon feed to me. The way I grew up it didn't matter if you treated everybody good as long as you had Jesus. Somebody that was a wonderful person like Gandhi; I mean, most Christians probably believe that Gandhi is in hell. That was another thing that I could not accept. I felt that wasn't possible.

In another instance she said:

I: What is sin?

P: I don't believe in sin. I think sin is something that churches have used to scare people and to keep people in line. To me the definition of sin is an act that where you violate some human principle. I think there are laws and morals, but when you read the Old Testament there are zillions of sins. If you are having sex with a woman when she is menstruating or not being cleansed properly -- that is a sin. I can't believe they all didn't burn in hell there are so many of them you forget some.

Jane's FDI Continuous Score was 4.00 and, at a Stage 4, was the highest scoring subject in the sample. Her P-score from the DIT-2 was 40, about average for a college educated adult woman.

The concluding chapter of "Conclusions and Discussion" follows.

References for this chapter and the one that follows are located in the Main Bibliography.

Chapter 9: Conclusions and Discussion

For the purposes of this study, I have defined practical theology as a process that engages the psychological, sociological, historical, and anthropological dynamics that inform the lived practices of religious knowledge in fundamentalist NRM communities. Individual expressed reasoning in sociomoral dilemmas and faith narratives are examples of such lived practices of religious knowledge, but are only the end-product of the production of knowledge and of faith and worldview formation in religious communities. This practical theology, then, provided a lens through which to analyze the complex faith and moral formation practices within fundamentalist NRM communities that will stand alongside the constructive “logics” of structural developmental studies.

This chapter synthesizes the results of the quantitative measures, the “logics” of structural developmental studies, with those of the qualitative, practical theological inquiries into community and individual practices of religious knowledge. All of this data has been necessary to analyze the complexities of faith and moral development in fNRMs. From these synthesized data, a new picture of fundamentalism begins to emerge, one that suggests that individuals who inhabit these sub-cultures employ complex factors, styles, and modes of integration of the contents of religious knowledge in their everyday lives. Therefore, the discussion herein is a beginning of a conversation that suggests both a developmental and a practical theological construct for understanding the cognitive and affective features of the contents of fundamentalism.

In interpreting the findings of the FDI studies, I will first look to Streib (2005; 2001) who has proposed an alternative to the six stage structural developmental theory in a five-type religious style mode. Streib (2001) defines religious style as follows:

Religious styles are distinct modi of practical-interactive (ritual), psychodynamic (symbolic), and cognitive (narrative) reconstruction and appropriation of religion, that originate in relation to life history and life world and that, in accumulative deposition, constitute the variations and transformations of religion over a lifetime, corresponding to the styles of interpersonal relations (Streib, 2001).

Envisioning religious styles as the accumulative deposition of layers, Streib (2001) delineates five religious styles that parallel descriptions of interpersonal schemata as described by Noam (1992). These are summarized below:

Subjective religious style. The subjective religious style corresponds to Noam's phase of the subjective-physical self in early childhood. In the mirroring of the symbiotic relationship with caregivers, basic trust emerges. Egocentricity is the dominant pattern here as, in childhood, the child sees herself as the center of the world. The ambivalence of the Erikson's (1968) "trust vs. mistrust" dynamic is at stake. The healthy resolution of this phases is the development of basic trust.

Corresponding to Fowler's intuitive-projective faith, fantasy, images and feelings developed in this phase that will play a continuous role throughout the lifetime of the individual. The God representation is shaped by idealized parental image, which emerges to see and to punish. This style is anxiety-laden and juridical.

Instrumental-reciprocal or "do-ut-des" religious style. This style emerges as the individual makes distinctions between the inner self and outer self; it is a

reflection of the awareness of individual needs as opposed to those of other people. This corresponds to Noam's reciprocal-instrumental self and Fowler's mythic-literal stage. The psychodynamic crises are "initiative vs. guilt" as well as "industry vs. inferiority."

The basic religious pattern here is a reciprocal understanding of the interpersonal and the God-human relationships. "Good" is what God and authority persons wish and require; "bad" is the result of punishment and mischief. Religious images and feelings are interpreted in stories and myths play a significant role here. Everything happens precisely the way they are detailed in religious story and literally, everything has to be observed exactly as the religious rules prescribe. An awareness of metaphor and symbol are not yet in place, driving the importance and priority placed on literality.

Mutual religious style. This style is built on the foundation of mutuality in relationships within the individual's religious group and views God as a personal partner. Highly valued by this religious style is being loved and respected by others. This style experiences unquestioned security in the religious group and is dependent upon its judgment, making it difficult to transcend ideological and institutional group boundaries. New people or objects introduced into the psychodynamic process here may cause radical shifting, which helps to explain the changes in content, experience and function of religion during adolescence. Even as the shifts can be radical, mutuality remains the prevalent feature of this style.

Individuative-systemic religious style. The individual inhabiting this style understands the social world as a system which God, society, religious community

and the human communities all have their place. The cognitive (narrative) aspect of this style reflects on religious matters, offers reasons for one's beliefs or skepticisms, and articulates a systemic perspective. This kind of rationality cannot yet accommodate symbol, rendering religious texts and rituals devoid of their full content. Consequently, the psychodynamic challenges are created in the emotional distance experienced by intense rational reflection. Deeply rooted in the psyche, there is a hunger for intimacy, identity, relatedness and trust. This becomes the psychodynamic impetus for re-inviting earlier styles for compensation.

Dialogical religious style. This religious style displays a remarkable openness for the Other, dialogue, and to valuing of symbol systems. No longer concerned about finding a religious identity, this style is open to new experiences and learning from other religious orientations. Consistent with Ricoeur (1981), this style is capable of "letting-go" of the self to being drawn into symbol or narrative, as the individual develops a "second naiveté." There may be questioning of the God representations, despite an underlying conviction that whatever the representation, there is a presence of a trustworthy Other and thus, a deeper understanding of trust (Streib, 2001, 153-4).

These religious styles constitute another way of viewing these subjects from fNRMs. Streib (2001) asserts that the fundamentalist orientation is a revival of the literal understanding, the anxiety toward a taskmaster deity, of the do-ut-des juridical structure, a prevalence of the reciprocal-instrumental style with part of the subjective style. These come in to play in religious matters where they may not be used in other areas of the individual's life. Streib points not only to revival of earlier styles, but

what he calls “heterodyning” of styles also takes place in the fundamentalist orientation. Adult residuals of earlier styles become merged with the power of mutuality in group relationships, the strength of systemic-rational arguments, or both. This yields a fundamentalist orientation is the “more stable, more rigoristic, and more cruel” (Streib, 2001, 154).

Applying this religious styles theory to this study, it makes the orientation of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the group that scored the highest mean scores of the FDI, particularly interesting. It could be argued that the intensely rational and cognitive presentation of Jehovah’s Witness teachings, as well as their rigidly structured theocracy, supports an individuative-systemic religious style. This rational orientation is supported by their higher aspect scores in Form of Logic (Aspect A) and Moral Judgment (Aspect C). Religious styles theory claims that this style hungers for intimacy, relatedness and identity, opening these individuals for reclaiming some version of earlier styles.

So the data on structures of thinking from the DIT, that of Schema Use, will also be helpful in understanding the Jehovah’s Witnesses. Recalling that schema scores allow for determining how different individuals transact moral deliberations differently, a review of schema score data will not lead us into the epistemological assumption that everyone learns and negotiates in the same way. I have also included here N2 scores, which are an overall developmental index reflected as a percentage (0-100) scores. The N2 index is actually a two-part measure. The first utilize a postconventional score, much like the P-score, and the second actually measures the extent to which the respondent rejects lower schema thinking. The N2 Index

generally produces mean scores of high school graduates in their 30s, college graduates in their 40s, professional school graduates in their 50s and moral philosophy and political science students in their 60s (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003).

ID T	Schema2	Schema4	Schema56	N2Index	Type	Age	Gen
170	14.00	8.00	28.00	48.75	6	32	M
274	11.00	23.00	15.00	37.83	4	49	M
Sarah	2.00	15.00	33.00	63.56	7	53	F
Paul	6.00	21.00	19.00	45.69	4	41	M

Figure 19: Jehovah’s Witnesses, By Schema Use, N2 index, and Schema Type

Types of schema profiles are placed into 7 categories as listed below. Two studies, Yeap (1999) and Bebeau (2002) have argued that schema types a “more complete” picture of subjects’ moral cognition characteristics than any of the types’ independent component variables (as cited in Bebeau & Thomas, 2003, 21).

Type 1 is predominant in personal interests schema and consolidated (uses that schema most of the time);

Type 2 is predominant in personal interests schema but transitional;

Type 3 is predominant in maintaining norms schema but transitional, using the personal interests schema as a secondary schema;

Type 4 is predominant in maintaining norms schema and consolidated;

Type 5 is predominant in maintaining norms but transitional, using postconventional secondary schema;

Type 6 predominant in postconventional schema but transitional;

Type 7 predominant in postconventional schema but consolidated.

The Jehovah’s Witness who scored in the 60s on this N2 index is Sarah, the 53-year-old college graduate who formerly worked as a nurse. Sarah, the woman I have called a “person of the book,” expert scored as a 3.86 on the FDI. Paul, the

elder who works as a corporation executive, is a Type 4. Paul's FDI continuous score was 3.82. Subject 274 indicates that his first language is not English and he has a German family background.

This is all that is needed to complete the suggestion that these Jehovah's Witnesses are likely to be involved in cognitive operations at higher levels than their FDI scores would suggest. If applying a religious styles perspective, it is very likely, then, that these individuals are capable of making meaning of their religious worlds at an individuative-systemic religious style or better, but have opted or chosen to return to elements of an earlier style.

The second group that uses an cognitive religious style and rational, sermonic argumentation is the churches of Christ, Group 4. For the churches of Christ, their theology is one that embraces many aspects of modernity, even as their sectarian presentation is that of a group that rejects modernity. Alexander Campbell, trained in Scottish Common Sense thought, argued that if everyone understood the truth of Scripture, it would be irresistible to them. It is the modern epistemological formula of, given reason, the right tools and information, everyone arrives at the same conclusion.

So how did the members of the churches of Christ profile by schema type on the DIT-2?

ID	Schema23	Schema4	Schema56	N2Index	Type	Age	Gender
086	5.00	22.00	23.00	N/A	7	42	M
Demarcus	7.00	13.00	9.00	55.03	5	37	M
Michelle	9.00	19.00	19.00	46.97	7	41	F
287D	4.00	10.00	32.00	63.63	7	57	F

Figure 20: Churches of Christ, By Schema Use, N2 index, and Schema Type

Therefore, the group with the second highest mean P-score, the Kohlbergian stage measure, actually holds three of four persons transacting at the most adequate schema, the postconventional, and doing so consistently. Only three of four N2 scores were reported, as it appears Subject 086 did not complete all of the ranking data. Of the remaining N2 scores, they appear exceptional considering the N2 index is a measure of the use of postconventional thinking as well as the rejection of earlier styles of thinking. Again, this group, with three of four transacting moral decisions at a type 7, appears to have performed differently in the DIT-2 data than on the FDI, where they averaged a Stage 3. Michelle, a type 7, was profiled in the narrative analysis with her story about her intimidation/mystification of the mystery of atonement. I suggested that reading from an “ethic of care” produced a postconventional interpretation of that story. Typing her as a Stage 3 with a Synthetic-Conventional faith was likely a disservice in light of her narrative and the DIT-2 schema type profile.

Demarcus, a solid 2 on every FDI aspect and, therefore, a continuous score of 2.0, is transitioning maintaining norms/postconventional moral thinker at Type 5.

This offers another “reading” of Demarcus. With Demarcus, the extensive use of binary language and the knowledge he constructed from mythic dualisms is, no doubt, a factor that made him present in the mythic literal stage in the classic FDI and narrative analyses. However, this DIT-2 schema type profile is not consistent with a mythic-literal thinker. Going back to his biography and his narrative, I recalled that Demarcus, now a county sheriff’s deputy, shared that he wanted to open a group home for “5 or 6 kids” currently in state custody. His plan was that “they need some home training, some structure. Some of them aren’t getting that at home” ... and “house them and provide them structure, get them to school, get them involved in sports, teach them about Jesus Christ – that will help get them on track.” That is surely not the plan of a frequent user of the Personal Interests schema type. A better argument would be that his attempt was one to help the kids in state custody conform to the norms of society. Even that argument, with Demarcus displaying features suggesting he is transitioning toward postconventional thinking, begs for further information. For Demarcus, this study will have to admit multiple knowledges. It will have to admit two facts about him --- that he uses simplistic binary dualisms to construct meaning making in religious truths, but he is capable of transacting moral decisions at a maintaining norms/postconventional level. What it has not done, however, is “written off” Demarcus as an adolescent in matters of faith.

Looking at the more charismatic/ecstatic groups, I will begin with the Hare Krishnas.

ID	Schema23	Schema4	Schema56	N2 Index	Type	Age	Gender
201	13.00	17.00	11.00	19.03	3	35	F
Ravi	8.00	11.00	17.00	41.47	6	47	M
239	4.00	13.00	23.00	61.09	7	29	F
Amrit	6.00	15.00	16.00	44.04	7	58	M

Figure 21: Hare Krishnas, By Schema Use, N2 index, and Schema Type

Of the four Hare Krishnas who took the DIT-2, two are functioning predominantly at the postconventional level and doing so consistently. Subject 239, the 29-year-old female type 7 who scored a 61.09 on the N2 index attended only one year of college in Europe before quitting school to join the Hare Krishnas. English is not her first language as she is the same individual who “walked from Bosnia during the war.” That Subject 201 is transacting moral decisions at the personal interests/maintaining norms transitional stage is almost an interesting anomaly among this group. To complete the biographical information, Ravi, the man who joined the movement during his first year in college and sees the essence of all religious systems as the same, as profiled in the narrative analysis, was scored at a 2.47 by classic FDI profile. He is a transitional postconventional type 6. Amrit, who prefers personal spiritual practice or congregational ritual, also profiled in the narrative section, scored a 2.57 on the classic FDI profile is a Type 7.

The Charismatic Restoration group members are profiled below:

ID	Schema23	Schema4	Schema56	N2 Index	Type	Age	Gen der
141	12.00	15.00	14.00	22.23	3	47	M
153	8.00	16.00	21.00	34.76	6	38	M
Duane	1.00	18.00	27.00	53.42	7	36	M
Jane	11.00	15.00	20.00	33.03	6	30	F

Figure 22: Third-Wave Charismatic members, by Schema Use, N2 Index, and Schema Type

The charismatic Christian group, despite its mean FDI continuous score being less than a Stage 3, posted schema type scores that suggest they are far more cognitively sophisticated in transacting moral decisions. With three of the four posting in the postconventional type range, there is reason to suspect that these thinkers have consciously chosen to assume a religious style from an earlier life phase. Only one of the four members who took the DIT-2 typed in the personal interest/maintaining norms level.

With college students averaging in N2 index scores in the 40s, and of the two N2 scores in the 30s, Jane is a college graduate and Subject 153 is not. Yet, the reflection of the types of thinking is the schema type score. In this view, we see both Subjects 153 and Jane transacting sociomoral decisions at the postconventional but transitioning level. Jane, profiled in the narrative analysis, scored a 4.0 on the FDI.

The Type 7, the postconventional/consolidated type in this charismatic group is Duane, the man who feels called to Christian ministry. With an N2 index score well above the average for a college-educated man, here lies another case for arguing

for an individual possessing perhaps an individuative-systemic religious style, while also displaying features earlier styles. His FDI continuous score was 3.5, indicating a transition from the Synthetic-Conventional to the Individuative-Reflective stage.

The Seventh-day Adventist group profiled lowest on the mean FDI continuous scores as well as the mean Kohlbergian P-score on the DIT. Here is their profile:

ID	Schema	Schema4	Schema56	N2 Index	Type	Age	Gender
Stephen	14.00	14.00	22.00	44.44	7	54	M
Maria	14.00	13.00	19.00	21.39	6	25	F
037	9.00	20.00	18.00	37.79	5	41	M
243	28.00	6.00	7.00	10.40	2	37	F

Figure 23: Seventh-day Adventists, by Schema Use, N2 Index, and Schema Type

Even among this group with the lowest average FDI scores, two are typed as postconventional at types 6 and 7, another is transitioning at the maintaining norms/postconventional type and one is typed at the personal interests level. English is not the first language of Subject 243, who profiled at a type 2. Reliability checks within the DIT-2 scoring process indicate that her answers were consistent, which suggests that the issue there was not one of language. Maria, the 25-year-old Latina who wrestled with the separation of loved ones by death, is a transitioning, postconventional Type 6, though her N2 index, at 21.39, is significantly lower than one would expect for a college graduate. Her FDI continuous score was 2.07.

Stephen, the rationally defended literalist, typed at a level 7, postconventional and consolidated, with an N2 index at 44.44. He is a graduate of a 2-year college and, with an N2 index in the 40s, N2 profile looks much like the average adult's. His FDI continuous score was 3.25.

Here is a quick summary of the schema types profiled in these five fNRMs. Sixteen of the twenty studied herein are typed at the maintaining norms/postconventional transition or at a postconventional level.

Five Religious Groups * Type indicator Crosstabulation

Count		Type indicator					Total	
		2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00		7.00
Five Religiou	H K	0	1	0	0	1	2	4
Groups	Jeh W	0	0	2	0	1	1	4
	SDA	1	0	0	1	1	1	4
	coC	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
	Charism	0	0	0	1	2	1	4
Total		1	1	2	3	5	8	20

Figure 24: Five Religious Groups by Schema Type Indicator

Differences between Individual DIT and FDI Interview Data

Some of the differences between the DIT-2 data and the classic FDI analysis may lie in their different methodologies. The DIT-2 is a recognition task and the FDI is a production task. The recognition task in the DIT-2 is sensitive to tacit knowledge, and many people know more than they say they do. Narvaez & Bock (2002) argue that individuals have, use and are influenced by a significant body of knowledge without awareness. They posit that tacit knowledge is domain-specific

“how-to” knowledge that guides behavior but is not readily available for introspection or easily available for articulation (Narvaez and Bock, 2002).

If Narvaez and Bock are correct, then the differences in the tasks may account for some of the disparities between the DIT-2 profile and the FDI aspect and continuous scores. As the DIT is a recognition task it privileges the activation of domain-specific areas of the brain not necessarily guided by cognition and independent of the subject’s ability or desire to articulate reasons for choosing a particular sequence of ratings and rankings.

However, some of the disparity may beg for serious consideration for Streib’s (2001) notion that fundamentalism is a heterodyning of adult styles of religiosity with styles from an earlier period of life. Streib’s research has been a response to, what he calls, the “puzzling” question of “How ... can a person, on the one hand, deal with everyday situations successfully on the basis of practical reason and ... in matters of meaning and matters of religion resort to the most simple answers?” (2001,153). We have in this data set a case of 16 of 20 individuals typing on the “more complete picture of subjects’ moral cognition characteristics than any of its independent component variables” (Bebeau & Thoma, 2003, 21) at the maintaining norms/postconventional transition or better. Applying Streib’s question here: How can 80% of the respondents from five different fNRMs profile at Type 5 or better and score so low on the aspects (of the FDI) that reflect meaning making and matters of religion?

One answer might be found in Adam (2007) who posited, “fundamentalists **do not grow** in their religious development because of particular cultural contents

unique to fundamentalism. Scriptural texts... may be used to facilitate or arrest cognitive development” (7). The results from this study, however, refute Adam’s assertion of that fundamentalism is a case of stunted religio-cognitive development. If fundamentalists do not grow in their religious development, how then is most of this sample transacting moral decisions with a maintaining norms/postconventional schema or on a more adequate schema?

The results of this study, albeit with a small sample, can affirm Streib’s theory of “heterodyning” in the sense that many of these respondents are capable of cognitive moral operations that far exceed their expressed capacity to formulate meaning making on matters of religion. I suggest that the process of “heterodyning” may be a conscious suspension of the individual’s current modes of thinking, in favor of a religious style that is more consistent with the person’s chosen religious group.

This is where the theories of poststructuralism and of “local knowledge” are useful. Given multiple subjectivities, composed of many different discursive structures, a particular group of subjectivities is activated within one’s chosen religious culture. Poststructuralism posits that individuals are a collection of multiple subjectivities, constructed by the many discursive circles we inhabit. The literature on “local” knowledge, addresses how culture determines how we know and what we know, and it reveals the multiple ways in which subjects perceive their realities and create their responses to the worlds in which they live. People who align themselves with others and form communities of allegiance negotiate, either consciously or unconsciously, the social meanings through which they understand reality. This understanding of subjectivity and of cultural knowledge construction yields a new

paradigm that is based on situated judgments, situated knowledges and situated truths (Hekman, 1995). Truth resides in the “wise people” of a community, its elders, gurus, religious leaders, or other persons a given community may deem worth to voice the community concerns and speak their reality into meaning. Knowledge is constructed within the webs of relationships in which Knowers find themselves.

How then are fundamentalist new religious communities constructing knowledge? Sandra Harding has proposed what she calls “strong objectivity” as a possible answer to this question (Harding, 1986). Harding’s use of the word “objective” does not recall modern apprehended object knowledge. Rather, she uses strong objectivity to suggest those social situations and relationships where more useful knowledge is produced. The Knower, understanding her position as socially situated and animated “determines from multiple choices which social situations tend to generate the most objective truth claims” (1991, 142). Further, the Knower finds herself adjudicated by and answerable to the norms of the community of interpretation (Brown & Gilligan, 1990; Brown, et al., 1991).

This poststructuralist approach to understanding the construction of religious Knowers in fNRM communities is likely mirrored in the schema data lifted from the DIT-2. Schema theory is a step beyond cognitive structural staging. Schema theory does not assert an invariant sequence and hierarchy of ways of reasoning, and thus, does not succumb to the modern impulse of assuming one valid way of Knowing. It reflects method of separating different types of thinking involved in negotiating moral decisions, rendering it possible to gain perspective on multiple types of reasoning that work while transacting moral decisions. As such, in the DIT schema data we have a

way of viewing multiple modes of thought and of integration of those patterns of reasoning.

The schema data from this small sample points to more sophisticated and complex patterns of moral reasoning than are suggested by both FDI data and the neo-Kohlbergian P-scores of the DIT-2. Consequently, the results of this study point toward poststructuralism, with its theories of multiple subjectivities, to account for the complex patterns of reasoning required to negotiate multiple subjectivities in an increasingly demanding world. Perhaps a poststructuralist theory of both moral and faith development are needed to more accurately describe both of these processes as we now understand them in the context of postmodernity. Perhaps poststructuralism suggests for us that, rather than stages of faith and moral development, individuals adopt constellations of patterns of Knowing that are locally and communally driven. In such a theory, religious communities become a (of potentially many) community of “strong objectivity” in which individuals inhabit (Harding, 1986), as they become the site for social situations and relationships in which useful knowledge is produced. In their religious communities, Knowers determine the choices by which they generate objective truth claims (1991, 142) and are accountable to and adjudicated by their communities of choice.

Practical Theological Lessons Learned

This brings us to a consideration of the production of knowledge in these five fNRMs and how their objective truth claims are generated, articulated, and lived. From my time spent in these five communities, I have spent some time in their webs of social relationships, participated in the multiple ways they construct Knowers, and

have tried to understand how they negotiate the social meanings through which they understand reality. In the process, I have learned many lessons about their ways of being and producing, consciously or unconsciously, religious and moral education.

For the Hare Krishnas, the ritual re-enactment of right relationships is at the center of the *aroti* ritual and of *ashrama* life. In the words of Subject 239, a 29 year old, Bosnian-born female Hare Krishna, “ISKCON is the religion of God revealing Himself to you.” The real presence of Krishna is localized in the wood and clay deities on their temple altars. Krishna is also present in Radha, his eternal consort, and together, the Radha-Krishna deities model perfect, non-objectifying, conjugal love. Vaisnava marriage is, by their philosophy, a partnership to facilitate the other’s love of God. As their philosophy teaches, “I am not this body,” loving the other in marriage is idealized as non-objectifying --- partners are partners in a type of love that is higher (interesting how Vaisnavas think in vertical metaphors) love than is relationship complicated by physicality. Thus, the Radha-Krishna deities model man-woman marital relationships.

The Caitanya deity is the image of the 16th century Vaisnava saint who is also said to be an incarnation of Krishna. Krishna returned as Caitanya so that the devotees He loved would better understand how to worship Him, and, it is said, Krishna wanted to experience loving Himself. Perfect love for Krishna is modeled in Caitanya, since it was Caitanya who taught humanity how to chant “Hare Krishna” and the letting oneself go the ecstatic love that Krishna adores. As Ravi said, “in every age, the Lord comes to establish *satya* or Truth.” Caitanya, then, is the truth of

our age, and is nothing less than Krishna, teaching His devotees how to love God. Caitanya, then, models the devotee's love for Krishna.

The *Tulasi Aroti* is the circumambulation of the *tulasi* plant in worship, as she is said to be a female spirit soul, in the form of a plant, who loves Krishna. This *aroti* recalls that spirit souls are all throughout the Vaisnava universe, and that one should remain mindful of all her relationships, because there could be a spirit soul anywhere at any time. The *Tulasi Aroti* models right relationships with everyone and everything, for loving souls are everywhere.

Because the theology of Vaisnavism so emphasizes the personhood of God, the supreme personality of the Godhead, and personal relationships with Krishna, one might call Vaisnava theology, “an ethic of relationship,” constructed and re-enacted, daily, through ritual. The lessons learned from Hare Krishna are of a personal and palpable God, who is at the center of all relationships, and who is all about righting relationships.

From the interview with Subject 239, a 29-year-old female Hare Krishna (English is not her first language):

I: So do you pray or meditate?

P: Oh, yeah.

I: How much would you say you do that?

P: Well, I chant Hare Krishna mantra, we keep vows at the time of initiation, we chant a minimum of 16 rounds on the beads, that takes me almost 2 and ½ hours and uh then we have ceremonies which are also prayers for meditation which can be an hour and some days it is more dependent on whatever and can take 3 and ½ hours. This is in the relationship with the Lord. ... these ceremonies are respect for all living beings. It doesn't make distinctions between people based on their external appearance or qualifications, and uh,

also doesn't make a difference between religions. This is based on how much members develop love for rather than fear of God in the sectarian sense.

The primary lesson learned from Jehovah's Witnesses is their linguistic construction of moral and religious reality, which stems from their practice of witnessing. Because of the witnessing mandate, every member is required to participate in the Jehovah's Witness construction of reality. That social construction of reality is guided, of course, by the unnamed theocratic organization, spearheaded by the massive publication effort of three Jehovah's Witnesses clearinghouses: the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, which co-publishes with the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of New York and the International Bible Students Association. Together, these clearinghouses are considered the one of the largest publishing efforts in the world (Cronn-Mills, 1999, 67). The practice of witnessing, however, intentionally requires every member to read their construction of reality, recite their construction of reality, and witness (preach) the same. By linguistic, rational and rote methods, each Jehovah's Witness learns how the Witnesses Know and can tell/teach others how to Know as Witnesses. As they are fond of saying, "How long have you been in the Truth?"

Cronn-Mills (1999) outlines three components, which he calls world formations, of the Witnesses construction of reality: Satan's World, Witness' World and Jehovah's World. Satan, insidious evil personified, is the real ruler of contemporary society, which consists of all the governmental, social, judicial and religious turmoil of the world (1999, 75). People who work and worship in Satan's World are those who do not worship Jehovah. The cross, medallions and statues of

Jesus, Mary or the saints are false worship and belong to the world of Satan. Satan actually uses false worship and false prophets to advance Satan's interests.

Witness' World is surrounded by, but separate from, Satan's World. Because the two worlds are so close together, Witnesses, as people who properly worship Jehovah, must separate themselves from those who are not, to prevent straying into Satan's World. Their beliefs are strictly based upon the *New World Translation of the Holy Scripture*, and must engage in certain practices. They must live a clean life, may not smoke, may not be a heavy drinker, and should be on good behavior at all times. Their very strong belief that they alone will survive Armageddon is the backbone of a strong oral tradition of proselytizing and publication distribution (Cronn-Mills, 1999).

In Jehovah's World, there are no people – yet. It will begin with the 1000 years of the Millennium, where there will be a new political structure and a new government under Christ. Christ and the chosen 144,000 will oversee the work necessary to restore the earth to its original pristine glory (Cronn-Mills, 1999).

The construction of the discourse of Jehovah's Witnesses, therefore, is dependent upon the teachings they receive from the theocratic organization that, in turn, becomes the way each congregation negotiates its own social reality, which then translates into the individual religious worldview. Thus, their language is generated by their *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and the theocracy, as the discourses they inhabit are equally controlled by the cultural boundaries of the community. As Witnesses are strongly discouraged from associating with people who do not worship Jehovah, their opportunities for challenge from other positions

and viewpoints are limited. The lessons learned about moral and religious education in Jehovah's Witness communities, therefore, is that the creation of language powerfully constructs, as it constitutes, the three-tiered Jehovah's Witness enclosed reality.

From an interview with a 31-year-old Jehovah's Witness:

P: Yeah. We definitely consider the Witnesses more our people than the nation our people because, I don't know, I guess because we're more united with each other than with nationality 'cause the human race doesn't really hold on board or anything like that with the Witnesses.

The primary lesson learned in Adventist communities takes me back to the work of ritual and its role in creating relationships, but in Adventist communities, relationship with God in Christ is front and center. As Adventist scholar and educator Beardsley (2004) states:

Solus Christus is the nominative case indicating that Christ stands alone and is all-sufficient. *Sola scriptura*, on the other hand is the ablative case, "by scripture alone." The role of scripture is to lead to Christ, and Christ is pre-eminent, beyond scripture. To stop with the scripture and fail to progress into a loving relationship with Christ results in stunted spiritual intelligence. "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life," said Jesus. "These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life." (John 5:39-40). ... Much "spirituality" today is personal in a post-modernist, "whatever" kind of way but falls short of leading to a personal relationship with the God of Scripture. This God is not an indulgent, permissive Celestial Parent but has specific expectations and provides guidelines for what it means to be wise and to stay in relationship with God.

Power, thinking, action, truth, duty, and destiny are considered virtues within the Adventist millennial subculture, and they are powerful concepts in Adventist worship and community practices. Each of these key concepts is expressed in nearly every worship service I attended, and in no worship service were they emphasized

more than in “Uniformed Services” day, the time when the youth were honored in their Adventurer and Pathfinder (co-ed scouting) efforts. Even in the four times a year that the Ordinance of Humility (foot-washing) and the Lord’s Supper are celebrated, in modeling humility and its connection with Christ’s sacrifice for humanity, are the strong chords of definition for power, thinking, “right” action, truth, duty and destiny. Ellen White wrote, “Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator — individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who influence character” (1952, 17, 18). Power, thinking, “right” action, truth and destiny in seeing Christ in the Second Advent are the elements of strong moral education. These key concepts, properly developed, are the guidelines for “right” relationship with the God of Scripture.

So moral and religious Knowers in Adventist communities are constructed in the liturgy, the work of the people, where relational knowledge is generalizable rather than specific. In the liturgy, the content, values and discourse of Adventist thought are laden with the emotional and affective components of relationship with God in Christ. Prayer, in the context of worship, takes place with the individual on one’s knees and on the floor just in front of the pew. It is undertaken with a sense of openness to relationship with the Divine. Song, especially choral song, is presented in an atmosphere of reflection and meditation, with the content of choral song placing relationship with God/Truth immediate and fully realized. Congregational singing stresses a common humanity’s relationship with God with its common hope for the imminent return of Christ. The sermonic and Scriptural elements of liturgy are the

moments when God in Christ speaks to humanity and take place after congregational prayer and singing. In other words, after becoming open and receptive to relationship with God, the capacity for emerging Truth is maximized.

As Beardsley (2004) writes, this is relational epistemology – (John 17:25-26)

“Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

In sum, the Adventist millennial subculture constructs moral and religious Knowers through the liturgy and in their relationships with God. As Subject 037 taught me, using the Adventist “Great Controversy,” “humanity’s purpose is to vindicate God’s true character. God is fair and loving, kind and God is using humanity to show that type of thing.”

From the churches of Christ, I learned the power of the rationally constructed moral and religious instruction. It is a rational construction of moral education unlike any other in this study. The churches of Christ present the Christian Bible to make it simple and irresistible to a reasonable person.

The Stone-Campbell movement, evolving on the Western frontier of the U.S., was a distinct form of rationalism set against the emotional focus that had become of Second Great Awakening. If what became Adventism was a charismatic response to the events of the 1830s and 1840s, the Stone-Campbell movement was its polar opposite. From this movement emerged the churches of Christ --- autonomous, distinctly Southern, and equally rational. Three themes dominated the practices of this group, especially in its early years, all related to the group’s belief that God’s

kingdom would soon be established on the earth (pre-millennialism). Those three themes were evangelization, the imperative for Church unity, and the restoration of the church according to the New Testament (Cronn-Mills, 1999, 61). Even as the millennial focus slowly faded from view, these three themes remained.

The churches of Christ continue, through their sermonic, worship, and rhetorical practices, to educate Knowers on these three themes. The restoration of the early Church is inextricably linked to the imperative for the unity of the Church. Church unity is not possible without evangelizing the world; until everyone is a disciple of Christ, the early Church cannot be fully restored. Therefore, the churches of Christ continue to construct rational, logical arguments, evangelizing the world through the irresistibility of common sense Truth. In these communities, moral Knowers and actors execute their work along the intersection of restoration for unity by evangelization. Religious and moral education begins with “togetherness,” the consensus of rational, like-minded thinkers in the construction of religious Truth. Theirs is a movement negotiating the social realities by which they understand the ultimate concerns of the world, by using reason.

When the consensus of like minds begins to take on an exclusivist tone, a tradition can turn in on itself. A survey of the history of the churches of Christ reveals that this is indeed the case, as the movement once entered, in one insider’s words, “the dark tunnel of legalism.” Rational minds, however, prevailed to form a consensus on how to re-view reality and a course correction is now in process for this NRM.

In the evangelizing, rationally constructed conversation of one church of Christ insider:

Everybody needs a hero. That is why the question is not: Do we have a God? The question is: Do we need a God? Everybody needs a hero, so God is our hero. That is why if you are connected into and observant of what is happening in the creative universe, your hero shows up every morning because the sun rises and never needs repair, that's awesome. That is awesome, every morning. Every evening, my God -- the stars come out, the seasons change, never needs repair. The chlorophyll takes the carbon dioxide out and in the morning gives you fresh, crisp air. Even the animal kingdom is awesome. Cut your fingernail, it grows back. Get a scar, it heals. God is showing you His presence. Your hero is close by.

This is classic argumentation in the words of a member of the churches of Christ, performed (in the anthropological sense) with the introductory words "that is why ..." and concluding with "Your hero is close by." This is why I claim that the construction of knowledge in these communities makes the great mysteries of faith plain, simple, logical and irresistible.

The lessons learned from third-wave restoration communities? Hood and colleagues (2005) call attention to how fundamentalist cultures differ from mainstream religious movements in their reliance upon one unique text as normative for meaning, worldview and behavioral codes. Such cultures derive all meaning and truth intratextually from their one text. However, multisensory, embodied modalities of knowledge must be included in the lessons learned from the third-wave restoration congregations. It seems that these communities are scripting the bodies of their adherents – their embodied worship and embodied texts create a sharp division between those who do well in their particular fundamentalist culture and those who do not. To that, I add that charismatic communities imprint their particular text and

their normative behaviors on the bodies of their adherents. Adherents then “know” when it is time to cry, shout, emote and so forth. How is this accomplished?

Shelia Landers Macrine (1999), a “critical” pedagogue and English professor at St. Joseph’s University, fashions a critique of contemporary literacy teaching models within the discourse on cultural capital and hegemony. Certain literacy models, she contends, respond from a dualistic, established-by-edict agenda where they serve only one population. That one population is the very one that holds the “dominant cultural capital.” When students enter literacy-training programs, they also enter a culture of key social and linguistic cues, which happen to match the activities and normative discourse used in the literacy classroom. Students from outside the culture with the “dominant cultural capital,” then, learn very quickly that they must choose between “failing” the dominant expectations or learn and then appropriate the dominant social messages. The consequences of the second choice, though “outsiders” learn the use the dominant social messages, is the internalization of self-doubt and self-hatred.

From the literature on cultural capital, two points directly relate to this discussion. The binary logic and enacted dualisms, as experientially taught in this “only Bible” fundamentalist culture, creates the established-by-edict agenda. First, we must be attentive to the underlying suggestion implied in either/or dualisms -- that one and only one public common knowledge is valid. Consequently, the only public “valid” knowledge was one that correlated with the social knowledge of the hegemonic class, in this case, those who know when to emote, when to shout, when to stand, when and how to be “baptized by the Spirit,” etc. Second, a dualistic either/or structure reinforces the idea of one public knowledge. Therefore, outsiders

and those who fail to access or understand the implicit epistemic clues, find themselves in an either/or position in relation to the one valid “truth” – as such, these outsider/Other persons cannot locate support or validation of their own knowledge, social or cultural experience. Therefore, these cultural dualisms and binary oppositions do more than locate Knowers in relation to the hegemonic (charismatic) paradigm, they mark Knowers from non-Knowers, insiders from outsiders, saved from unsaved.

Fundamentalist NRMs, such as the third-wave restoration congregations studied herein, tend to have no written rules. There is no worship liturgy distributed among the congregation at Total Grace Christian Center. There are no hymnals at Total Grace. What is at work at Total Grace and at the Cathedral at Chapel Hill is a culture of worship literacy, if you will, constructed along a dualistic agenda that is every bit as much established-by-edict as the practices of modern scientific inquiry. Embodied knowledge seems to rule the culture in charismatic circles. Perhaps embodied charismatic religious practices are acts of resistance to modernity; perhaps its emphasis on embodiment is the charismatic version of modern anti-rationalism. The dualistic agenda at work in these congregations is a reinforcement of a binary logic that separates people – good/evil, saved/unsaved, and heaven/hell. Those binary operations are reinforced by the “rule of the Bible,” that carries the sense of imperative, for these congregants, along with the dualistic agenda. The result is a radical division of persons and bodies in these congregations. Those bodies can apprehend the cues, read the “signs” and can enter the epistemic space, understand the implicit rules of how knowledge is constructed, physically expressed, and

subsequently articulated, are imprinted with the designation “saved.” Those bodies that cannot seem to break the code of this epistemological acquisition, or those who never learn to or resist expressing their fundamentalist knowledge in culturally sanctioned ways, are stamped “unsaved.” They are non-Knowers. And in fundamentalist culture, the post-mortal fate of the “unsaved” is very clear.

Recalling Jane:

I: Anything else you remember about speaking in tongues...?

P: I remember when I was eleven; I do everything according to what grade I was in. ... I think I was in fourth grade and I guess I decided it was time for me to get filled with the Holy Ghost. I sat down and I didn't get up until I got it because if they didn't think I would get it they would just pray harder and longer. So I got it. I wanted to get up. I'll say whatever you want.

Jane, being a little brighter at 11 years than I am today, broke the code to become a Knower in the charismatic fundamentalist setting in which she grew up. When Knowers are scripted and imprinted, they “know” without necessarily knowing why they know. Jane correctly “guessed,” in her words, when it was time to get filled with the Holy Ghost.

I, on the other hand, never did “get it” --- I did not get the Holy Spirit and I didn't “get” when it was time to do what in third-wave restorationist worship. I cannot dance and I cannot sing and, since I know these things about myself, I am not likely to make the attempt. I can read, but there was no bulletin, no liturgy, and no hymnal in third-wave restorationist worship. What I did “get,” very clearly, was that I was a non-Knower and that there was a whole world of Spirit and difference between me and the Knowers who “got” it week after week.

Emerging Questions for Further Study

I hope that life affords me another opportunity like the one with which I was presented in this study. The quantitative evidence from this small sample is suggestive of several issues, which beg for further study.

Taking seriously Streib's (2001) contention that fundamentalism represents a "heterodyning" of mature religious styles with those from an earlier period in life, I believe that the DIT-2, with its schema scores and types, might be one window into systematically examining the types of thinking used by members of fundamentalist communities. It may be that DIT-2 revealed schemas and types are the best method for demonstrating and documenting the phenomenon of "heterodyning" or, perhaps, pressing toward a poststructural theory of faith development. The results of this small sample can only point to this "heterodyning" as a possibility, but a larger sample may very well highlight trends in moral reasoning that could validate or refute Streib's assertion or reveal more clearly the contours of a new theory.

Second, the choice of the DIT-2 proved a better one for this sample, a fact that I only tripped upon late in this study. The choice of the DIT, with its P-scores and stage scores, would have limited the outcomes to the results of yet another structural developmental stage theory. From the results of this small sample, P-scores and stage theories would lead one to conclude that the Jehovah's Witnesses were the morally, structurally, strongest of the groups studied herein. By looking at the DIT-2 schema scores and types, the members of the churches of Christ, with 3 of 4 members being a Type 7, proved to exhibit the most sophisticated moral thinking. Therefore, the DIT-2, as it now models a theory beyond the structural stage theory of the neo-

Kohlbergian DIT, captures more information about the types of reasoning people exhibit in making moral judgments. Perhaps schema theory is a wave of the future in moral judgment and faith development research?

It goes without saying, then, that the quantitative study herein begs for a second round of study with a larger sample. That quantitative study might include classic FDI scores alongside DIT-2 schema and type scores, with statistical analyses to locate significant similarities or dissimilarities between the two types of scores. Similarly, a comparison between the two structural developmental theories, represented in the FDI and the DIT-2 P-scores and stage scores, might yield interesting results.

For qualitative study, it proved a worthwhile endeavor for me to do some historical, sociological, and ethnographic work while researching fundamentalist NRMs. The NRM sectarian subcultures helped me to see the distinctions between a more common contemporary American evangelicalism and sectarian fundamentalism. I better understood each group's liturgies and ritual enactments, as I knew a little about their stories and the themes that each community held as sacred. The ethnographic work proved priceless when interviewing group members, in understanding some of the language and stories they told, and in knowing how best to ask questions. It also proved priceless in re-scripting ten interviewees' stories, in order to better understand their communities and the different ways in which each one constructed practical theology.

The lessons learned in each community are now a part of me and I hope that I have proved worthy of their trust. I set out to advance each community's story, along

with fundamentalism in general, forward in academic discourse. I do hope I have been faithful to the task.

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Appendix 1
Consent To Participate In A Research Study
03-04-2002

Headers are bolded and underlined; Instructions and suggested language are italicized; required language is bolded and italicized

Emory University Graduate Division of Religion
Consent to be a Research Subject

Title: **Deconverts from Fundamentalist New Religious Groups in the Southeast USA: Biographical Trajectories, Transformed Processes, and the Need for Intervention**

Principal Investigator: **Andrea Green, Ph.D. Candidate**, with Faculty Advisor **John Snarey, Ed.D.**, Graduate Religion, Psychology
Research Assistant: Christopher Silver, Graduate Student, Psychology, University of Tennessee, Chattanooga.

Sponsor's Name:

Introduction/Purpose: You are being asked to participate in a research project. If you choose to participate in this research, you should know that this is a **research project to establish and compare types of individuals in the Southeast US who have left or are participating in faith communities called “fundamentalist new religious” groups.** The researchers would like to **explore and compare those individuals’ relations to particular communities of faith, their faith, moral, and developmental issues and coping skills, and also to understand something of the histories and biographies of selected persons.** The results of this study will help researchers understand religious development, moral development, and transformation as it occurs in these individuals in their respective environments. In the Southeast US, 120 individuals will be asked to complete a number of surveys and questions about themselves. **Of these 120 people, 48 will be asked to participate in a faith development interview and a moral dilemma test. If selected for all of the questionnaires, individuals can expect to spend around 2 hours answering survey questions, and up to 2 to 3 hours talking about their faith.**

Procedures: This is how the research project will be handled:

If you were once and are no longer a member of a religious or a church group that calls itself “a fundamentalist new religious group,” you are being asked to volunteer for a series of interviews. You will be asked to talk with me about your faith, about your background and religious experience, about your history with religion or with the church group, and you’ll be asked to participate in an interview we call a “faith development interview.” You can expect to talk to me, Andrea Green, for about two (2) to (3) hours. I will tape record the interviews with you, but in no way will your name be attached to

the tape or will the tape be identified as you. I will assign a number to the tape so that no one will learn who is on the tape recording and so you can feel free to answer my questions openly and honestly.

If you are now a member of the new religious or fundamentalist group, you may be asked to answer a series of questions in an interview. You will be asked to talk with me about your faith, about your background and religious experience, about your history with religion, mysticism or with the church group, and you'll be asked to participate in an interview we call a "faith development interview." You can expect to talk to me, Andrea Green, for about two (2) hours. I will tape record the interviews with you, but in no way will your name be attached to the tape or will the tape be identified as you. I will assign a number to the tape so that no one will learn who is on the tape recording and so you can feel free to answer my questions openly and honestly.

Whether you are interviewed by me or not, you will receive a phone call from Chris Silver, a research assistant who will schedule a time for you to answer a group of more questionnaires about yourself. These

questionnaires will contain short answer questions that may answer 'yes' or 'no', or might rate a question on a scale of '1 to 5,' for example. These short answer questions, like the interview questions I ask you, are questions that have no "right" or "wrong" answers. They just help us understand you as well as we can. When Chris Silver contacts you, he will make arrangements with you to go through these questions, perhaps in a week's time or so. Like me, Chris will, in no way, use your name or mark your name on the papers of questions. We ask that you do not write your name on them either. We will keep all your information together by assigning you a number so that no one will be able to learn who you are and you can feel free to answer our questions openly and honestly.

Risks: We know of no risk to you for participating in this study. We do not foresee any risk to you for participating in this study. However, if you should need to ask questions or either me, Andrea Green, or of Chris Silver, one or both of us will be with you while you are being asked questions or being interviewed. And please remember, you can stop at anytime after giving your consent.

Benefits: We know of no benefit to you for participating in this study. However, some people, after sharing their life and faith histories with a researcher, feel grateful to have to opportunity to speak about their faith, their belief and what they value most in life. **Even if taking part in this research study may not benefit you personally, we researchers may learn new things that will help other people.**

Confidentiality: People other than those doing the study may look at both medical charts and study records. Agencies that make rules and policy about how research is done have the right to review these records. So do agencies that pay for the study. Those with the right to look at your study records

include my dissertation advisors, the advisors for Chris Silver, and the Emory University Internal Review Board. All of these people are concerned that your rights are being protected in this study. Records can also be opened by court order. We will keep your records private to the extent allowed by law. We will do this even if outside review occurs. We will use a study number rather than your name on study records where we can. Your name and other facts that might point to you will not appear when we present this study or publish its results.

Compensation: You will not be compensated for participating in this study. Your participation, should you choose to participate, is completely voluntary.

NOTE:

We will arrange for emergency care if you are injured by this research. However, Emory University has not set aside funds to pay for this care if a mishap occurs. If you believe you have been injured by this research, you should contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. John Snarey, Ph.D., at (404) 727-4185.

Costs: There is no cost to you for participating in this study. We ask only for your honesty and your time.

Contact Persons: If you have any questions about this study, you may leave a message for me, **Andrea Green**, at **(888) 284-9745**. This phone call is no cost to you. **Call Dr. John Snarey if you have been harmed from being in this study.** Call Dr. James W. Keller if you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research study.

Their telephone numbers are:

James W. Keller, M.D. (404) 727- 5646
John Snarey, Ph.D. (404) 727- 4185

New Findings: We may learn new things during the study that you may want to know. We can also learn about things that might make you want to stop participating in the study. If so, you will be notified about any new information.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal: Your participation is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse to be in this study. You can stop at anytime after giving your consent. This decision will not affect in any way you in any way nor will it jeopardize any other benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

The study investigator and/or its sponsor may stop you from taking part in this study at any time if they decide it is in your best interest, or if you do not follow study instructions.

“Your participation is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse to be in this study. You can stop at anytime after giving your consent. This decision will not affect in any way your current or future medical care or any other benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. The study doctor/investigator and/or sponsor may stop you from taking part in this study at any time if they decide it is in your best interest, or if you do not follow study instructions.”

We will give you a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you’re willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

Subject’s name

Date

Time

Subject’s legally authorized representative

Date

Time

Witness (if required)

Date

Time

Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Time

Appendix II

Faith Development Interview Guide

Part I: Life Review

1. Factual Data: Date and place of birth? Number and ages of siblings? Occupation of providing parent or parents? Ethnic, racial and religious identifications? Characterization of social class— family of origin and now?
2. Divide life into chapters: (major) segments created by changes or experiences— "turning points" or general circumstances.
3. In order for me to understand the flow or movement of your life and your way of feeling and thinking about it, what other persons and experiences would be important for me to know about?
4. Thinking about yourself at present: What gives your life meaning? What makes life worth living for you?

Part II: Life-shaping Experiences and Relationships

1. At present, what relationships seem most important for your life? (E.g., intimate, familial or work relationships.)
2. You did/did not mention your father in your mentioning of significant relationships.
 - When you think of your father as he was during the time you were a child, what stands out? What was his work? What were his special interests? Was he a religious person? Explain.
 - When you think of your mother... [same questions as previous]?
 - Have your perceptions of your parents changed since you were a child? How?
3. Are there other persons who at earlier times or in the present have been significant in the shaping of your outlook on life?
4. Have you experienced losses, crises or suffering that have changed or "colored" your life in special ways?
5. Have you had moments of joy, ecstasy, peak experience or break through that have shaped or changed your life? (E.g., in nature, in sexual experience or in the presence of inspiring beauty or communication?)
6. What were the taboos in your early life? How have you lived with or out of those taboos? Can you indicate how the taboos in your life have changed? What are the taboos now?
7. What experiences have affirmed your sense of meaning in life? What experiences have shaken or disturbed your sense of meaning?

Part III: Present Values and Commitments

1. Can you describe the beliefs and values or attitudes that are most important in guiding your own life?
2. What is the purpose of human life?
3. Do you feel that some approaches to life are more "true" or right than others? Are there some beliefs or values that all or most people *ought* to hold and act on?

4. Are there symbols or images or rituals that are important to you?
5. What relationships or groups are most important as support for your values and beliefs?
6. You have described some beliefs and values that have become important to you. How important are they? In what ways do these beliefs and values find expression in your life? Can you give some specific examples of how and when they have had effect? (E.g., times of crisis, decisions, groups affiliated with, causes invested in, risks and costs of commitment.)
 7. When you have an important decision or choice to make regarding your life, how do you go about deciding? Example?
 8. Is there a "plan" for human lives? Are we—individually or as a species—determined or affected in our lives by power beyond human control?
 9. When life seems most discouraging and hopeless, what holds you up or renews your hope? Example?
 10. When you think about the future, what makes you feel most anxious or uneasy (for yourself and those you love; for society or institutions; for the world)?
 11. What does death mean to you? What becomes of us when we die?
 12. Why do some persons and groups suffer more than others?
 13. Some people believe that we will always have poor people among us, and that in general life rewards people according to their efforts. What are your feelings about this?
 14. Do you feel that human life on this planet will go on indefinitely, or do you think it is about to end?

Part IV: Religion

1. Do you have or have you had important religious experiences?
2. What feelings do you have when you think about God?
3. Do you consider yourself a religious person?
4. If you pray, what do you feel is going on when you pray?
5. Do you feel that your religious outlook is "true"? In what sense? Are religious traditions other than your own "true"?
6. What is sin (or sins)? How have your feelings about this changed? How did you feel or think about sin as a child, an adolescent, and so on?
7. Some people believe that without religion morality breaks down. What do you feel about this?
8. Where do you feel that you are changing, growing, struggling or wrestling with doubt in your life at the present time? Where is your growing edge?
9. What is your image (or idea) of mature faith?

This section from Appendix A in James W. Fowler's *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, 1981.

