INTERACTIONAL COMMITMENT: ‘LIKE ME’ AND ‘NOT LIKE ME,’ AN EXTENSION
AND TEST OF IDENTITY THEORY

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fulfillment of the requirements for the
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by

Jay W. Hays

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Dissertation written by

Jay W. Hays

B.A., Mount Union College, 1998
M.Ed., Kent State University, 2001
M.A., Kent State University, 2010
Ph.D., Kent State University, 2017

Approved by

Dr. Richard T. Serpe, Chair, Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Dr. Kristen Marcussen, Members, Doctoral Dissertation Committee
Dr. Richard E. Adams
Dr. Mark A. Kretovics
Dr. Manfred van Dulmen

Accepted by

Dr. Richard T. Serpe, Chair, Department of Sociology
Dr. James L. Blank, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS……………………………………………………………………………..iii
LIST OF FIGURES………………………………………………………………………………vi
LIST OF TABLES…………………………………………………………………………………..vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS………………………………………………………………….viii

CHAPTERS            Page

1  INTRODUCTION………………………………………………………………………………..1

2  LITERATURE REVIEW……………………………………………………………………….8
   Identity Theory…………………………………………………………………………………8
   Commitment…………………………………………………………………………………..15
   Perceptual Control and Commitment……………………………………………………19
   Commitment and the Social Structure…………………………………………………22
   Measuring Commitment…………………………………………………………………25
   Interactional Commitment – An Extension…………………………………………30
   Religion……………………………………………………………………………………31

3  METHODS AND DATA…………………………………………………………………….42
   Model 1……………………………………………………………………………………45
   Exogenous Variables………………………………………………………………………46
   Endogenous Variables……………………………………………………………………47
   Model 2……………………………………………………………………………………52
   Exogenous Variables………………………………………………………………………52
B. Survey Items........................................................................................................102
C. Summary of Hypotheses..........................................................................................107
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Hypothesized Model 1</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tables</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cross tabulation of religion by race</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Descriptive statistics: mean, percentages, standard deviation, range, skewness and kurtosis of study variables</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pairwise correlation matrix</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Post estimate descriptive statistics for Model 1</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Standardized coefficients for Model 1</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Post estimate descriptive statistics for Model 2</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Standardized coefficients for Model 2</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Unstandardized coefficients and standard errors for Model 2</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Identity theory is a prominent theoretical and research tradition in sociological social psychology. First proposed by Stryker (1968; 1980[2002]), identity theory emerged from symbolic interactionism to establish testable hypotheses about the relationship between society, the self, and behavior. The theoretical dictum is based on the idea that society shapes the self which shapes social interactions. To establish testable hypotheses related to this idea, Stryker invoked the concepts of commitment to represent society and identity as an aspect of the self that influences behavior.

Identities are cognitive schema that organize the self (Stryker and Burke 2000) and are internalized representations of the roles that people play in society. Identities, as an aspect of the self, shape social interaction. Social interactions occur as one behaves in identity relevant ways in situations for which that identity is relevant. When a child acts out of order, a parent is called upon to address the inappropriate behavior. When an employee is late for work, a supervisor is called upon to reprimand the employee. When an athlete scores a goal, teammates are called upon to congratulate them.
In these examples the roles of parent, supervisor and teammate may exist within the same person. In each case, the identity most salient in the situation\(^1\) is called upon to provide a script for how to behave. In each case the role choice seems clear. One would not address a teammate as they would their young child. However, life is rarely so ubiquitous, particularly when role choices conflict, such as when the next game is the same night as the child’s piano recital, or the night before a big project is due at work. Structural symbolic interactionism provides a framework for how such role choice decisions are made and identity theory provides a mechanism for testing hypotheses related to this framework.

Identities are hierarchically arranged by their importance (prominence) to the self and probability of being enacted across situations (salience). An identity’s placement relative to competing identities will predict behavior (Burke and Reitzes 1981). Identities, as aspects of the self, are shaped by society. Society is understood by symbolic interactionists to be an interactional process that occurs as a series of role relationships that place an individual in contextual situations with role related others. The strength of those relationships predicts the prominence (McCall and Simmons [1966]1978) and salience of the identity (Stryker 1968). The strength of the ties between the self and role related others reflects the *commitment* one has towards those others. In other words, commitment refers to the intensiveness and extensiveness of a social network tied to a particular identity. Thus, the theoretical dictum that society shapes self shapes social behavior is specified by identity theory as commitment affects identity prominence, affects identity salience, affects identity relevant behaviors.

\(^1\) Stryker suggests that identities are salient across situations. One with a highly salient parent identity, might define their teammate and supervisor identities from a family point of view, treating other teammates or co-workers as family members.
When confronted with a schedule conflict, as with choosing between the piano recital or playing in the next game, identity theory provides a mechanism for predicting the outcome. If one is more committed to their children than to their teammates, then the parent identity is more important than the athlete identity, and the recital provides the opportunity to enact the parent identity, then we predict the person will attend the recital and not the game. As the individual chooses the piano recital over the game, the athletic identity falls in the salience hierarchy and may jeopardize future opportunities to be an active member of the team if the team decides to cut the uncommitted member. Commitment then can be operationalized as the loss of social ties when commitments to other ties are given preference. Commitment has two dimensions – extensiveness and intensiveness. The extensiveness of social relationships based upon an identity is referred to as interactional commitment. The intensiveness of social relationships based upon an identity is affective commitment.

The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the theoretical arguments and measurement issues related to how identity theorists have utilized the concept of interactional commitment. “Religion” provides the context in which the arguments will be tested. One of Stryker’s original hypotheses stated “the greater the commitment premised on an identity, i.e., the more extensive and/or intensive the network of relationships into which one enters by virtue of a given identity, the higher will be that identity in the salience hierarchy” (1968; 561). This relationship in which commitment to others based upon a given identity affects the salience of an identity is well established in the literature (Callero 1985; Lee 2002, 2005; Merolla, Serpe, Stryker and Schultz

2 Choice is a scope condition for identity theory (Stryker 1980[2002])
What is assumed in this rich body of literature is that only commitments to others based upon a given identity will affect that identity in the hierarchies. What has not been tested is how interactions with others who are not associated with a given identity affect the salience of that identity. This is an aim of this dissertation. To understand the effects of interaction between individuals who share one’s religious beliefs and interaction between individuals who do not share the same beliefs on one’s identity.

A second aim is to contextualize commitment within the social structure. Theoretically, commitment is the smallest component of the social structure (Stryker and Serpe 2011). Identity theory has specified three levels of social structure: Larger social structures such as race, gender, social class and religious affiliation; intermediate social structures such as neighborhoods, schools, or churches; and proximal social structures or the interpersonal relationships such as coworkers, classmates, family members that develop within the intermediate structures (Stryker, Serpe, and Hunt 2005). These social structures act as the organizing elements of society. They constrain and provide opportunities for people to enact roles and provide choices between roles. A low-income person may not be able to afford piano lessons for their child, or to miss work, as the loss of income would jeopardize the health and safety of their children. Examining the effects of the social structure on these processes is important for contextualizing the nature of commitment, identity, and behavior. Religion provides the context for this examination.

Sociologists recognize religion and religious organizations as an important social institution. Among sociologist’s earliest writers -- Marx, Weber, Simmel, Durkheim, and Du Bois -- all addressed religion in their respective works. Marx’s famous quote that “religion is the
“opiate of the masses” suggested that religion numbed the lower classes to their painful existences under capitalism. Simmel (1955) argued that religion brought people together into a group affiliation who would not otherwise intersect in other aspects of their lives. Durkheim wrote that religion served as a collective force, that through sacred rituals and the use of totems, individuals affirmed and re-affirmed their collectivity. Weber’s was interested in how Protestantism helped to shape Western capitalism by providing an idealism that stressed the pursuit of a moral calling to be productive as evidence of the fulfillment of God’s glory (Edles and Appelrouth 2005).

Today, religion continues to be an important organizing agency in our community. Putnam and Campbell (2010) note that Americans are increasingly polarized along religious lines. Those with strong religious beliefs are aligned on the political right and those who are not religious or only slightly religious are aligned on the political left. The central question of their book is how can a society that values religious pluralism exist with religious polarization?

Yancy (2010) reported that atheists, as a group, attract a high level of animosity by religious people, particularly from older, less educated conservatives. However, he also reports that these fundamentalists also experience a degree of animosity from politically progressive, more educated groups especially in highly secularized spaces such as public universities. There are regional and racial differences in these results as well. Non-southern whites for example are more accepting of Muslims and atheists, and more likely to reject fundamentalists, but southerners were least likely to accept atheists and Muslims but most likely to accept fundamentalists.

The 2008 American Religious Identification Survey results indicated that 76 percent of US Adults identified as Christian. People who do not identify as religious (the “none’s” for “no religion”) was 15 percent (Kosmin and Keyser 2009). The 2014 Pew Research findings from the
U.S. Religious Landscape Study (Cooperman, Smith, Ritchey 2015) indicated that less than 71percent identified as Christian and nearly 23percent identified as “none’s”. During the same timeframe, non-Christian religious affiliation increased slightly (1.2percent) as belief and spirituality become more personalized (Madsen 2009). Shifting demographics and polarization indicate that religion still plays a critical role in how American society is organized. Such patterns not only influence macro social structures, but affect local communities as congregations grow, decline, or even close (Bidgood 2016). As the intermediate level of social structure is affected, so too are individual relationships, identities, and behaviors.

This dissertation will not examine the macro concerns related to changing affiliation and belief, but by examining interactions between those who share beliefs and between those who do not share beliefs, we can shed light on how polarization may affect the structure of the self and engagement in religious behaviors.

Utilizing cross sectional data collected via an online survey concerning respondent’s religious identity, this secondary analysis will examine the interactions that respondents have with members of their congregations, with family and friends, and their interactional commitment structures based upon their religious identities. Two forms of interactional commitment will be specified. First, the traditional approach which addresses interaction with those who share their religious beliefs; and second, an alternative approach which address interaction with those who do \textit{not} share their religious beliefs.

The specific research questions can be posed:

1. \textit{Does social structure, particularly engagement at the proximal level, affect extensiveness of interaction with others who are like them and others not like them in terms of their religious beliefs?}
2. *How do interactions with others who are like them and not like them in terms of their religious beliefs affect identity and identity relevant behaviors?*

The following chapter will review the identity theory research and findings as well as the sociology of religion literature as it is relevant to the present research. Specific hypotheses will also be specified in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 will discuss the data, statistical methods, and analytic strategy for answering the above questions and address the specific hypotheses. Chapters 4 and 5 are analytical chapters that will test the hypotheses. The concluding chapter will provide a discussion of the results and provide answers to questions posed in this chapter.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is broken into three broad sections. First, I will provide an overview of identity theory, paying special attention to commitment. Second, the role of religion is examined in social life. The role of religiosity (beliefs, belonging, and behavior) is examined as well as how social structures affect religious identities. Finally, a set of hypotheses are specified using religion and religiosity as a mechanism for contextualizing interactional commitments and how interactional commitment structures affect identity and behavior.

IDENTITY THEORY

A full discussion of the philosophical influences and historical development of structural symbolic interactionism and identity theory has been explored in detail elsewhere (Burke and Stets 2009; Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stets and Serpe 2013; Stryker 1968[2002]), 2008). This review will summarize key aspects of this development, particularly as they relate to the concept of commitment.

Any discussion of the development of key concepts in identity theory and the structural symbolic interactionist frame from which it is formulated must begin with George Herbert Mead (1934). The general idea in Mead’s work is that mind, self, and society are linked in a constant cycle of social interaction. One is not possible without the other,
Human society as we know it could not exist without minds and selves, since all its most characteristic features presuppose the possession of mind and selves by its individual members; but its individual members would not possess minds and selves if these had not arisen within or emerged out of the human social process. (Mead 1934:227).

The social act unfolds beginning with a conversation of gestures. One person initiates a gesture, another responds accordingly, and the initiator adjusts in kind. Gestures are acts that utilize symbols to elicit a response in another person. When symbols are understood by both the initiator of the act and the receiver in the same way, the symbols become significant symbols. It is when symbols become significant symbols that the conversation of gestures carries meaning. Mead argued that it is the existence of significant symbols that demonstrates evidence of the mind. The conversation of gestures and the use of significant symbols can be more precisely articulated as a process of shared meanings.

Blumer (1962, 1969) articulated these ideas in his writing. First, objects have meanings and individuals act toward objects based on those meanings. Second, meaning arises during social interaction (situations). Third, meanings are interpreted in situations in conversation with the self. As Mead argued, the mind is key in the development of shared meaning, which makes the self possible.

Simultaneous to the development of the min, is the development of the self. The self is an object which has meaning and can be acted upon based on those meanings. The self is given meaning during social interaction as the self takes on the role of another. During the conversation of gestures, the individual has the capacity to put themselves in the role of the other to understand the others’ attitudes so as to formulate an appropriate gesture, or response to a gesture. The generalized other represents an extension of the other to the whole community of
others. When one takes the attitudes of the generalized other, one can evaluate the self in an objective fashion. Also important is the idea that the self wants to be seen positively by the generalized other, in which case the self will conform to attitudes of the whole community.\(^3\) Rosenberg (1981: 593) referred to the self-as-object process as the self as “social product.”

The self is not simply a passive social product conforming to society (the generalized other). Mead (1934) also indicated that the self has a subjective nature. He referred to the self as having a “me” and an “I”. It is the “me” which is the object of the self – the social product aspect of the self. The “I” reacts to the “me” and is the creator within the social act. The “I” is the agent of the self; it is the responder, acting on behalf of the self, expressing desires, wants, needs, and establishing self-identifying meanings. The “I” is a “social force” (Rosenberg 1981: 593). This social process of shared meanings and taking the role of the other leads to cooperation, group formation, and the development of societies.

Mead and Blumer both referenced society as a process of shared meanings and of cooperation. Cooperation tends to have a positive connotation; however, Simmel (1955) suggested that conflict is also an important element in creating the boundaries of meaning. Conflict not only establishes associations and unifies certain groups of individuals against other groups of individuals, but in the process, establishes dissociating factors. Conflict and unity are important for the development of the self as well as the development of groups and societies.\(^4\)

Simmel (1955) characterized the development of self and society through a process of developing and sharing ideas (mind). Groups form as individuals develop ideas and these ideas

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\(^3\) Mead suggests that society can exert control over the self through the process of taking on the generalized other. Social control is achieved through self-control.

\(^4\) This is like Durkheim’s treatment of deviance. Deviant behavior provides the community with a means of affirming what it values; what is acceptable; what is unacceptable.
“find an analogue in the relationship of individuals to each other” (127). Individuals are born into a “web of circumstances” that is indifferent to their individuality yet dependent upon one another. As the individual extends themselves beyond the family unit, they begin to associate with others who are similar in some way. In modern societies, one has more freedom to associate with different groups based upon interests, talents, ideas, etc. When individuals join a group by choice, they can retain a sense of individuality, while at the same time “surrenders” to the group. Individuality is in part the unique nature of the individual’s multi-group affiliations. In some cases, these group affiliations may intersect. This may cause internal or external conflicts, but may also strengthen and integrate the self, “the ego [self] can become more clearly conscious of this unity, the more he is confronted with the task of reconciling within himself a diversity of group-interests” (Simmel 1955:142). Thus, interactions with generalized others provides the self with an opportunity to establish meanings for the self as object and as subject.

Kuhn and McPartland (1954) took a more literal interpretation of ‘taking the role of the other,’ when they linked roles and role relationships with the self. Their “Twenty Statements Test” asked respondents to write twenty statements answering the question “who am I?” They found that respondents tended to supply consensual responses first, or referential associations that “place him relative to other people” (Kuhn and McPartland 1954:69). Earlier work on the self also characterized the self in relation to other people and led James (1890) to consider that “a man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in their mind” (294). In other words, the self is an object and can be identified by others in role specific ways in the same way that Simmel articulated that group affiliations help to clarify individuality in a web of affiliations. These role meanings are shared so that one acts a certain way around family but may act differently around their friends, co-workers, etc.
If one takes the role of another to reflexively understand one’s self, then it makes logical sense that different meanings will emerge. Therefore, taking the role of one’s mother will produce a different understanding of self then taking the role of one’s child, or friend, or co-worker, etc. Each perspective of self as object produces a different self.

Turner (1976; 1978) further elaborated the relationship between the self and roles. Merton’s classical role-theory suggested that individuals were socialized per their roles, which provide cultural scripts for behavior, but had little agency in the process (Stryker [1980]2002). Turner argued that not only do individuals engage in role-taking, but role-making as active agentive selves (the self is also an “I”). Turner (1978) provided a detailed analysis of how role expectations become merged with the person. He noted that some roles are compartmentalized and only enacted when specifically called upon. Other roles become merged with the person so that they are enacted across situations, even when other roles may be more appropriate. Role-merger occurs when socialization pervasively affects the attitudes and beliefs of the person and is a result of a failure by the person to compartmentalize the role, or failure to abandon the role despite alternatives. Thus role-person merger occurs when the role expectations of a given role are merged with the person to the extent that it is played across situations.

Given these elements, Owens and Samblanet defined the self as “an organized and interactive system of thoughts, feelings, identities, and motives that (1) is born of self-reflexivity and language, (2) people attribute to themselves, and (3) characterizes specific human beings” (2013:226; emphasis added). Identities are one way in which the self is organized. McCall and Simmons ([1966]1978) at about the same time as Stryker (1968), theoretically began to think of the role taking process as a process of internalizing meanings as identities. McCall and Simmons defined role-identities as “the character and the role that an individual devises for himself as an
occupant of a particular social position. More intuitively, such a role-identity is his imaginative view of himself as he likes to think of himself being and acting as an occupant of that position” (1966[1978]:67 italics in original). This definition of an identity links the self to society in an imaginative process, thus incorporating mind, self, and society.

Stryker’s definition of identity stressed the fact that they are “internalized positional designations” (1980[2002]:60). Additionally, a person has many identities (a la James) as reflective of the various roles held by an individual (Stryker 1989). Stryker (1980[2002]) theorized that identities are organized in a salience hierarchy, or the probability that a particular identity will be called upon in or across situations. The salience hierarchy organizes the self in a way that ties identities directly to behavior. Roles carry culturally defined scripts that are merged with the person as identities. Each identity has behavior expectations that are established by others and by the self. When choices must be made relative to behavior, Stryker argued that one will call up the identity most appropriate for the situation to provide the individual with the appropriate role based behaviors.

An important influence on the salience of an identity is the prominence of an identity. The prominence of an identity is the subjective importance placed upon the identity (Brenner, et al., 2014). McCall and Simmons ([1966]1978) specified four factors that influence prominence. First is the person’s own imaginative view of themselves in the role, reflecting Mead’s notion that the self is an object onto itself; second, how well is the identity supported by role related others. Not only are role related others stressed in this point as a tie to a social position, but the appraisals of others about role performance is also implicit and will be discussed further below. Third is how committed the person is to the identity. Here the idea of commitment is introduced (Stryker places greater emphasis on the role of commitment). The final factor that influences
prominence is the intrinsic and extrinsic gratifications of the fulfilling the role successfully. The self is motivated in part by self-esteem (Cast and Burke 2002; Ervin and Stryker 2006; Gecas 1986, 1991; Rosenberg 1979) and positive affect (Burke 1991), and individuals want to give off the correct impressions (Goffman 1959). Identities that provide such gratification will become more important as a result.

Both prominence and salience are predicated on one’s commitment to identity, or to those who support the identity. Commitment strengthens the ties between society and self by articulating the role that others play in providing meaning for the identity. That is, “to the degree that one’s relationships to specified sets of other persons depends on being a particular kind of person, one is committed to being that kind of person” (Stryker 1980[2002]:61). When one is committed to one’s children, then one is committed to being a good parent. Alternatively, when one is committed to the parent identity, one is thereby committed to one’s children. For example, a woman is both a mother and a university professor. Her more salient mother identity might lead her to take her children to the playground rather than grading her students’ latest exams, also indicating that the professor identity is lower in the hierarchy. Thus identities, as internalized self-meanings (in this case mother means spending time with her children in playful activity), provide the link between the social structure and behavior (Burke 2004). It is her commitment to her children and to her identity as a mother that increases the salience of the mother identity “up” in the identity hierarchy more than the professor identity and her commitment to her students (and their exams!). The next section will delve deeper into commitment, its theoretical roots in symbolic interactionism and issues related to measuring commitment.
Commitment

Stryker’s concept of commitment drew on several sources including Kornhauser (1962) and Becker (1960; 1964). Both Kornhauser and Becker tied commitment to behavior: Kornhauser tied commitments to courses of action, the relationships that are associated with those lines of actions, and the loss of those relationships when particular courses of action are changed; while Becker tied commitment to goals and the subsequent unavailability of alternative lines of action once the goal is established. By examining the commitments of individuals in radical and liberal political groups, Kornhauser found that the radical groups required a greater commitment to the cause, including restricting members from associating with those outside the movement. This closed social group fostered strong ties with other members of the group. Leaving the radical political organization would thus mean losing ties to other members. Kornhauser concluded that “the strength of a commitment can be measured by the number of social spheres for which it enforces lines of action” (1962:322 italics in original).

Becker similarly discussed commitment as “consistent lines of activity” (1960: 33), and used the concept in response to arguments of personality psychologists that personality was immutable and did not change once adulthood was reached. Becker argued that the adult self is stable but is subject to situational change. Consistent with Kornhauser’s thinking, individuals are committed to a line of action based on a set of goals: “we say a person is committed when we observe him pursuing a consistent line of activity in a sequence of varied situations” (1964:49). In the pursuit of consistent goals, various courses of action become linked, weaving a pattern that constrains future behavior. Commitments become a constraining element on behavior because

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Stryker (1968) directly credits Kornhauser but shades of Becker appear in later developments of the concept, particularly Serpe (1987) as commitment takes on a constraining role.
breaking commitments would jeopardize the long-term goals of the actor. Becker also notes that breaking commitments, i.e., changing a course of action or goal, can be painful as courses of action included associations with particular others that would be lost with the change in the course of action. An individual may forgo a new job, despite a better salary, because of the pain one would experience in changing their current course of action.

Consistent with the symbolic interactionist view that individuals are social agents and not simply social products (Mead 1934), individuals can choose between courses of action that can alter the social structure. Pursuing a line of action puts one into contact with specific spheres of others. Changing a course of action leads to changing social spheres, altering social networks (local social structures). Choice occurs when multiple courses of action are available and an actor must choose between those lines of action that will best suit his/her goals. Situational adjustments allow for choices to be made and changes to occur in the adult life course (Becker 1964). Kornhauser added that “commitment is more than simply voicing choice” (1962: 321), but that is was a necessary first step in directing a course of action. Therefore, choice is a key element of commitment and is a scope condition for identity theory (Stryker [1980]2002).

Stryker adopted these ideas of commitment (including choice) into his formulation of identity theory. While Becker and Kornhauser linked commitment directly to behavior, Stryker argued that identities serve as an important causal link between commitment and behavior. Individuals committed to an identity (being a certain type of person) are in the process tied to role-related others who are engaged in similar lines of action. As the strength of ties with others engaged in similar lines of action increases, there is a corresponding increase in the prominence and salience of an identity. Greater prominence and salience of an identity leads to more consistent lines of action (behavior). When lines of action are inconsistent, it is likely that the
referential identity is low in the salience and prominence hierarchies and commitments (particularly to other people) are weak. Thus Stryker (1968) defined commitment as “The ‘costs’ associated of giving up meaningful relationships to others should alternative courses of action be pursued” (1968: 560).

Stryker ([1980]2002) defined two types of commitment — affective commitment and interactional commitment — which were subsequently tested by Stryker and Serpe (1982; Serpe 1987; Stryker and Serpe 1994). Affective commitment is the intensiveness of social ties, while interactional commitment is the extensiveness of the social network associated with a given identity. Thus, commitment has both breadth and depth\(^7\). Although Merolla, et al. (2012) analyzed commitment as a second order latent construct, Stryker (1987; Serpe 1987; Stryker and Serpe 1994; also, see Burke and Reitzes 1991) have noted that interactional and affective ties (commitment) are distinct and can operate independently. Stryker (1987) borrowed Becker’s (1964) example of a man who dislikes his career. While he spends a great deal of time with his coworkers (interactional commitment), he may not miss them if he or a co-worker quit the job (affective commitment). Conversely, he may love his wife a great deal (affective commitment), but cannot spend time with her (interactional commitment) because of obligations at work (long hours, travel, etc.).

Commitment represents society in the basic symbolic interactionist dictum that self reflects society. The structure of self is affected by the commitment the individual has towards

\(^6\) The recursive nature of the commitment-salience-behavior model is also demonstrated here as commitment affects salience affects role choice behaviors affects commitments and so forth (Serpe 1987)

\(^7\) Burke and Stets (2009) refers to interactional and affective commitment as quantitative and qualitative commitment. This does not refer to the methods used in collecting data for commitment as both have been collected primarily through survey research. Rather, the interpretation is quantity of network commitment (time spent, number of others known) and quality of time (referencing the closeness to network others).
others. The number of others associated with an identity, the importance of those others to the self, and the felt closeness to those others affects the prominence and salience of an identity such that identities with more others who are close to the individual will be more salient. As discussed above, the more prominent and salient an identity in the hierarchy, the more likely it will be enacted in situations (behavior).

While Stryker (1968) was incorporating commitment into his theoretical work on the self, Kanter (1968) also developed a theoretical model of commitment. Kanter’s model did not have an influence on identity theory (Burke and Reitzes 1991), however, it did have an important influence on the sociology of religion (Cornwell 1987; 1989) so deserves mentioning. Kanter drew on work by Parson’s in identifying three axes of commitment: cognitive, cathetic, and evaluative.

These three aspects of commitment support one another through continuance commitment, cohesion commitment, and control commitment. With shades of Kornhauser, Kanter described continuance commitment as the cost of leaving a social system to be more than the costs of staying and is a commitment to one’s role in the group. Cohesive commitment is akin to affective commitment in that feelings of affect tie members of a system together and reflects a commitment to the relationships with other members of the group. Finally, control commitment refers the level of obedience and the rightful power of the system to issue sanctions. This final form of commitment is a commitment to the norms of the group.

As can be seen in the ‘systems’ language, Kanter’s focused commitment to a formal group or organization. Unlike identity theory which seeks to utilize commitment as a causal mechanism for a structured self and individual behavior, Kanter’s commitment explained why individuals attach themselves to social organizations, “commitment may be defined as the
process through which individual interests become attached to the carrying out of socially organized patterns of behavior which are seen as fulfilling those interests, as expressing the nature and needs of the person” (Kanter 1968:500).

Thus, far I have been discussing identity theory and commitment from the perspective of the structural variant of identity theory. Identity theory has developed along two distinct but complimentary research lines (Stryker and Burke 2000). Stryker’s structural version and Burke’s perceptual control (Burke 1991; Burke and Stets 2009). Both versions find their roots in structural symbolic interactionism with the structural model focusing on the effects of social structure on identity and behavior, and the perceptual control model focusing on measuring the meaning of identities and how individuals control their own and others perceptions of identity behavior. Commitment takes on a slightly different role in perceptual control models, which I will discuss in the next section.

Perceptional Control and Commitment

The perceptual control model stresses the importance of self-meanings and characterizes the self as a cybernetic control process in which inputs (perceptions) are compared to an identity standard (meaning). If perceptions are consistent with the identity standard, then identity verification occurs and behavior remains consistent. If an identity is not verified, psychological distress or negative emotions may result (Burke and Harrod 2004; Stets 2003, 2004, 2005, Stets and Burke 2014). To avoid prolonged discomfort, discrepant or non-verified identities cause the

8 Identity Discrepancy Theory also postulates a system of identity evaluation by which discrepant identities result in psychological distress and is theoretically rooted in structural symbolic interactionism (Large and Marcussen 2000; Marcussen and Large 2003; Marcussen 2006)
cybernetic control system to activate resulting in either a change in self-perceptions (meanings of the identity standard), a change in behavior to align with the identity standard or to control the meanings of others (Burke 1991; 2006; Cast 2003).

The perceptual model utilizes a conception of commitment that is different than how it is utilized in the structural model: “Commitment to an identity is the sum total of the pressure to keep perceptions of the self-in-situation meanings in line with the self-meanings held in the identity standard” (Burke and Stets 2009). Burke and Reitzes (1991) argued that individuals are committed to their identities and that in a cybernetic control process individuals seek feedback through reflected appraisals from identity relevant others as to their identity performances. Future behavior is thus based on how feedback perceptions match identity standard meanings. Commitment to an identity and the reflected appraisals of important others is emphasized rather than commitment directly to others as Stryker and colleagues have specified. Put another way, Stryker argued that commitment affects identity which affects role behavior; while for Burke and Reitzes, “commitment moderates the relationship between identity and role performance” (1991:244; italics added). This moderating effect means that people who are highly committed to an identity will work harder to have their identities verified by others, while those with low commitment to an identity will not work as hard.

Burke and Reitzes (1991) further conceptualized two bases of commitment: cognitive and socioemotional. The socioemotional bases of commitment are functionally equivalent to Stryker and colleagues use of commitment. Cognitive bases of commitment have to do with how people view positive rewards and negative criticism of performing the identity. While they found that the negative costs associated with the student identity were not significant, the positive rewards associated with the identity are important bases of commitment. Commitment thus represents the
sum of forces that encourages individuals to develop and maintain congruence between identity meaning and reflected appraisals. The larger the network of role others associated with an identity, the greater the number of people who must verify the meaning of the identity (Burke 2004). Thus, commitment to an identity can create a more stable self and allows identities to be resistant to change (Burke 2006).

Again, we can examine the university professor/mother example from above to highlight the nuances between Stryker’s and Burke’s versions of commitment. For Stryker, the commitment to her children affects her behavior; but for Burke, her commitment to her mother identity will predict her behavior. In the latter case, verification of the meaning she has for her mother identity are found in the reflected appraisals of her children. Grading papers or taking them to the playground will result in reflected appraisals, which may or may not verify her mother identity. Her level of commitment (high or low) will dictate (moderate) how hard she will work to bring reflected appraisals from her children in line with her identity meanings.

Burke and Stets (1999) found that married couples (role partners) could create high levels of commitment in which a mutual verification context evolved. In acting in ways that not only fostered self-verification, but verified the identities of their partner, the couples grew in trust as each confirmed the identity of the other strengthening the shared social bond and shared meaning of everyday interaction. This harkens to the structural model’s emphasis on the strength of social ties and verifies the notion that commitment can be measured as the loss of such ties. Greater commitment and trust increases mutual verification, which increases the stability of the identity and the strength of the social relationship to the point that couples began to refer to themselves as “we” rather than as “I” in discussing their spousal identities. If mutually verifying contexts do not develop, there is a greater likelihood that commitment will weaken and individuals will seek
alternative role partners (Burke and Stets 1999). Individuals may even abandon unverified identities with weak commitments.

**Commitment and the Social Structure**

Identity theory articulates that commitment is the smallest level of the social structure, but the relationship between commitment and other levels of social structure requires additional theoretical and empirical work. Early models of identity theory included the three primary theoretic constructs of commitment affecting salience affecting a behavioral outcome with few structural precursors included in the models. Stryker and Serpe (1982) included age and income; Sex was used in several papers (Serpe 1987; Serpe and Stryker 1993); and race was a key element in Owens’ and Serpe’s (2003) examination of the self-esteem in the traditional identity theory model. After the initial wave of identity theory research in the 1980’s, other social psychological researchers (House and Mortimer 1990; Kohn 1989; Turner 1988) were calling for an examination of multiple levels of social structure.

Stryker, et al. (2005) launched a new line of research in identity theory by specifying multiple levels of social structure in their identity theory models. While maintaining the larger social structures of race, gender, income, and age at the macro-level of social structure, and retaining the commitment variable as the smallest most intimate level of social structure, the intermediate and proximal levels of social structure were included. The logic of structural symbolic interactionism posits that individuals are positioned in society based upon these levels of social structure which provide individuals with a probability of encountering and interacting with other persons similarly positioned (Stryker [1980]2002). Similarly placed actors have
greater opportunity to enter social relationships through which commitments can be formed, identities developed, and behavioral choices exercised.

Large social structures create boundaries within which such relationships can form (Goffman 1983). Intermediate social structures are social institutions such as schools, churches, voluntary organizations, workplaces, and local shopping markets that provide space within which individuals are placed in proximity to one another in routine ways. These routine encounters with similar others form more intimate relationships such as those that exist between family members, classmates, co-workers, colleagues, and friends. Stryker, et al. (2005:95) defined the intermediate level as the “localized” and “associational” level of social structure. Their subsequent analysis did not contain specific “localized” measures, but they could construct two distinct associational measures.

The first such measure was referred to as structural overlap and occurs when the same persons become associated through multiple role relationships; e.g., one’s sibling is also a co-worker, or a cousin is involved in the same voluntary organizations. These overlapping role interactions were shown to lead to stronger commitment to shared identities. Ethnic homogeneity, the second associational construct is like structural overlap, but rather than the same person overlapping in multiple role relationships, persons of the same ethnicity overlap across networks. In this later case, we might see that the church you attend, the schools your children are enrolled in, and your workplace are all populated with individuals of the same ethnicity as you. Both ethnic homogeneity and structural overlap were found to have varying effects on commitment across three racial groups that were examined in this study (Latino, white, black).
Stryker, et al. (2005) were only able to measure the proximal level of social structure inferentially by examining the inter-correlation the error terms of the commitment structures. The research included commitment variables for work, family, and volunteer identities. By taking the degree of commitment of two of the three commitment variables on the third variable, the authors could construct a social embeddedness correlation matrix. Embeddedness was defined as “a structure of multiple ‘other’ commitments proximate to the commitment that is of immediate concern” (Stryker et al. 2005: 96).

Researchers generally found that larger social structures, although they had direct effects on commitment, were mediated through intermediate and proximal levels of the social structure. This finding supports the symbolic interactionist notion that the interactional levels of social structure is of primary importance in analyzing and understanding everyday human behavior (Blumer 1962).

While Stryker, et al. (2005) integrated ideas concerning multiple levels of social structure into the identity theory model, their conceptualization of the proximal level needed to be further elaborated. By examining minority students enrolled in science training programs at colleges and universities in the United States, Merolla, et al., (2012) utilized enrollment in the training program as a proximal level construct. The features of the training program included increased access to relationships with faculty mentors and other students enrolled in the training program. The finding supports the thesis that smaller social structures increase commitment to specific role identities and behavioral outcomes. In this case, they found that students continuously enrolled in the science program developed greater commitment, salience, and were more likely to persist in their collegiate majors than students who were never involved in the program, left the program, or entered the program later.
Yarrison (2016) identified three different proximal level constructs while examining the religious identities of respondents: the homogeneity of the respondent’s social networks, the reflected appraisals of friends and family related to the respondent’s religious behaviors, and the knowledge the respondent perceived their friends and family had about their religious beliefs. Yarrison confirmed that the homogeneity of the proximate social structure positively affects the importance of an identity. Further, the positive evaluations of friends and the greater knowledge that one’s friends have of one’s identity, the more important the identity becomes. A friend’s knowledge of one’s identity also increases the probability that the identity will be enacted and increases the frequency of identity relevant behavior. These findings add to the growing evidence that ‘smaller’ levels of social structure have greater impact on the self and behavior then do ‘larger’ structures. This dissertation seeks to contextualize commitment by incorporating aspects of each of the three levels of social structure.

**Measuring Commitment**

As identity theory has evolved, so have the measures used to capture key concepts. Appendix A provides a summary of the various scales by which commitment was measured. Several studies in both the perceptual control and structural variants of identity theory have tested commitment in addition to a network theory approach. I will restrict my comments in this section to the development of commitment in the structural variant, but other approaches (Burke and Reitzes 1991; Burke and Stets 1999; White and Burke 1987) are noted in the Appendix.

In the first empirical test of identity theory, Stryker and Serpe 1982 operationalized commitment with six items (See Appendix A). The identity referent for this study was a religious identity and established the link between commitment and identity salience. The first two items
related to the importance of other people in their religious community. The third item was
constructed to measure the closeness of others within the religious community. The final three
items were structural overlaps questions, asking about overlap between their religious group and
friendship and other activities that could be associated with independent identities. These items
were constructed into a single scale of commitment and did not distinguish between interactional
or affective commitment. Callero (1985) used a similar scale omitting the sixth item, which
increased the reliability of the item from .73 in the former analysis to .82 in the latter. The link
between commitment and salience was confirmed in this study of blood donors.

Serpe’s (1987; 1991; Stryker and Serpe 1994) longitudinal study of college students was
the first to measure interactional commitment and affective commitment were separately
measured. This study established that interactional and affective commitment are distinct
concepts with independent effects on identity salience and on psychological centrality (Stryker
and Serpe 1994). Two interactional commitment items dealt with time spent doing things with
others associated with aspects of the student identity and close friends one has who are also
students. The affective commitment questions were reflected appraisals from parents and friends.

Using the same data set as those noted in the previous paragraph, Serpe and Stryker
(1987) established the causal relationship between commitment and salience. This was
accomplished by measuring aspects of the student identity (athletic-recreational; extracurricular)
and membership in related student groups. Commitment was perceived as “joining” student
organizations related to various student identities. They found that students with a salient identity
at time 1 were more likely to join related organizations by subsequent wave. Joining student
organizations reinforced the salience of the identity. Some differences existed between genders
depending on the identity, but the general pattern held with the conclusion that the self is stable
through a process of commitment to salience to commitment and so forth, with the strength of direction from commitment to salience.

In Serpe and Stryker’s 1993 article, they returned to a single measure of commitment with five items that related to the frequency of interaction with family members, friends, and dating partners in different contexts. The questions were how often the respondent interacted with [family, friend, dating partner] during meals, in the home, outside of the home, on the phone, or while working on projects together. The number of friends and close friends, the frequency of dating, and the number of organizations the student respondent joined in their first semester at the university were also utilized in the model. While not identified in the article as commitment, these items have been used in conjunction with other items to construct commitment. These relationship patterns were used to show that as a college student’s commitment to the family identity diminished, as a function of distance between the university and their home, respondents replaced the lost family ties with ties to peers at the institution.

Lee (2002) utilized a single question that was repeated across five roles (friends, family, teachers, program staff, program roommates) in a study of high school students enrolled in a science, math, and engineering program: “Thinking about your life, how much, in general, have you talked about or engaged in science, math and technology activities while around (or talking via phone or computers with) your _________[friends, family, teachers, program staff, program roommates]. Lee also collected data on three items for affective commitment: the importance of [friends, family, teachers, program staff, program roommates], closeness to these individuals, and a level of happiness when interacting with these role others. Lee merged these items into a commitment score for each of the five roles. This mirrors the early attempts to measure commitment (Stryker Serpe 1982), but the practice of combining interactional and affective
commitment has been avoided because of the conceptual differences in interactional and affective commitment. The most successful method of calculating a single commitment item was the construction of a second order latent construct (see Merolla, et al. 2012) utilizing items first reported by Owens and Serpe (2003).

Beginning with Owens and Serpe (2003) the measure of commitment became stable and has been measured consistently in several studies (Stryker, et al. 2005; Merolla, et al. 2012) working from the structural identity theory tradition. The current scale includes three items: two items related to time spent with role related others and one item pertaining to the amount of money one spends doing things with role related others: (1) “How often do you do things with [role others]?”; (2) “In an average week, how many hours do you spend doing things with [role others]?”; (3) “Of the money you do not need for rent, food, clothing and other essentials, how much do you spend on things you do with [role others]?” The first item as well as a modified version will be tested in this dissertation.

Brenner’s (2011) study of biasing effects of over-reporting socially desirable behavior utilized identity theory to show that surveys may provide respondents an opportunity to activate a salient religious identity that leads to over-reporting. In this study, the author includes three types of commitment – interpersonal extensive commitment, interpersonal intensive commitment, and intrapersonal commitment. Three items were used to measure interpersonal extensiveness (interactional commitment) and a single measure of interpersonal intensiveness (affective commitment). Interpersonal extensiveness items measured the frequency of attendance at church related activities. The interpersonal intensive item was a measure of structural overlap, and was a count of the number of close friends who were members of the same religious organization. Brenner suggests that the overlap of friendship and worshipper identities intensifies
the effect of interpersonal relationships. He argues that these traditional methods of measuring commitment only measure interpersonal interaction and fail to account for intrapersonal activities. Interaction can be an internal process of the mind (Mead 1934) in that we have conversations with ourselves: “this interaction, whether with or within the self, with the divine, or with an imagined (or generalized) other, comprises an important part of interaction that creates and maintains a religious identity” (Brenner 2011:58). Using God as an other, has some support in the literature. Recent qualitative work found that victims of intimate partner violence used prayer as a form of emotional management, and that God served as a significant other to whom one could vent and from whom receive positive reflected appraisals (Sharpe 2010).

Utilizing three items that address the frequency of solitary religious observation: reading the bible, solitary prayer, and time spent on religious activities within the home, the author finds support for the assertion that the interpersonal commitments affect salience while intrapersonal commitments affect prominence. This finding also can explain how individuals who do not interact with other religious persons can have a highly salient religious identity. That is, individuals with high intrapersonal commitment increases the importance (prominence) of the religious identity, which increases the salience of the identity, independent of interpersonal commitment.

A second recent extension deals with the embeddedness of role related others, and non-role related others in an individual social network. Using a social network theory approach to commitment, Walker and Lynn (2013) asked survey respondents to identify the 25 individuals that they would invite to a dinner in the respondents’ honor. The respondent then indicated

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9 Cornwall (1989) defines a commitment to God as an important function in understanding religious behaviors. See below.
through which role(s) the individual is associated (family members, coworkers, attend the same religious services, spent time with socially [friends], did school work together [student]). Role relationships were examined, particularly the level to which role alters were tied to other role alters. This is similar to Stryker, et al.’s (2005) approach to structural overlap, but rather than being concerned with the same role partner being associated with multiple roles, Walker and Lynn focused on how individuals not tied to the respondent through the same roles are connected to one another via a different role: “The social and emotional attachment approach overlooks the essential fact that the people we are connected to may also be connected to each other” (Walker and Lynn 2013:157). They defined this as embeddedness. For example, person A works with B; person A attends the same church as person C; Person B and C, but not A, are involved in the same voluntary organization. They found that the more one’s social network demonstrates embeddedness, the more salient one’s identity.

INTERACTIONAL COMMITMENT -- AN EXTENSION

To date, identity theory has assumed that individuals activate identities that are (1) normative, and (2) are done so in appropriate situations for the role. As such, interactional commitment captures information related to the extensiveness that one interacts with others like themselves – religious, workers, volunteers, students, or parents. Emerging research (Long 2016; Westermann-Ayers 2014) has examined the effects of counter-normative role identities – non-religious, unemployed, childless, and single – and stigmatized identities – mental illness. This emerging research highlights that those who occupy counter-normative roles may not interact with others like themselves. The present analysis will not examine counter-normative roles, but will examine individuals in a normative role – religious – who not only interact with others like themselves, but with others not like themselves. Doing things with others who do not share the
same religious beliefs has been shown to affect the prominence of identities (Alper and Olsen 2013).

Interactional commitment measures how much time and money one spends with others like them. In the present study, respondents were asked about how much time they spend with those of the same religion as them and with those who are not the same religion as them. Traditionally, this measure has preceded identity prominence and identity salience in structural models, suggesting that it is associated with a role identity. However, the concept and the measurement of commitment need not be tied only to role identities. Consider a religious person who identifies with a specific denomination, “I am Catholic.” This claim places the individual into a social category, “Catholics,” as opposed to Protestant, Jew, etc. (a social identity), and as a member of a particular group, presumably their local congregation (a group identity). Furthermore, the meanings associated with being Catholic, depending on the individual’s level of religiosity, could become a person identity in that their values, morality, ethical positioning and even voting patterns may be internalized as a religious, catholic, moral person (Brenner 2011; Peek 2005).

RELIGION

Religion carries social capital (Putnam 2000; Putnam and Campbell 2010; Wuthnow 2002), has the propensity to promote pro-social behaviors (Wilson 2000; Wilson and Janoski 1995), and influences political involvement (Wilde and Glassman 2016). Religion can also promote animosity, inequality, prejudice, and discrimination (Cobb, Perry, Dougherty 2015; Yancy 2010, Yancy and Kim 2008).
In this dissertation, I am interested primarily in how interactional commitments affect identity and behavior. Religion provides the context within which this examination takes place. In this regard, I follow Guhin’s (2014)\textsuperscript{10} advice that sociologists who study religion should shift away from attempting to craft theories of religion and thinking about religion as a \textit{sui generis} category; rather, religion can be a rich context for sociological theories to be tested. The specific identity theory hypotheses and the extension of interactional commitment are examined using religion as a context. In other words, how does interaction with those who share one’s religious beliefs, and interaction with those who do \textit{not} share one’s religious beliefs affect identity and behavior.

A goal of identity theory is to explain and predict social behavior (Stryker 1980[2002]). The behavior of interest in the present study are individual religious behaviors. There are several activities that constitute religious behavior: praying, watching religious programming on television, church attendance, reading or studying religious texts, and evangelizing (Baker 2008; Campbell 1987; 1989; Wilde and Glassman 2016).

Religiosity refers to how religious a person is or is not. It is often operationally vague, measured as religious affiliation (Wilde and Glassman 2016), belief in God (Yancy 2010), personal image of God (Stroope, Draper, and Whitehead 2013), perceived belief (Brenner 2011), religious participation (Chatters, Taylor McKeever Bullard, Jackson 2009), and frequency of religious service attendance (Brenner 2012). It has been used as an independent variable (Brenner 2011, 2012) and as a dependent variable (Stroope 2012), and Allport and Ross (1967)

\textsuperscript{10} Guhin is expressly concerned that the sociology of religion as a sub-discipline has failed to explain broader social phenomena. He encourages sociologists to think of religion as “a site through which religious actors can be studied” (2014:579).
developed an intrinsic-extrinsic religiosity scale to distinguish between internal beliefs and external benefits and consequences.

Belief in God, god, or a higher power is an important element across studies of the sociology of religion and is incorporated into nearly all studies reviewed for this dissertation. Religious studies also tend to incorporate three aspects of religiosity: belief, belonging, and behavior. Allport and Ross advised social scientists that, “to know that a person is in some sense ‘religious’ is not as important as to know the role religion plays in the economy of his life” (1967:442). Religiosity (belief) will be utilized as a control variable and belonging and behavior will be incorporated as endogenous variables. Religious belief is also an internal cognitive function and would certainly influence the self and self-evaluations.

H1: Religiosity will have a positive effect on (a) congregational membership, (b) knowing, (c) reflected appraisals, (d) interactional commitment with those who do share the same religious beliefs, (e) identity prominence, (f) identity salience, and (g) individual religious behavior.\(^\text{11}\)

Individuals construct networks of others based on valued identities (Adler and Adler 1989). Therefore, one who is highly religious might foster interactions to those who share their beliefs and limit interactions with those who do not share the same beliefs.

H2: Religiosity will have a negative effect on interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

\(^{11}\) Chapter 3 will provide the details of all the variables that will be utilized in the study. I introduce these variables at this point while specifying the hypotheses. Important literature related to each variable will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter.
H3: Religiosity will have a greater effect on commitment with those who do share the same religious beliefs compared to the effect on commitment to others who do not share the same religious beliefs.

As previous research has noted, larger social structures operate through smaller social structures. The larger social structural components serve primarily as control variables in this study and are selected due to their importance as found in the sociology of religion literature. The focus of this dissertation is not on how such structures affect identity or behavior, but how social structure affects the two forms of commitment being tested. Specific hypotheses for the control variables will only be specified to compare how the two interactional commitment terms are affected by social structure.

Recent scholarship in religion has argued that much of the research has failed to account for religious segregation (Emerson, Korver-Glenn, Douds 2015; Wilde and Glassman 2016; Yancy and Kim 2008) including the historical development of structures of inequality. This religious segregation is a complex issue of intersectionality in which race, ethnicity, class, gender and age have important implications for affiliation and belief. For example, white conservative fundamentalists are more likely to vote Republican, while white mainline Protestants vote more Democratic. Black Protestants, regardless of denomination are more likely to vote Democratic. White conservative Protestants are also more likely to occupy lower social classes, have less education and lower income than other groups. Catholics seem to be split in terms of their voting preferences. Wilde and Glassman (2016) argue that determining whether conservative whites vote based on religious values or class values is unclear in the literature. Voting and other religious behaviors may also be a function of religious identity (Brenner 2012).
Among black Americans, differences in ethnicity emerge as well (Chatters, Taylor, McKeever Bullard, and Jackson 2009). Caribbean blacks are more likely to read religious texts than African Americans, and less likely to belong to an official place of worship, engage in activities at these places of worship, or make prayer requests. Both Caribbean and American blacks are more religious than whites. Even among African Americans, older blacks differ in the types of involvement in religious life based upon gender and marital status (Taylor, Chatters, McKeever Bullard, Wallace, and Jackson 2009). Further, blacks and whites who attend multiracial churches tend to affirm white racial frames associated with racial inequality (Cobb, Perry, and Dougherty 2015), and racial diversity in congregations has been associated with declining church attendance (Dougherty, Martinez, and Marti 2015).

Latino’s religious experiences have received less attention than has white’s and black’s experiences (Emerson, Korver-Glenn, Douds 2015), particularly as it has related to political behaviors (Wilde and Glassman 2016). Protestant Latino’s mirror their white counterparts in that class divisions are important indicators of voting behaviors; more conservative Protestants tend to vote Republican whereas mainline Protestants and Catholic Latinos vote more democratic. Catholic Latinos are also less likely to oppose abortion than are conservative Protestant Latinos (Bartkowski, Ramos-Wada, Ellison, and Acevedo 2012). Latino’s also mirror blacks as they are likely to engage in political activism as a church in the same way that blacks do with civil rights issues.

In terms of gender differences, Baker (2008) found that women are more likely to engage in prayer and more likely to pray for others. Women tend to exhibit more concern over the well-being of others (Beutel and Marini 1995), which could result in females interacting with others without regard to religious beliefs. Schnable (2015) found that as income increases, women’s
religiosity decreases, but the association between income and religiosity is positive for men. Women tend to be more religious than men and religious women tend to vote Republican, yet the literature also shows that women are overwhelming more liberal in their voting patterns (Wilde and Glassman 2016). Even multi-racial churches that are inclusive of social class do not always support gender equality (Yancy and Kim 2008). Such integrated churches that are more conservative theologically are less supportive of female leaders in the church: “Christian teachings might promote egalitarian attitudes towards minorities and low SES individuals while buttressing patriarchal attitudes” (Yancy and Kim 2008:108).

Race is a complex web and differences found among racial groups are often confounded with immigration status, economic class, generation, religious affiliation, religiosity, and how conservative or liberal one’s church group is. As such, there is evidence for differences among the races, but there is no clear picture from the literature as to how racial group alone may predict congregational membership, engagement in proximal social structures, commitment, identity, or behavior.

In summary, research suggests that religious homophily has increased over the past few decades among the religious by age and by level of education, but decreased by sex (McIntosh, Sykes, Kubena 2002; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, and Cook 2001; Smith, McPherson, Smith-Lovin 2014). Education has a consistent negative affect on religious beliefs (Stroope 2011). Recent research also suggests that the age effect may in fact be a cohort effect and that as each cohort become more educated, they also become less religious (Schwadel 2014). The complex nature of these larger social structures requires complex analysis of interactional affects. Thus, no specific hypotheses will be specified for age, race, gender, nor education; however, these items will be included as controls.
Religious individuals are generally associated with- or belong to- a religious organization which often has a local gathering point for worship: a church, temple, synagogue, etc. These gatherings, which I refer to as congregations for simplicity, are intermediate social structures and play an important role in organizing the proximal structures, commitment structures, identity and behavior. Cornwall’s (1989) theory of religious behavior utilizes Kanter’s (1968) approach to commitment and specifies that commitment, as an affective measure of attachment, is an important link between belief and behavior. Commitment in Cornwall’s models is measured by a spiritual commitment to and importance of God, as well as attachment, identification, and loyalty towards the church and church community. Although this version of commitment confounds commitment as identity theory defines it with measures of prominence, the ideas of loyalty and attachment to a group of others related to a social position is relevant and stresses the importance of belonging to a group or community of worshipers.

H4: Congregational membership will have a positive effect on (a) others knowing about one’s beliefs, (b) reflected appraisals, (c) interactional commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs, (d) identity prominence, (e) identity salience, (f) individual religious behavior.

H5: Congregational membership will have a negative effect on interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

H6: Congregational membership will have a greater effect on interactional commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs compared to interaction commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

The next set of hypotheses deal with the proximate social structures effect on commitment. Drawing from Merolla, et al. (2012) and Yarrison (2016), I will incorporate two
proximate social structural variables to determine the effects of the immediate context on commitment. Within these contexts, the centrality of friends associated with one’s beliefs is important (Gurrentz 2014; Wuthnow 2002). Parental influences on religious belief are stronger for adolescents than for adults, but the effect of religious socialization in the family is consistently strong (Cornwall 1989; Ozorak 1989; Petts 2015). First, the degree to which friends and family know about one’s religious beliefs will have the following effects:

H7: Others knowing about one’s religious beliefs will have a positive effect on (a) interaction commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs, (b) identity prominence, (c) identity salience, and (d) individual religious behaviors.

H8: Others knowing about one’s religious beliefs will have a negative effect on interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

H9: Others knowing about one’s religious beliefs will have a greater effect on interactional commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs compared to interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

Positive evaluations about one’s religious beliefs by others is likely to reinforce religious beliefs and behaviors, having the following hypothesized effects:

H10: Reflected appraisals will have a positive effect on (a) interactional commitment of those who share the same religious beliefs, (b) identity prominence, (c) identity salience, and (d) individual religious behavior.

H11: Reflected appraisals will have a negative effect on interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.
H12: Reflected appraisals from friends will have a greater effect on interactional commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs compared to interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

A foundational premise of identity theory is that commitment to role related others will have a positive effect on identity prominence and identity salience (Stryker 1968, [1980]2002). Anthropological findings affirm that commitment based upon relationships with other members of the church is important for describing a Christian’s sense of self (Bielo 2012). Cornwall’s (1987; 1989) theory of religious behavior specifies the importance of commitment in predicting religious behaviors. As such,

H13: Interactional commitment with those who share the same religious beliefs will have a positive effect on (a) identity prominence, (b) identity salience, and (c) individual religious behavior.

Alper and Olsen (2013) utilized identity theory to explain why the first author felt a change in her sense of identity as a Jewish person when she moved from a predominantly Jewish community to a community with few other Jewish people. They found that because there were fewer opportunities to enact the identity, the distinctions between her Jewish identity and the largely Christian community in which she now lived increased the importance of the identity. Long (2016) found that the accessibility (thinking about an identity) increases for those who hold a counter-normative identity. In Alper’s case, her Jewish identity was more pronounced as a contrast to the religious identities of others in her community, causing her Jewish identity to

12 Alper and Olsen (2013) measured identity importance, but referred to the measure as salience rather than the preferred term of prominence. The practice of measuring salience as ‘importance’ can be found throughout the literature (see Thoits 2012, 2013 for recent examples.)
seem (locally) counter-normative thereby increasing the identity’s accessibility. Consistent with prior research (Alper and Olsen 2013; Brenner, et al., 2014; Stryker and Serpe 1994), I hypothesize that:

H14: Interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs will have a positive effect on identity prominence.

H15: Interactional commitment with those who do not share the same religious beliefs will have a negative effect on (a) identity salience and (b) individual religious behaviors.

The identity theory is a theory of behavior, which is also the third “B” in the religiosity triangle. Stryker’s classic example of a man who has a free Sunday has the option to go golfing or spend time with the family (going to church perhaps). The more salient identity will predict the behavior. In this case, religious identity prominence and religious identity salience will predict individual religious behavior (Behavior).

H16: Identity Prominence will have a positive effect on (a) identity salience, and (b) individual religious behavior.

H17: Identity Salience will have a positive effect on individual religious behavior.

Chapter 3 will provide the analytic strategy for testing these hypotheses, describe the data, and discuss the measures. Support for these hypotheses will confirm the assumptions of identity theory -- interactional commitment with those who are ‘like me’ affects role identity prominence and salience. Further, if the alternative method of measuring commitment produces the expected results, identity theory can be applied to a host of social problems related to othering, inequality, deviance, as well as empirically explain current social crises such as political polarization. As shown above, utilizing religion and religious identity is most
appropriate as religion can be seen as a third rail of American politics and carries a major influence over many behaviors from voting and political affiliation, to opinions about science vs. Biblical literalism, abortion, the death penalty, and can form the basis of both community services and hate groups.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND DATA

Data for this dissertation come from the Religion and Identity survey, an online nationally representative sample of adults who were initially recruited using landline and cell phone calls. The screener question “Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation or preference?” was asked to include only those participants who identified with a specific religion or denomination. Agnostics, atheists, and other “none’s” were dropped from the survey. There was a total of 2,738 respondents who began the survey, following the screening question 1591 completed the survey creating a response rate of 58 percent. Categorical responses to the screener question (and frequency of response) included: Christian (649), Protestant (253), Catholic (484), Buddhist (17), Hindu (1), Muslim (16), Jewish (49), Mormon (22), other (80). Of the 80 who selected other, most specified a protestant denomination including 26 Baptists, 6 Pentecostal, 2 Lutheran, 2 Methodist, 1 Presbyterian, 1 Episcopal. Given that the respondents did not classify themselves as Christian or Protestant, I was reluctant to re-classify them as such.

The literature overwhelmingly supports the notion that religious affiliation, or denomination, is an important predictor of attitudes and behaviors (Putnam and Campbell 2010; Wilde and Glassman 2016). This is particularly true when attempting to identify mainline vs. fundamentalist Protestants. The ubiquitous “Christian” and “Protestant” categories confound these subgroups making sorting these two important subgroups is impossible. As such the study will not include a variable for religious affiliation/denomination.
The sampling protocol oversampled blacks and non-white Hispanic/Latinos to create roughly equivalent group sizes of blacks (555), non-white Hispanic/Latinos (527) and whites (510) for a total of 1592 completed surveys. Table 1 provides a cross tabulation of race by religion. Black/African Americans were the most likely to list “other” (45 of 80) and accounted for 23 of the Baptists, 5 of the Pentecostals, and 3 of the Christians in the “other” category. Nearly two-thirds (72 percent) of Latinos are Catholic and account for 64 percent of all Catholics in the study. Catholics represent 30 percent of all categories. Blacks (61 percent) and whites (35

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Black/African American (n =540)</th>
<th>Latino (n =539)</th>
<th>White (n = 492)</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – Total</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - Baptist</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other - Pentecostal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – Protestants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
percent) were more likely to select “Christian”, which was also the most frequently selected category (41 percent). Together, Christian, Protestant, and Catholic accounted for 1386 (88 percent) of the respondents.

Table 2 provides the descriptive statistics for all the variables utilized in this study. This paper presents the results of two different analyses (see figures 3.1 and 3.2). Not all variables were utilized in both analyses. Post estimate descriptive statistics will be presented in Chapters 4 and 5 as they related to each analysis. Appendix B provides a list of all the questions and response categories for items used in analyses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLE</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>6.54 (2.66)</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1588</td>
<td>43.29 (16.44)</td>
<td>18-89</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (1 = female)</td>
<td>1585</td>
<td>53.63% (.50)</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1588</td>
<td>3.35 (.98)</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>31.30% (.46)</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>1576</td>
<td>34.25% (.47)</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1575</td>
<td>34.41% (.48)</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregation</td>
<td>1554</td>
<td>56.05% (.50)</td>
<td>0-1</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>5.48 (1.48)</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>-.94</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflected Appraisals</td>
<td>1194</td>
<td>7.37 (2.13)</td>
<td>0-10</td>
<td>-.72</td>
<td>3.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Commitment – Like Me</td>
<td>1464</td>
<td>3.21 (1.96)</td>
<td>0-6</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>1.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Commitment – Not Like Me</td>
<td>1403</td>
<td>2.60 (2.01)</td>
<td>0-6</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>1.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prominence</td>
<td>1448</td>
<td>2.98 (.82)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>-.62</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td>1394</td>
<td>2.52 (.96)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Behavior</td>
<td>1591</td>
<td>3.74 (1.43)</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>-.36</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MODEL 1

The analysis in Chapter 4 (Model 1) fits a structural equation model as a first test of the hypotheses by focusing on how the proximal level of the social structure affects the extensiveness of interactions with those who share their religious beliefs and with those who do not share their religious beliefs. The relationship between extensiveness of interactions and identity salience and the how this relationship varies by race were also tested. Figure 1 depicts the heuristic model to be tested in the first analysis (Model 1).

Figure 1 Hypothesized Model 1.

[Diagram of the model]

13 I shorten the phrase “interactions with those who share their religious beliefs” as “Like Me”, and shorten the phrase “interactions with those who do not share their religious beliefs as “Not Like Me.” I will use the shorter terms and the longer phrases interchangeably.
Exogenous Variables

How religious a person is, or their religiosity, was utilized as a control variable in both analyses. Religiosity was measured by a single item “How religious do you consider yourself?” responses ranged from $0 = \text{not at all religious}$ to $10 = \text{very religious}$. The mean score is 6.54 and the most common responses were 7 (16.21 percent), 8 (16.46 percent), and 10 (16.14 percent), indicating a highly religious sample. This is not surprising given that those not affiliated with a religion and more likely to indicate they are not religious were dropped from the study.

As previously noted, the survey oversampled Latinos and blacks to create three equally sized racial groups. Two survey questions were utilized to capture race and ethnicity: “Are you Latino or Hispanic?” and second, “What race do you consider yourself to be?” Response categories included white, black/African American, Asian, Other. Only nine individuals indicated Asian and 80 indicated “other”. All 89 of those who chose Asian or other, had indicated they were Hispanic or Latino and are included in the Latino group.

Nearly half (409) of those who indicated white (902) as their race, also indicated that they were Latino. Fewer (29) who listed black/African American as their race also answered positively to the Hispanic/Latino question. To parcel this out, the white variable was constructed with those who indicated white on the race question, and “no” on the Hispanic/Latino question. In essence, white is a more accurately white, non-Hispanic. The black variable was also constructed in this manner, though in all final analyses, black is the omitted category. The Latino variable is constructed utilizing any respondent who indicated yes on the Latino variable regardless of how they answered the question about their race. As such, the Latino variable contains 9 individuals who identified as Asian, 80 who selected “other”, 409 who are also white.
and 29 who are black/Hispanic. White, black, and Latino are dichotomous variables with 1 = to white non-Hispanic/Latino, black non-Hispanic/Latino, or Hispanic/Latino and 0 = all else. Despite this overlap, all of the correlations shown on Table 3 between the races are negative.

**Endogenous Variables**

Two proximate social structural constructs found in the literature were utilized in the analysis. Know is a scaled item derived from three observed variables that asked respondents, “How certain are you that your [close friends, friends, and family members] know your religious beliefs?” The responses were ranked on a four-point scale from 1 = almost certainly would not, to 4 = almost certainly would. It should be noted that respondents are provided an explanation of the difference between friends “people who you know and do things with” versus close friends “people who you know and can count on if you need them.” The reliability of the 3 items is high (α = .84). Yarrison (2016) analyzed close friends & friends, and family separately with mixed results on identity prominence and salience, but exploratory factor analysis demonstrated these items form a single factor with an eigenvalue = 1.90. Confirmatory factor analysis finds that the items load (.86, .88, .63 respectively).

The second proximate social structural variable, reflected appraisals, was constructed using three items, “How positively do you think your [friends, close friends, family] view you because of your religion?” 0 = not at all positively, to 10 = very positively. The item demonstrated good internal consistency (α = .86), and all three times loaded (.89, .89, .68 respectively) as a single factor (eigenvalue= 2.04).

Both variables at the proximate social structural level were set to covary. Reflected appraisals and know correlate at .60. Because both measures address one’s perceptions of the
Table 3: Pairwise Correlation Matrix for all variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Religiosity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. White</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Black</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Latino</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Age</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Sex</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Education</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Congregation</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Know</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.34</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Reflected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appraisals</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Like Me</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Not Like Me</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
<td>-0.46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Prominence</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Salience</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>-0.19</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Religious</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bolded items are significant at p<.05
how friends, close friends, and family think about the self and knowledge about the self, I calculated the variance inflation factor (VIF) to test multicollinearity. VIF was estimated at 1.58 (Tolerance = .63), indicating that assumptions of collinearity are not violated (McClendon 2002).

As demonstrated in Appendix A, interactional commitment has been commonly constructed in previous research using three variables (particularly Owens and Serpe 2003, Merolla, et al., 2012, Stryker, et al., 2005). These items were worded in the positive tense and were functionally equivalent to the “like me” version. The “like me” items were worded: “How often do you do things with people who share your religious view?” 0=Never, to 6 = Daily; “In an average week, how many hours do you spend doing things with people who share your religious views?”; and “Of the money you do not need for rent, food, clothing, and other essentials, how much do you spend on things you do with people who share your religious views? Things like, going to the movies and gifts?” 1= almost none, to 5 almost all. This study also asked these questions in the negative tense, or the “not like me” version: “…who do not share your religious views...” The three “like me” items performed marginally well ($\alpha = .63$).

Exploratory factor analysis provided an eigenvalue of 1.02.

The poor performance of these items as a construct was related to the non-normal distribution of the second item, which permitted the respondent to enter any value as the response. This produced a range of 0-168. The mean of this item is 9.91, however 50 percent of respondents entered a response from 0-4 with a mode of zero. The skewness is 5.16 and Kurtosis is 36.92, indicating a very narrow curve with a long right tail. Attempts to alter the distribution by cutting the long tail and matching the scale of the first item (8 categories) produced a platykurtosis distribution with virtually no variation. Standardizing the items did not provide any further clarity or improve the performance of the variables as a scale or factor. Therefore, the
second item was dropped from the construct. The third item had 235 missing values, which was not a problem for the size of the first analysis, but was problematic in the more complicated second analysis. Thus, the third item was dropped from the analysis.

The same pattern was found for “not like me” items. A goal of the study is to compare how the “like me” and “not like me” items perform in the identity theory model. For this analysis, I only used one item for Interactional Commitment - Like Me: “How often do you do things with people who share your religious views?” and one item for Interactional Commitment – Not Like Me: “How often do you do things with people who do not share your religious views?”.

Like me and Not Like Me are also closely related conceptually and may violate the assumption of multicollinearity. The correlation of the two items is -.46, which was not high enough to warrant concern. The result of VIF confirm that collinearity was not violated (VIF=1.28; Tolerance = .78). Due to the nature of the relationship between the two variables, Like Me and Not Like Me were set to covary.

The outcome variable for this model was religious identity salience. Salience is a latent construct comprised of three measured items. “Think about meeting a person of the [same sex, opposite sex, friend of a close friend] for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?” All four items are scaled 1 = almost certainly would not, 2 = probably would not, 3 = probably would, 4 = almost certainly would. The measure had strong internal consistence (α = .96).
Figure 2: Hypothesized Model 2

- Religiosity
- White
- Latino
- Age
- Sex
- Education

Congregation

Know

Reflected Appraisals

Salience

Prominence

Religious Behavior

Like Me

Not Like Me

Reflected Appraisals

Know

Congregation

Like Me

Not Like Me

Figure 2: Hypothesized Model 2
MODEL 2

The analyses in chapter 5 provides a test of the full structural identity theory model utilizing a structural equation model. Model 2, Figure 2, included the variables from Model 1 as well as additional variables representing the large social structure and intermediate social structure. Know and reflected appraisals were retained at the proximal social structural level. Both interactional commitment variables and salience were retained. Prominence and religious behavior were included with religious behavior as the final dependent variable.

Exogenous Variables

Religiosity was retained as a control variable. Latino and white were included as measures of race and blacks/African Americans were the omitted category once more. Other larger social structural variables included measures for sex, age, and education. Sex is coded 1 for female, 0 for men. Fifty-four percent of the full sample were female. The average age of the dataset was 43 and the median age was 35. Education was coded on a five-point scale, 1 = less than high school; 2 = high school graduate; 3 = some college or technical school; 4 = college graduate; and 5 = graduate or professional school. The average level of education for this sample was 3.35, or some college. Seventy-nine percent of the sample attended some college and nearly half (45 percent) graduated from college.

Endogenous Variables

A single item was utilized to represent the intermediate social structural level: membership in a religious organization (Congregation). This item came from the survey question “Which of the following best describes you?” 0 = I am not a member of any religious
organization; 1 = I am a member of a religious organization (such as a church, synagogue, fellowship, etc.). More than half (56 percent) of respondents indicated that they belong to a religious organization.

Prominence, or the relative importance of an identity, was included in this analysis. Recent research (Brenner, et al., 2014) has shown that prominence is causally prior to identity salience. Prominence a is latent construct comprised of three measurement variables: “My religion is an important part of my self-image;” “Being religious is an important reflection of who I am;” and, “I have a strong sense of belonging in my religion.” These items were scored 1 strongly disagree to 4 strongly agree. The items have strong internal consistency (α = .90).

The outcome measure was individual Religious Behavior. This latent construct represents the actions that people take to display their religious identities. The items include “How often do you read the bible, Quran, Torah, or other sacred texts?”; “How frequently do you watch religious program on television?”; “How often do you participate in table prayers or grace before or after meals?”; “How frequently do you ask someone to pray for you?” Items were measured on a six-point scale, 1 = never; 2 = Less than once a year; 3 = A few times a year; 4 = A few times a month – 1 to 3; 5 = A least once a week – 1 to 3 times; 6 = nearly every day – 4 or more times a week.” The mean individual behavior indicates that individuals engage in such behaviors roughly less than once a month (mean = 3.70). Exploratory factor analysis produced a single factor with an eigenvalue of 2.02. Confirmatory factory analysis produced factor loading coefficients of .81, .70, .74, and .67 respectively. As a constructed item these four items demonstrate good internal consistency (α = .82).
MISSING DATA

Every effort was made to limit the amount of missing data. Several additional proposed variables were dropped because of significant missing data. Similar to the issues with interactional commitment items, other variables that are traditionally included in the salience, prominence, and religious behavior constructs were dropped due to high missing data. Some of these items were also dropped to decrease the number of parameters to sample size ratio, and will be discussed in chapter 5. Both models were fit utilizing full information maximum likelihood estimation (Acock 2013).
CHAPTER 4
MODEL 1 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, I begin to address the research questions originally posed in Chapter 1:

Does social structure, particularly engagement at the proximal level affect extensiveness of interaction with others who are like them and not like them in terms of their religious beliefs?

Chapter 3 provided descriptions for all the variables used in this study. Table 4 provides the post estimate descriptive statistics for the variables used in Model 1. The model was estimated with full information maximum likelihood estimation utilizing STATA 13.1.

Model fit statistics indicate a good fitting model (Acock 2013). The chi-squared of 66.24 (p<.000) is significant, but this is not surprising because the chi-squared is sensitive to sample size (N = 1231). The root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is near the .05 threshold for a good fitting model (RMSEA = .056). The Comparative Fit Index (.989) and the Tucker-Lewis Index (.970) both exceed the recommendations of greater than .95. Table 5 provides the unstandardized coefficients, standard errors, and standardized coefficients for Model 1.

EXOGENOUS VARIABLES

Religiosity demonstrates to be an important control variable as it was significant on all pathways tested in the model. Coefficients between religiosity and know, reflected appraisals, like me, and salience are all positive, providing initial support for Hypotheses 1b (B = .47), 1c (B
= .46), 1d (B = .24), and 1f (B=.36). In other words, these hypotheses will be re-examined in Model 2 for confirmation of significance. As expected, Hypothesis 2 is negative and significant between religiosity and Not Like Me (B = -.07). Persons who are more religious have decreased interactional commitment to those who do not share their religious beliefs. Hypothesis 3 also has preliminary support as the effect of religiosity is greater on like me (B = .24) than on Not Like Me (B = -.07).

| Table 4: Post estimate descriptive statistics for Model 1 (N = 1239) |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|
|                                | Mean/Percentage (SD) |
| Religiosity                    | 6.66 (2.63)         |
| White                          | 30.32% (.46)        |
| Latino                         | 34.77% (.48)        |
| Know                           | 5.54 (1.45)         |
| reflected appraisals           | 7.39 (2.11)         |
| Interactional Commitment       | 3.26 (1.97)         |
| – Like Me                      |                     |
| Interactional Commitment       | 2.58 (2.00)         |
| – Not Like Me                  |                     |
| Salience                       | 2.60 (.99)          |

Although there are no specific hypotheses related to race, the impact of race warrants comment. I first examine the correlations presented in Table 3. The moderate negative correlations are very similar in size across the parings: between white and Latino (r = -.49) is no different than the correlations between black and white (r = -.49) and similar to black and Latino.
(r = -.55). The negative correlations indicate that they covary in opposite directions and hints that there may be some differences. I tested a groups modeling approach (Preacher 2006) in earlier versions of the model (results not shown). This was accomplished by analyzing two racial groups at a time to compare one against another. For each pairing (black-white; black-Latino; white-Latino), constraints were placed upon the paths from each interactional commitment item to salience. By comparing the chi-squared of the constrained and unconstrained models, it can be determined if race plays a role in the relationship between the interactional commitment items and salience. Within each of the three pairing, there were no significant differences in the chi-squared. As such, a groups approach did not provide any additional clarity to the model over a traditional approach in which two of the three groups are included as dichotomous exogenous variables.

However, in the white-Latino group, the chi-squared (66.89) was much smaller than when black was included (black-white = 93.24; black-Latino = 88.64). While comparing chi-squared across groups does not have any direct interpretation, it does suggest that something is different about the black group as a comparison group. Therefore, in the final version of Model 1 (Figure 3.1), Latino (35.68 percent) and white (28.74 percent) are entered into the model as measurement items with black (64.42 percent) as the omitted category to provide a more parsimonious model.  

Both Latino and white performed in similar manners in Model 1. Both racial groups are significant on Not Like Me and on salience but not significant on know, reflected appraisals, or Like Me. As shown in Table 5, not only are they significant on the same endogenous variables,  

14 Utilizing this coding strategy is also why there is no hypothesis comparing Latinos and whites, because no direct comparison is tested.
but the direction of the coefficients are the same. Both white and Latino failed to reach significance on Like Me, but both are significant and negative on Not Like Me.

Table 5: Standardized coefficients for Model 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Know</th>
<th>Reflect. Appraisals.</th>
<th>Like Me</th>
<th>Not Like Me</th>
<th>Salience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b(SE)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b(SE)</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>b(SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.47</td>
<td>.37(.02)</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.18(.02)</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.21(.15)</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.12(.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>-.03(.09)</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.13(.14)</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.11(.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.15(.05)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like Me</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Like Me</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bolded estimates are significant at p>.05 or better.

Compared to blacks, whites have lower interactional commitment to those who do not share the same religious beliefs and have lower religious identity salience. In comparing Latinos to blacks, Latinos also have lower interactional commitment to those who do not share the same religious beliefs. No other effects are present in Model 1 for race.
ENDOGENOUS VARIABLES

The next set of variables examine the relationship between proximal social structure and commitment. The proximal social structural variables (reflected appraisals and know) perform as expected for interactional commitment with those who share the same beliefs, but only reflected appraisals performed as expected on interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs. Others knowing about one’s religious beliefs increases interaction with those who share the same beliefs ($B = .11$), supporting hypothesis 7a. Hypothesis 8 is not supported as others knowing about one’s religious beliefs has no effect on interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs. Because know was not significant on interactional commitment for those who share the same beliefs, hypothesis 9 does not have support as the coefficients for the interactional commitment items cannot be accurately compared.

The reflected appraisals of family and friends increases interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs ($B = .26$) and decreases interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs ($B = -.15$). Therefore, hypotheses 10a and 11 are both supported in Model 1. The effect of reflected appraisals on interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs is greater than the effect on interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs, supporting hypothesis 12.

The three significant effects on Like Me (religiosity, know and reflected appraisals) are all positive as expected. Also, as expected the four significant effects on Not Like Me (religiosity, white, Latino, reflected appraisals) are all negative. These findings are consistent with theory: location in the social structure will increase commitments to those who share the same beliefs and decrease commitments to those who do not.
The identity theory hypothesis (13b) that interactional commitment has a positive effect on salience is supported for those who share the same beliefs ($B = .24$). Hypothesis 15a is not supported as the path estimate for those who do not share the same beliefs to identity salience failed to reach significance.

SUMMARY

Following the results of Model 1, I can partially answer the research questions. Proximal social structural variables do change interactional commitment. The results suggest that the more family and friends know about one’s religious beliefs (hypothesis 7a), the more extensive the network of individuals who share your religious beliefs is. The more one perceives that family and friends positively evaluate them based on religious beliefs, the more extensive interactions will be with individuals who do share their beliefs (hypothesis 10a), and the less extensive are interactions with those who do not share one’s religious beliefs (hypothesis 11). Proximal social structural elements reinforce interactional commitment structures comprised of similar others, and constrain interactional commitment structures comprised of others who have different religious beliefs. Reflected appraisals have a stronger effect on interactional commitment with those who share the same beliefs than on interactional commitment with those who do not share the same beliefs (hypothesis 12).

Although identity structures (prominence and salience) were tested more fully in Model 2 and will be discussed in the next chapter, evidence in Model 1 supports hypothesis 13b - interaction with others who share one’s religious beliefs increases the salience of the religious identity.
There is also initial evidence that racial differences exist in commitment and identity structures based upon religious beliefs. No differences across races existed in interactional commitment with others who share their religious beliefs. However, whites and Latinos interact less with others who do not share their religious beliefs than do blacks. As noted in the previous chapter, many those who identified as Latino, also identified as white, which could account for why whites and Latinos perform similarly in the model when compared to blacks. This relationship will be re-examined in Model 2.

Further discussion of the results and a discussion of the limitations of this model and of Model 2 will be addressed in Chapter 6, as many of the limitations in Model 1 are also present in Model 2. Model 2 incorporated the variables and relationships identified in Model 1, but expanded the number of social structural variables; included identity prominence; and an identity relevant behavior as the outcome.
CHAPTER FIVE
MODEL 2 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In the previous chapter, I began to answer the first research question (does social structure, particularly engagement at the proximal level, affect extensiveness of interaction with others who are like them and not like them in terms of religious beliefs?) by focusing on the proximal level of social structure with limited use of larger social structures as control variables. Model 1 answered this question affirmatively: proximal social structures increases interactional commitment with those who share one’s religious beliefs decreases interactional commitment to those who do not share the same religious beliefs.

In this chapter, the first analysis is expanded upon to include intermediate and larger social structures and to test the core identity theory hypothesis: “How does interaction with others who are like them and not like them in terms of their religious beliefs affect religious identity and individual religious behaviors?”

Model 2 is a structural equation model estimated using full information maximum likelihood estimation. STATA’s mlmv estimation methods identifies parameters in the presence of missing data (Acock 2013). There were 1163 cases analyzed in this model. Under normal maximum likelihood estimation, only 974 cases were utilized after listwise deletion. The additional 189 cases are important to ensure robust results. Utilizing the N:q method (Kline 2011), it is recommended that the ratio of parameters to be estimated to the
sample size be at least a 10:1 ratio (20:1 is highly recommended). That is, each parameter to be estimated should have 10 cases. Model 2 contains 115 parameters to be estimated indicating that at least 1,150 cases are needed to provide trustworthy results. Utilizing full information maximum likelihood estimation provides enough cases to meet the 10:1 ratio.

The data set contains equal representation from three racial groups (blacks, whites, Latinos). As with Model 1, the model presented in Figure 3.2 was analyzed using a groups modeling approach (results not shown). The models in which whites or Latinos were the omitted groups, would not converge. As a result, Model 2 includes white and Latinos as exogenous variables with blacks as the omitted group.

Table 6 provides the post estimation descriptive statistics for the variables utilized in this analysis. In comparing the mean and standard deviations of the full sample in Table 2 with the post estimation statistics in Table 6, there are four variables that changed by more than a standard deviation. Whites decreased from 31.30 percent to 30.67 percent. Latino increased from 34.25 percent to 34.98 percent. The number of females changed from 53.60 percent female to 52.80 percent. Finally, Congregational membership increased from 56.05 percent to 59.90 percent and is the greatest change seen in the sample. These variations are normal given that the model only estimated 1163 cases of the 1591. Religiosity remained within a standard deviation of 2.66 in the full model as the mean increased from 6.54 in the full sample to 6.71 (2.65) in Model 2. This slight increase could account for some of the change seen in congregational membership as the two items are significantly correlated ($r = .47$).

The fit statistics suggest a well-fitting model utilizing the standard fit statistical cutoffs provided by Acock (2013). The chi-squared is 357.95 with 108 degrees of freedom and is significant. The chi-square is sensitive to the size of the sample so a significant finding is not
surprising in this case. The root mean squared error of estimation (RMSEA) is .045 indicating a good fitting model. The comparative fit index is .98 and the Tucker-Lewis Index is .96, both greater than the .95 recommended cutoff score.

Table 6: Post estimate descriptive statistics for Model 2
(N = 1163)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean/Percentage (SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White 30.67% (.46)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino 34.98% (.48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 42.75 (16.07)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex 52.80% (.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education 3.42 (.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregation 59.90% (.49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know 5.57 (1.44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflected appraisals 7.41 (2.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment – Like Me 3.33 (1.95)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment – Not Like Me 2.56 (1.99)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prominence 3.01 (.89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salience 2.62 (.98)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Behavior 3.56 (1.78)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EXOGENOUS VARIABLES

Religiosity is included in the model as a control variable. Table 7 provides the standardized coefficients and significance for the model. Table 8 provides the unstandardized coefficients and the standard errors. I will refer to the standardized results as I did in the previous
chapter to make comparisons between Models 1 and 2. Except for the coefficient on Not Like Me, which failed to reach significance, religiosity has a significant and positive effect on all direct paths, confirming that level of religious belief is important to control for when examining proximal relationships, commitment, identity and religious behaviors. Thus, all aspects of hypothesis 1 (a-g) are supported.

Hypothesis 2 is rejected as religiosity failed to reach significance on Not Like Me, meaning that how religious a person is does not affect interactional commitment to those who do not share the same religious beliefs. I speculate in the conclusion of this chapter why the path from religiosity to Not Like Me was significant in Model 1 but not in Model 2. There is no support for hypothesis 3 because religiosity is not significant on Not Like Me precluding any comparison with the coefficients for Like Me.

Larger social structural variables provided inconsistent effects. Age is significant for Like Me (B = -.11) and Not Like Me (B = .14); The direction of effects is opposite – younger people interact more with those who share their beliefs while older people interact more with people who do not share their beliefs. I will address this further in the concluding chapter. Age had no other significant effects in the model.

Education is significant on Congregation (B = .07), Like Me (B = .07), Not Like Me (B = -.10), Prom (B = -.07), and RB (B = .06). Education increases congregational participation, interacting more with people who share your beliefs, and engagement in individual religious behaviors; education decreases interaction with those who do not share the same religious beliefs and decreases the importance of the religious identity. All things being equal, the more educated people are, the more likely they will belong to a church and engage in individual religious
behaviors, but being religious is not a prominent aspect of their identities. **Education** affects both interactional commitment items, and, as with **age**, the effects are in opposite directions.

**Sex** is not a significant indicator for either of the interactional commitment items. Being a female does have a significant effect on family and friends knowing about their religious beliefs (**Know** = .08) and on reflected appraisals by family and friends (**reflected appraisals** = .09).

In regards to race, **whites** are significant and negative on **Not Like Me** (B = -.11) indicating they are have lower interactional commitment to others who do not share the same identity than do **blacks**. The coefficient on **Like Me** is not significant, indicating that blacks and whites are not different in respect to interactions with others who share the same religious beliefs. **Latino** is not significant for either interactional commitment variable, meaning that Latinos and blacks do not differ in regards to their interactional commitment structures regardless of religious belief.

Additional differences by race include significant coefficients for **white** on **prominence** (B = -.06), **salience** (B = -.14) and **religious behavior** (B = -.17). In each case, the coefficient is negative indicating that blacks hold their religious identities as more important, they are more salient and engage in individual religious behaviors more than whites. **Latino** has significant paths to **prominence** (B = -.07) and **religious behavior** (B = -.12). This indicates that blacks hold their religious identities as more important than Latinos and engage in religious behaviors more than Latinos.

**ENDOGENOUS VARIABLES**

The endogenous variables include the intermediate variable **congregation**, the proximal level variables **know** and **reflected appraisals**, both interactional commitment variables, identity **prominence** and **salience**, and the outcome variable individual **religious behaviors**.
### Table 7: Standardized coefficients for Model 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Know</th>
<th>Reflected Appraisals</th>
<th>Like Me</th>
<th>Not Like Me</th>
<th>Prominence</th>
<th>Salience</th>
<th>Religious Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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*Bolded items are significant at p < .05 or better.*
Table 8: Unstandardized coefficients and standard errors for Model 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>Know</th>
<th>Reflected Appraisals</th>
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<th>Not Like Me</th>
<th>Prominence</th>
<th>Salience</th>
<th>Religious Behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Not Like Me</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Prominence</td>
<td>.03(.01)</td>
<td>-.02(.01)</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.03(.02)</td>
<td>-.03(.02)</td>
<td>.38(.05)</td>
<td>.26(.06)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Salience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.38(.05)</td>
<td>.26(.06)</td>
<td>.29(.04)</td>
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</table>

Bolded items are significant at p< .05 or better.
**Intermediate Social Structures**

The intermediate social structure is represented in this analysis by whether a respondent belongs to a religious organization (congregation). Religiosity and education both have a positive effect on whether one belongs to a congregation as described above. Belonging to a congregation has positive effects on both proximal level variables: whether others know about one’s religious belief (know = .15); and how positively others view them (reflected appraisals = .12). Hypotheses 4a and 4b are supported.

*Congregation* is significant and increases both forms of interactional commitment (*Like Me* = .18; *Not Like Me* = .11), therefore, it supports Hypothesis 4c but not Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 11 is also supported because the effects on interactional commitment with others who share the same beliefs is greater than the effect on interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs. *Congregation* also has a positive effect on prominence (B = .10) and *religious behaviors* (B = .19) but no effect on *salience*, which supports hypotheses 4d and 4f, but rejects 4e. These results indicate that belonging to a religious organization increases the certainty of others knowing about one’s religious beliefs, increases the perceptions of how positively others view the self, increases interactional commitment to those who do, and do not, share the same religious views, increases the importance of the religious identity, and increases the frequency of religious behaviors.

**Proximal Social Structure**

There are two proximal level variables: *know* and *reflected appraisals*. As described above, *know* is affected by the *religiosity* of the respondent, by whether the respondent belongs to a *congregation*, and by *sex*. *Know* increases interaction with others who share their religious...
beliefs (*Like Me* = .11), but there is not a significant effect on interactional commitment with others who do not share one’s beliefs. *Know* also increases identity *prominence* (*B* = .10) and *salience* (*B* = .15), but has no effect on *RB*. Hypotheses 7a, 7b, 7c and 8 are supported, while 7d and 9 are rejected.

*Reflected appraisals* are affected by *religiosity*, *congregation*, and *sex*. *Reflected appraisals* increases interactional commitment with others who share the same beliefs (*Like Me* = .24) and decreases interactional commitment with those who do not share their religious beliefs (*Not Like Me* = -.12), supporting hypotheses 10a and 11. The effect of *reflected appraisals* on *Like Me* is greater than its effect on *Not Like Me*, supporting hypothesis 12. Finally, *reflected appraisals* significantly increases *prominence* (*B* = .18) and *religious behavior* (*B* = .07), supporting hypotheses 10b and 10d.

**Interactional Commitment**

The principle variables of interest in this analysis are the two interactional commitment variables and how they perform in a full identity theory model. As shown above, one’s religiosity, being younger rather than older, having more education, belonging to a congregation, friends and family knowing about one’s religious beliefs, and the positive reflected appraisals by friends and family all increase interactional commitment to others who share religious beliefs. While being black (as opposed to white), being older, having less education, and belonging to a congregation increase interactional commitment to others who do not share religious beliefs. Reflected appraisals by friends and family decreases interactional commitment to those who do not share religious beliefs.
Consistent with the body of literature in Identity theory, interactional commitment to those who share your religious beliefs (Like Me) significantly increases prominence (B = .12), salience (B = .08), and religious behavior (B = .15), supporting hypotheses 13a, 13b, and 13c.

Interactional commitment to those who do not share one’s religious beliefs (Not Like Me) significantly increases prominence (B = .08), supporting Hypothesis 14. Not Like Me is not a significant predictor for salience or religious behaviors; therefore, hypotheses 15a and 15b are rejected.

Identity and Behavior

A goal of this study is to contextualize interactional commitment and test the use of an alternative method of measuring commitment. The theoretical importance of commitment is its effect on identity hierarchies, namely the prominence and salience hierarchies. These direct affects were described in the last section. To understand the full implications of commitment on identity, the theoretical effects of identity on behavior must also be confirmed.

As noted, both forms of interactional commitment have a positive effect on the prominence of the religious identity. Prominence in turn has a positive and significant effect on salience (B = .33) and religious behaviors (B = .12), supporting the prominence hypotheses (16a and 16b). Salience likewise has the expected positive effect on religious behavior (B = .22) supporting Hypothesis 17.

To summarize, how religious a person is (religiosity = .21), their level of education (education = .06), belonging to a congregation (Congregation = .19), perceiving positive reflected appraisals from friends and family concerning beliefs (reflected appraisals = .07), having strong commitments to others who share the same religious beliefs (Like Me = .15),
holding the religious identity as important (Prominence = .17), and having a highly salient religious identity (Salience = .22) affect religious behaviors (reading sacred texts, watching religious programs on TV, praying before meals, and requesting prayers). Black/African American’s also engage in such activities more than whites (white = -.17) and Hispanic/Latinos (Latino = -.12).

COMPARING MODEL 1 AND MODEL 2

The goal for Model 1 was to examine the effects of proximal social structural elements on interactional commitment. Model 2, while including these paths, expands to include larger and intermediate social structures, as well as prominence and a behavior outcome. Appendix C provides a list of hypotheses and whether they were supported by Model 1 and by Model 2. In Model 1, Know demonstrated significance on Like Me (B = .11) and remained significant in Model 2 (B = .11) with no change to the effect size of the standardized coefficients. Reflected appraisals also demonstrated significance in both models on Like Me (Model 1= .26; Model 2 = .24) with only a slight decrease in the effect size in the larger model. Reflected appraisals were also significant in both models for Not Like Me, with standardized coefficients of -.15 in Model 1 and -.12 in Model 2, also showing a slight decline in effect size. The consistency between the models with respect to the relationship between the proximal social structure and commitment highlights the importance of specifying proximal elements in sociological research.

Except for Hypotheses 2 and 3, all other hypotheses that are tested in both models are consistent. Hypothesis 2 states that religiosity would have a significant effect on Not Like Me. Hypothesis 3 states that the effect size of religiosity will be greater on Like Me than on Not Like Me. The effect of religiosity on Not Like Me was significant in Model 1 but was not significant in
Model 2. Thus Hypotheses 2 and 3 were supported in the first analysis but not in the second. I speculate that the inclusion of *congregation* at the intermediate level of social structure is the likely cause.

**SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a full test of the hypotheses of the study including confirming several that were first tested in the previous chapter. The main findings support previous research and theoretical work in identity theory. First, smaller social structures have an important effect on commitment. Second, interactional commitment, as traditionally defined as the extensiveness of relationship associated with an identity, had the expected effects on prominence, salience, and the behavioral outcome. Third, identity prominence and salience had the expected relationship and both affected behavior.

There are three new findings in this study. First, interactional commitment to those who do not share the same identity is a product of the social structure. Social structure organizes us into groups of similar others. This pattern is reinforced by the social structure itself as reflected appraisals by members of the primary group discourage interactions with others who are different. Second, the effects of social structure are generally in opposite directions when comparing their effects on interactions with others who are “like me” versus “not like me.” Being younger has a stronger effect on interactions with similar others while being older has a greater effect on interactions with dissimilar others. The same effect is seen with education in which more education reinforces interactions with those who share your identity and decreases interactions with those who do not share your identity. Third, interactional commitment with those who do not share your identity increases the prominence of the religious identity but does
not increase the probability that the identity will be called upon, nor do such commitment structures affect behavior. I will explore these findings in more detail in the final chapter. Limitations of the study, as well as possible directions for future research will be addressed as well.
CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Identities are arranged in a hierarchy of prominence and salience, or in a hierarchy of importance and probability of enactment, and are activated in social situations. The higher the identity in both hierarchies, the more likely it will be activated. Activation is manifest as behavior. The core of the identity theory model is that commitment affects prominence affects salience affects behavior. In the present study, this traditional approach by identity theorists to understand identity and behavior is supported when the objects of commitment share the same identity as the subject. When the object and subject do not share the same identity, commitment does not affect salience nor individual behaviors, but it does affect prominence. The results highlight the contextual nature of identity salience, which is defined as the probability that an identity will be enacted across situations. When interacting with those who share the identity meanings, identities become more salient, and there are opportunities to enact them.

Identities are arranged in a salience hierarchy and are role specific. The position of an identity in the salience hierarchy is supported by commitment to others related to the role. It should not be surprising that a religious identity is more salient when commitments are tied to others who share the identity as opposed to others who do not share the identity. These others have no effect on the salience of the identity. Commitments to individuals who do not share one’s identity do influence the importance of the identity. When the context of interaction includes those who do not share the identity, one becomes more aware of the identity and its importance to the self as shown in the increase in prominence, but this does not lead to
increases in salience or behavior. In a context in which the identity is not supported, it takes on a counter-normative role. Like a stigmatized identity, it is hidden.

The literature provides some explanation for this phenomenon. Serpe (1991) argued that the more one thinks about an identity, the more internalized are the meanings associated with that identity. When an identity is contrasted in situation, the apparentness of the identity being contrasted is enough to force the individual to become aware of and think about the identity. In this case, extensive interactions with those who do not share one’s religious beliefs may put the individual’s religious beliefs on notice, forcing the individual to think about and reinforce those beliefs.

The result is an increase in the religious identities position in the prominence hierarchy. This reinforcement pattern may be healthy, particularly if the identity meanings are positive or positively evaluated by others. When the identity meanings are perceived as negative -- such as being the only person of color in a courtroom full of whites, the only homosexual in the locker room, or any other counter-normative or stigmatized identity when confronted with a situation in which the normative identity is on display -- identity activations can lead to feelings of shame and embarrassment (Long 2016) and can lead to social withdrawal (Westermann Ayers 2014). In the present study, negative consequences were not detected. If Not Like Me had a negative effect on salience or on religious behavior, then such negative consequences could have resulted.

The importance of context in these findings cannot be understated. Social structural arrangements place individuals into contact with similarly placed others. Smaller social structures such as congregations and interpersonal contact with friends and family have implications for sense of self (identity) and for behavior. The age of the respondent provides an interesting finding. Younger people have more extensive relationships with those who share their
religious beliefs while older people have more extensive relationships with people who do not share their religious beliefs. This seems contrary to expectation given that millennials are more religiously unaffiliated (Cooperman et al. 2015). Geography might be a possible explanation for this finding as younger people have a more limited range of social opportunities than do older people. That is, younger people have fewer opportunities to extend relationships beyond the proximal level: their family, neighborhoods, local school, and their churches. Older people who may have attended college have more social mobility and may interact with more diverse groups, work in atmospheres that are more diverse, or become involved in civic organizations that may be more diverse.

While belonging to a congregation is only predicted by education (larger social structure) and the individual’s religious beliefs, congregational membership has important effects on interactional networks, identity, and behavior. People engage the world and construct meaning in the world based upon everyday interactions (Blumer 1968). Belonging to a religious group positively effects the interactions at the proximal level, including whether friends and family know about your religious beliefs and whether they think positively of you based upon those beliefs. The interactions within these smaller social structures have an important effect on one’s commitment to being a certain type of person. Being a certain type of person means being committed to others who support and provide resources and verification (Burke and Reitzes 1991). Smaller social structures also have important implications for interactions with those who do not share the same identity.

First, having friends and family who know about one’s beliefs do not affect the extensiveness of interactions with those who do not share one’s beliefs; they only reinforce commitments to those who share beliefs. Second, the reflected appraisals of friends and family
do have a negative effect on the extensiveness of interactions with those who do not share one’s beliefs, while reinforcing relationships with those who do share one’s beliefs. It may be the case that knowing is a precursor to reflected appraisals when discussing a specific identity. Reflected appraisals are perceptions of how others may respond to specific actions. A son, whose family and close friends know that he is religious, may not know about his budding friendship with an atheist in an extracurricular club, but he certainly could perceive that they would frown upon such a friendship. This should be addressed in future research.

Given the proximal level effects on commitment, one might assume that the intermediate level would have the same effects. However, belonging to a religious group not only increases commitment to other religious people, it increases interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs. Noting the religious segregation that exists in this country (Putnam and Campbell 2010), this seems surprising. One explanation may be that religious organizations also engage in community service and mission trips to third world countries. Evangelizing at soup kitchens and homeless shelters, and financially supporting organizations like Catholic Charities may provide members of congregations to engage in activities and with individuals who they would not normally meet.

Finally, reflected appraisals from friends and family have a negative effect on interactions with others who do not share their beliefs. Reflected appraisals are perceptions of feedback that become real as they alter behavior. A long held social psychological principle is that if a person defines a situation as real, it is real in consequences. In the above scenario, the religious boy and the budding relationship with an atheist is likely doomed to fail unless the boy is willing to adopt a deviant identity in the eyes of his primary group. The fear of secondary
deviance (Lemert 1967) is often enough to discourage acts of deviance. In this case a friendship with a person who does not share the same beliefs.

These findings also suggest that interactions with people who do not share the beliefs of the primary group is discouraged. Such discouragement facilitates the segregation of society. When segments of society do not interact with one another, stereotypes can develop and lead to misunderstanding or to devaluing others as individuals construct their social realities (Berger and Luckman 1962). As noted above, religion and religious beliefs can be counter-normative in some settings and even become stigmatized. Because religion is not always on display (unless one is wearing a hijab or other religious or cultural attire), it can be thought of as a discreditable stigma (Goffman 1963); that is, people do not always know about one’s beliefs unless they are explicitly revealed. As with any stigma, a person may try to hide their beliefs from others. In American society, this is much more likely to be the experience of someone in a marginalized group: nonbelievers, pagans, Jew’s or Muslims (Yancy and Kim 2008), or someone who is questioning their religious beliefs compared to one who is much stronger in their beliefs and would not hide them. Yet, this pattern holds even among the largely Christian sample utilized in this study. Additional study that includes non-religious people and more non-Christians will be necessary to sort out how these social interactions might lead to a sense of marginalization or even stigmatization.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The primary goal for this dissertation was to further contextualize interactional commitment. This was achieved by examining the extensiveness of social interaction with those who share similar religious views and with those who do not share their religious views. A
secondary aspect of contextualizing interactional commitment was to examine the effects of proximal and intermediate social structures on commitment. While this was partially successful, the dataset provided few constructs for examining intermediate and proximal level affects sufficient for this analysis. Membership in a congregation was the only intermediate variable utilized in the study, and there were only two proximal variables: know and reflected appraisals. The survey did have other rich data concerning participation and affective attachments to the congregation as well as other variables that have been used in previous studies (Merolla et al. 2012, Stryker, et al. 2003) such as ethnic homogeneity and structural overlap. Unfortunately, these questions were not asked of all survey participants. Only participants who were members of a congregation were asked these more in depth questions. As a result, the sample was reduced by nearly 50 percent – too large of a loss of respondents to conduct such a large model.

Future studies will need to have more respondents to include these intermediate and proximal level measures or alter the design so that more respondents are asked the in-depth questions. In a smaller unpublished report (Hays 2016), intermediate constructs of congregational attachment and participation in congregational activities significantly affected commitment with those who shared beliefs and identity.

A second limitation was also caused by the design of the study. Only those who answered a screening question “Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation or preference?” were included in the study. Those who did not respond with a specific religious affiliation (protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, etc.) or indicated that they were atheist, agnostic, or indicated no religion, were dropped from the study. Thus, we did not have the experiences of those without a specific religious belief or affiliation. It may be that atheists or agnostics have a different experience when it comes to others knowing about their beliefs,
reflected appraisals concerning their beliefs, or more importantly the extensiveness of their interactions with likeminded individuals. Lacking a religious belief in the United States is still considered a discreditable stigma and many of the “none’s” hide their religious non-beliefs from others. Future research in this area should also consider the counter-normative identity of non-religious.

Third, with the goal for this dissertation being an examination of interactional commitment, affective commitment (the intensiveness of social interactions) was intentionally omitted. Future research should not only include affective commitment, but an examination of affective commitment to those who share an identity, as well as affective commitment to those who do not share the identity, needs to be examined. It may be, as it is with interactional commitment, that affective commitment to those who do not share the identity is weaker than commitment to those who share the identity. It could also be hypothesized that affective commitments will have similar effects on identity and behavior.

Studies that have examined race and ethnicity, gender, and religion often find a complex web of intersectionality. This could account for the small effect sizes of the larger social structures and lack of significance for race on interactional commitments to those who are alike. Advances in identity theory that examine person, role, and group identities simultaneously can help to disentangle these competing identities. To do so, commitment should be theoretically broadened beyond its connection to role identity to determine how commitment to person identities (conviction?) and group identities may be operationalized. Kanter’s (1968) work with commitment may provide theoretical bases for connecting commitment to group identities and Cornwall’s (1989) use of commitment to God and Brenner’s (2011) concept of intrapersonal
commitment may be helpful in theorizing the relationship between commitment and person identity.

There has been significant research and attention paid to social phenomena referred to as the “echo chambers,” confirmation bias, and living in a bubble. The idea that people seek out information that confirms their beliefs (Lord, Ross, and Lepper 1979), consume media that reinforces their own opinions (Flaxman, Goel, and Rao 2016), and selectively ignore competing paradigms (Lilienfeld, Ammirati, Landfield 2009) has not only drawn the attention of scholars but of the popular media. A recent study by Dandekar, Goel, and Lee (2013) demonstrated that homophily (association with like-minded others) along with confirmation bias (interpreting new data in biased ways), can account for the polarizing effect of opinions concerning politics in the US. However, they fail to provide a theoretical explanation for how or why homophily and confirmation bias are connected. Findings from the present research along with other elements of identity theory, can provide a theoretical argument for how homophily and confirmation bias may operate in opinion formation and polarization.

First, we know that interaction with others who share one’s identity leads to increased identity salience which leads to role related behaviors. Second, individuals seek to verify their salient identities (Burke and Stets 2009) and maintain congruence between identity meanings, behaviors, and reflected appraisals (Cast and Burke 2002). The present research finds that reflected appraisals encourages commitments to those who share the same identity and discourages interactions with those who do not. These patterns affect the salience of an identity and role related behaviors. Brenner and Delamater (2016) found that people will interpret situations as opportunities to enact highly prominent identities, influencing the salience of the identity which results in role specific behavior. That is, if one sees themselves as a conservative
and this identity is important to them, they may see consumption of conservative media as a way to enact their identity.

Additionally, the identity verification process relies heavily on reflected appraisals (Burke 1991). The verification process therefore may be subject to confirmation biasing tendencies as demonstrated by how individuals establish networks of associations. Identity theory can provide additional clarity to the explanation of recent political polarization by examining how identities can lead to behaviors that encourage homophily and confirmation bias. To fully address this problem, identity theory should work towards fully integrating the perceptual control process (identity verification) and the structural processes (commitment – identity – behavior).

This dissertation also highlights the importance of smaller social structures. Although not a specific aim of the project, the effect of larger, intermediate, and proximal social structures was displayed. As further evidence of the importance of smaller social structures, I calculated the mean effect size of each level of the social structure in Model 2. The larger social structure (age, race, sex, education) had a mean standardized effect size of .097. The intermediate social structure (congregation) had a mean standardized effect size of .142 and the proximal social structure (know, reflected appraisals) had an effect size of .139. Future sociological research, not just social psychological research, should continue to specify the levels of social structure to develop a fuller understanding of the effects of society on the individual.
REFERENCES


(http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/).


doi:10.1073/pnas.1217220110


APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF MEASUREMENT ITEMS FOR COMMITMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication (scale reliability if reported)</th>
<th>Identity Referent</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Interactional</th>
<th>Affective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stryker and Serpe 1982 (.73)</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>1. Of all the people known through religion, how many are important to you, that is, you would really miss them if you did not see them?</td>
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<td>Callero 1985 (.82, only used the first 5 items)</td>
<td>Blood Donors</td>
<td>2. Think of those people who are important to you. About how many would you lose contact with if you did not do the religious activities you do?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. How many people do you know on a first name basis through your religious activities?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Of the people you know through your religious activities, how many are close friends?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Of the people you know through religion, how many participate in other activities with you (e.g. work together, engage in recreation together, visit each other’s homes, etc.)? The fifth item is constructed from ratings of the importance of organizations the respondent participates in and the people the respondent knows through religious activities who also participate in the organizations. The sixth item is constructed from ratings of the importance of specific activities (other than religious, such as hobbies and recreation) the respondent engages in and whether or not the respondent participates in these activities with people known through religious activities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serpe 1987; 1991 Stryker and Serpe 1994</td>
<td>Five identities related to being a college student: academic; athletic-recreational; extracurricular; non-organizational friendships; dating</td>
<td>1. How many of the people you have met through (one of the identities) have become close friends? Response was the number reported</td>
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<td>2. How often do you do things or have activities related to (one of the identities)? 1=never, 2= once a week, 3= twice a month, 4= once a week, 5= several times a week, 6= daily</td>
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<td>1. How good or successful (at a specific identity) do you think your parents think you are?</td>
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<td>2. How good or successful (at a specific identity) do you think your best friend thinks you are? 1= below average, to 4= excellent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Source</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Questions</td>
<td>Response Options</td>
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| Serpe and Stryker 1987                    | Five identities related to being a college student: academic; athletic-recreational; extracurricular; | 1. How many organizations or groups have you joined because of [role based identity referent]?   2. How many of the people you have met through (one of the identities) have become close friends?  
*Response was the number reported* |                                                                                                                                            |
| Serpe and Stryker 1993                    | Family, Friends, Dating                           | 1. How often do you have meals with members of your family?  2. How often do you have a conversation with family members at your home?  3. How often do you have a conversation with family members outside of the home?  4. How often do you have conversations with your family members on the phone?  5. How often do you work on household projects with family members?  
*1= never; 2= seldom; 3= once a month; 4= once a week; 5= several times a week; 6 = daily* |                                                                                                                                            |
| Owens and Serpe 2003; Stryker, Serpe, Hunt 2005 | Family, Family, Work, Volunteer, Science student | 1. How often do you do things with ___? 2. In an average week, how many hours do you spend doing things with ______ ?  
*Response is number entered*  3. Of the money you do not need for rent, food, clothing and other essentials, how much do you spend on things you do with ____?  
*1=almost none; to 5= almost all* |                                                                                                                                            |
| Merolla et al. 2012                       | Family, Work, Volunteer                           | 1. If you were not able to see them, how much would you miss the _____?  2. How close (in personal and emotional terms) are you to ______?  
*1=very close; to 4= not close at all*  3. How important to you are ______?  
*1=very important; to 6= not important at all*  4. I often feel unhappy after I do things with ______?  
(reverse coded) 1=strongly agree, to 6= strongly disagree |                                                                                                                                            |
| Lee 2002 (.78 to .93)                     | Science, Math, Engineering students              | Thinking about your life, how much, in general, have you talked about or engaged in science, math and technology activities while around (or talking via phone or computers with) your ____ [friends, family, teachers, program staff, program roommates]  
1. How important to you are ______? 0=very important; to 6= not important at all  2. How close (in personal and emotional terms) are you to ______? 0=very close; to 6= not close at all  3. After doing things with ____I usually feel happy. 0=Strongly disagree, to 6 = Strongly agree | [friends, family, teachers, program staff, program roommates]                                                                 |


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brenner (2011)</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Interpersonal Extensiveness</th>
<th>Interpersonal Intensiveness: A count of the number of close friends in the respondent’s religious organization</th>
<th>Interpersonal: 1. Frequency of prayer (alone, not in a religious service. 11 point scale from “never” to “several times a day”, 2. Frequency of individual Bible reading. Six point scale “not read” to “Several times a day”, 3. How many hours have you spent in the past month doing religious activities in your home? Zero to seven or more hours.</th>
<th>Intrapersonal: 1. Degree of satisfaction or fulfillment I get from being a student</th>
<th>Cognitive Basis (positive) 1. Degree of satisfaction or fulfillment I get from being a student 2. Feel being a student is beneficial or rewarding in terms of my future 3. People say I am right in placing importance on being a student 4. Frequency of strong praise as a student</th>
<th>Cognitive Bases (negative) 1. Frequency of mild criticism as a student 2. Frequency of strong criticism as a student Balance of criticism and praise as a student (high score indicates more criticism)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walker and Lin (2013)</td>
<td>Family, Coworkers, Religious, student, friends</td>
<td>Social Attachment The number of others (alters) the respondent indicated were associated with the role, divided by the total number of others listed in the survey</td>
<td>Emotional Attachment How close the respondent felt to each alter emotionally 1=not very close, to 4 = extremely close</td>
<td>Embeddedness The proportion of listed alters who are either role based others or individuals tied to a role based other.</td>
<td>Burke and Reitzes 1991 (positive = .75, negative = .71, intensive = .75, extensive = .62) College Student</td>
<td>Cognitive Basis (positive) 1. Degree of satisfaction or fulfillment I get from being a student 2. Feel being a student is beneficial or rewarding in terms of my future 3. People say I am right in placing importance on being a student 4. Frequency of strong praise as a student Perceived degree of disappointment of others to failure as a student</td>
<td>Cognitive Bases (negative) 1. Frequency of mild criticism as a student 2. Frequency of strong criticism as a student Balance of criticism and praise as a student (high score indicates more criticism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burke and Stets 1999 (subjective = .92;)</td>
<td>Socioemotional (intensive)</td>
<td>Socioemotional (extensive)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. Brother/sister is important to me as a student</td>
<td>1. Number of people I would miss if I were no longer a student</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. High school friends are important to me as a student</td>
<td>2. Number of friends made in college</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. An intimate met high school is important to me as a student</td>
<td>3. Number of people I would no longer see if I were no longer a student</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Parents are important to me as a student</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An intimate (lover, fiancée, spouse) is important to me as a student</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>Subjective Commitment</th>
<th>Behavioral Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I would break up with my spouse if:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. I did not love my spouse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My spouse was unfaithful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My spouse and I constantly quarreled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White and Burke 1987 (.68 for all three items)</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Extensiveness</th>
<th>Intensiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many of the people you know are a result of your ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td>How many of your friends are because of your ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many of your close friends are because of your ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

SURVEY ITEMS

Age:
(age) What is your age?
    ____ Age in Years

Congregation:
(relig5) Which of the following best describes you?
    0. I am not a member of any religious organization
    1. I am a member of a religious organization (such as a church, synagogue, fellowship, etc.)

Education:
(educ) Which of the following best describes your education?
    1. Less than high school
    2. High school graduate
    3. Some college or technical school
    4. College graduate
    5. Graduate or professional degree

Identity Prominence:
(prom1) My religion is an important part of my self-image.
(prom2) Being religious is an important reflection of who I am.
(prom3) I have come to think of myself as a religious person.
(prom4) I have a strong sense of belonging to my religion.
(prom5) It is important to me that others know about me as a religious person.
1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree

**Identity Salience:**

(sal1) Think about meeting a person of the same sex as you for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?

(sal2) Think about meeting a person of the opposite sex for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?

(sal3) Think about meeting a friend of a close friend for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?

(sal4) Think about meeting a friend of a family member for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?

(sal5) Think about meeting a stranger for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?

   1. Almost certainly would not
   2. Probably would not.
   3. Probably would
   4. Almost certainly would

**Individual Religious Behaviors:**

(Relig16) How often do you read the bible, Quran, Torah, or other scared text?

(Relig17) How frequently do you watch religious programs on television?

(Relig19) How often do you participate in table prayers or grace before or after meals?

(Relig20) How frequently do you ask someone to pray for you?

   1. Never
   2. Less than once a year
   3. A few times a year
   4. A few times a month – 1 to 3 times
   5. At least once a week –1 to 3 times
**Interactional Commitment**

(icom1) How often do you do things with people who share your religious views?

(icom2) How often do you do things with people who “do not” share your religious views?

1. Never  
2. Seldom  
3. Once a month  
4. Less than once a week  
5. Once a week  
6. Several times a week  
7. Daily

**Know:**

(know1) Please rate how certain you are that your close friends (people you know and can count on if you need them) know your religious beliefs.

(know2) Please rate how certain you are that your friends (people who I know and do things with) know your religious beliefs.

(know4) Please rate how certain you are that your family members (Brothers and/or Sisters, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins, etc.) know your religious beliefs.

1. Completely certain that they do not know  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7. Completely certain that they do know

**Prominence:**

(prom1) My religion is an important part of my self-image  
(prom2) Being religious is an important reflection of who I am  
(prom4) I have a strong sense of belonging to my religion.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Disagree

**Race:**

(Race) What race do you consider yourself to be?
- White
- Black/African American
- Asian
- Other (please specify)

(Latino) Are you Latino or Hispanic?
- Yes
- No

**Reflected Appraisals:**

(ra1) How positively do you think your close friends (people who you know and can count on if you need them) view you because of your religion?

(ra2) How positively do you think your friends (people who you know and do things with) view you because of your religion?

(ra4) How positively do you think your family members (Brothers and/or Sisters, Aunts, Uncles, Cousins, etc.) view you because of your religion?

0. Not at all positively

... 

10. Very positively

**Religiosity:**

(Relig3) How religious do you consider yourself?

0. Not at all religious

... 

10. Very Religious
Sex:

(sex) What is your gender?

0. Male

1. Female
## APPENDIX C

### SUMMARY OF HYPOTHESES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>MODEL 1</th>
<th>MODEL 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1: As <strong>Religiosity</strong> increases, the following will increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Membership to a congregation</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Certainty of others knowing religious beliefs</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Positive reflected appraisals</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Interactional commitment with those who share religious beliefs</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) Identity prominence</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F) Identity salience</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G) Individual religious behaviors</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2: As <strong>Religiosity</strong> increases interactional commitment to those who do not share religious beliefs will decrease</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3: <strong>Religiosity</strong> will have a greater effect on interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs compared to those who do not share the same beliefs.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4: As membership in a <strong>congregation</strong> increases, the following will also increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Certainty of others knowing religious beliefs</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Positive reflected appraisals</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) Interactional commitment with those who share religious beliefs</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) Identity prominence</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E) Identity salience</td>
<td>Rejected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F) Individual religious behaviors</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5: As membership in a <strong>congregation</strong> increases, interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs will decrease.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6: Membership in a <strong>congregation</strong> will have a greater effect on interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs compared to those who do not share the same beliefs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Supported/Rejected</td>
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<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 7</strong>: As the certainty that others know about one’s religious beliefs increases, the following will also increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) interactional commitment with those who share religious beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) identity prominence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) identity salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) individual religious behaviors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 8</strong>: As the certainty that others know about one’s religious beliefs increases, interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs will decrease.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 9</strong>: The certainty that others know about one’s religious beliefs will have a greater effect on interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs compared to those who do not share the same beliefs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 10</strong>: As reflected appraisals increase, the following will also increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) interactional commitment with those who share religious beliefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) identity prominence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) identity salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D) individual religious behaviors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 11</strong>: As reflected appraisals increase, interactional commitment to those who do not share the same beliefs will decrease.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 12</strong>: reflected appraisals will have a greater effect on interactional commitment to those who share the same beliefs compared to those who do not share the same beliefs.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 13</strong>: As interactional commitment with those who share religious beliefs increases, the following will also increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) identity prominence</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) identity salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C) individual religious behaviors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 14</strong>: As interactional commitment with those who do not share religious beliefs increases, prominence increases.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 15</strong>: As interactional commitment with those who do not share religious beliefs increases, the following will decrease:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) identity salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) individual religious behaviors</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rejected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hypothesis 16</strong>: As identity prominence increases, the following will also increase:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) identity salience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 17: As <strong>identity salience</strong> increases individual religious behaviors will also increase.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>