A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES

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by

Anisi Daniels Smith

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Dissertation written by

Anisi Daniels Smith

B.A., Kent State University, 2002

M.A., Kent State University, 2007

Ph.D., Kent State University, 2018

Approved by

Dr. Richard T. Serpe, Chair, Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Dr. Nicole Rousseau, Members, Doctoral Dissertation Committee

Dr. Jerry M. Lewis

Dr. Amoaba Gooden

Accepted by

Dr. Richard T. Serpe, Chair, Department of Sociology

Dr. James L. Blank, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences
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“Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.” Proverbs 31:8-9

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Self and identity are key concepts in the symbolic interactionist tradition of sociology, and a core assumption of symbolic interaction is that self, society, and interaction reinforce each other (Mead 1934). Identities represent an organizational aspect of the self that includes internalized meanings and positional designations (McCall and Simmons 1966; Stryker 1980). Extant research on race and religion overlooks how individuals internalize the meanings of these identities, and how these identities are positioned within the self. Stets and Serpe (2013:52) state, “In identity theory, we need to better understand how identities form, why they form when they do, and whether this formation varies by age, class, or race/ethnicity.” Stets and Serpe also note the importance of understanding the conditions that change the prominence (importance) and salience (likelihood of enactment) of an identity, and one’s commitment to an identity. This dissertation seeks to understand if Whites and Blacks vary in the prominence and salience of their racial and religious identities, and how the integration of these identities influences moral and ethical positions.

Using the framework of identity theory, I will also examine if strength of religious faith influences identity prominence and salience, and how these influences may vary for Whites and Blacks. Moreover, I seek to explore if the integration of racial and religious identities influences ethical and moral positioning, and whether this positioning varies by race/ethnicity.
While researchers have utilized identity theory to examine religious identities (Stryker and Serpe 1982; Hunt and Hunt 2001; Yarrison 2016) and racial/ethnic identities (Owens and Serpe 2003; Stryker et al. 2005), there is a gap in the literature regarding the integration of these identities. Further, this gap extends to how the integration of these identities influences ethical and moral positions.

Five key questions guide this dissertation research:

1. What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and the prominence of religious identities among Whites and Blacks?
2. What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and salience of religious identities among Whites and Blacks?
3. How does the strength of religious faith influence racial/ethnic identities among Whites and Blacks?
4. How do proximal social structures influence the prominence and salience of racial and religious identities among Whites and Blacks?
5. How does the integration of racial and religious identity influence moral foundations and ethical positioning among Whites and Blacks?

Significance of the Study

This dissertation contributes to sociological study in three important ways. First, through identity theory, I utilize a multidimensional concept of identity that reflects the differentiated worlds that individuals inhabit. Sociologists have incorporated multiple conceptualizations of the self into the study of stratification and inequality, but a notable portion of these studies only include unidimensional concepts of the self, or one part of identity in isolation from other parts (Hunt 2000). A multidimensional definition of identity more completely reflects the ways in which people actually live, interact, and enact identities.
Second, this research conceives of religion as a proximate social structure—that is, a context that is close to persons and within which they enact their identities. Stryker et al. (2005) note that little research has examined the ways in which identities operate at a particular level of social structure. Furthermore, this dissertation acknowledges that, due to placement in these levels of social structure, racial and ethnic groups create and experience these proximate structures in different ways. In so doing, the salience and prominence of their identities may also vary even under an ideologically inclusive banner of religion.

Third, sociological research has overlooked the examination of moral and ethical beliefs through both racial and religious identities. Racial and religious positioning depend on contextual position in social structure, and these positions can influence the beliefs that people hold about themselves and others. These beliefs and their internalized meanings shape perceptions of what is good, right and fair. I argue that ethical positioning and moral foundations speak to racial and religious foundations of meaning.

The following chapter will review identity theory research and findings, as well as the sociology of religion literature as it is relevant to the present research. 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 addressing 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 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Comprehensive explanations of the development and influence of symbolic interactionism and identity theory can be found in sociological literature (Burke and Stets 2009; Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stryker 1968[2002], 2000, 2008). This literature review focuses on select aspects of symbolic interactionism, and particularly structural symbolic interactionism as it relates to identity theory.

Sociologists have a long-standing interest in the forces that shape the self and identities of individuals and groups. The symbolic interactionist tradition of sociology assumes that people attach meanings to people, objects, and events, and they transmit those meanings through interaction. Meaning making is a dynamic process that constantly defines what individuals encounter, including themselves. Within this process people behave toward others, objects and events based on the meanings that they have for them, and not according to their objective properties. Symbolic interactionists hold a similar view toward the self. The self is a fairly stable set of perceptions about who we are relative to others and to social systems. For symbolic interactionists, the self is an essential concept for explaining personality through a sociological lens, and for explaining social behavior in general. In an interactionist sense, the self is an object that is created and maintained through the meanings of social interaction. Therefore, the nature
and development of the self is social. According to Mead (1934), society shapes the self, and the self shapes behavior.

Mead (1934) noted that the self is made of various parts. His conceptions of the I, Me, and Other are seminal influences on the study of self, and these conceptions include dialectical relationships among them that create meaning. Other researchers have proposed parts of the self that produce meaning using the concept of identity (Stryker 1980; Burke and Stets 2009; Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stets and Serpe 2013) and explaining how identity relates to social roles. Stryker and Burke (2000) define identities as the parts of the self and are made of the meanings that people attach the roles they play in a society. McCall and Simmons (1966) theorizes that role-taking included a process of internalizing meanings, and these meanings are identities. Expanding on the process of internalization, McCall and Simmons (1966) define role-identities as the character and activities that an individual constructs for themselves based on occupying a particular social position. This definition of role identities emphasizes an individually-based construction of identities, even though the origin of these identities is found in social structure. Taking a more definitive view on the role of social structure, Stryker defines identity as “internalized positional designations” (1980 [2002]:60) for each role that a person holds. For example, if a person holds a position as a professor, they hold an identity that corresponds with that position. The positional designation provides shared meaning and expectations for the identity. Stryker’s view of role-identity makes the link between social structure and interaction with others explicit.

Identity theory has its roots in structural symbolic interactionism, which developed from a need to clarify the concepts in Mead’s theoretical framework of the self (Stryker 1980, 2008; Serpe and Stryker 2011). This branch of interactionism acknowledges that society is the product
of social interaction, but it also includes the notion that the existence of society precedes new members. Given this assumption, structural symbolic interactionism reformulates Mead’s principle into society shapes self, and self shapes interaction (Stryker 1980). Structural symbolic interactionism also expands Mead’s original principle by viewing society as a durable pattern of interactions and relationships that have the capacity to reproduce themselves (Stryker 1980, 2008; Serpe and Stryker 2011). The structural framework echoes traditional symbolic interactionism with the premise that society is the product of continual processes. Its departure from the classic framework includes the position that interactions and roles are organized systems, but they not homogeneous in a society. These interactions and roles are ingrained in groups, communities and institutions, and they intersect with boundaries of social structural variables such as sex, class, age, and religion. Due to these organized systems and boundaries, people interact through specific networks, navigating said networks through the roles that facilitate their participation in the networks (Stryker and Burke 2000).

Stryker (2008) notes the implications of this view of society: First, the image indicates more emphasis on the influence of social structure than Mead’s formulation permits. Second, it indicates the usefulness of viewing social structures as boundaries that influence the probability of people of various backgrounds entering into particular social relationships. This view suggests that various social structures can constrain or facilitate entering and exiting networks of interaction. Third, the structural symbolic perspective characterizes the self as multifaceted since it is the product of a multifaceted society. These facets of the self sometimes contradict and operate independently of one another. For example, the meaning that one holds concerning their religious identity may operate independently of the meaning that they hold for their racial or
ethnic identity. Finally, a structural symbolic interactionist frame views the influence of social structure as a process that operates through a tiered system of structures that shape the self.

The main goal of identity theory, as proposed by Stryker (1968; 1980), is to develop testable hypotheses in order to explicate the relationship between the self and social structure. The theory shares the main assumptions of structural symbolic interactionism: individuals are actors as well as reactors; social structures and interaction shape human action; interaction is based on definitions of situations, and the meanings of these definitions are learned through interaction; self-conceptions are essential to producing interaction, and these conceptions are partially shaped by the reactions of others (Rosenberg 1979; Stryker 2008). These assumptions form the basis of identity theory’s reformulation of Mead’s axiom of society shapes self and self shapes behavior. The reformulation may be stated as society impacts self, and self impacts social interaction (Stryker 1968, 1980, 2008).

Identity theory assumes that people have multiple role identities, and these identities correspond to social roles. It specifies behavior as role choice, which is deciding to meet the expectations of one role over another in situations where alternative courses of action are reasonable and possible for the individual (Stryker and Serpe 1982; Serpe 1987; Serpe and Stryker 1987, 1993). The various courses of action that individuals encounter indicate that role choice is not always straightforward, obvious, or congruent with perceptions of a particular identity. Identities represent cognitive schemas, which are internally stored information and meanings (Markus 1977). These schemas provide a basis for defining situations and interactions. Because of their cognitive function, the schemas are present across situations. Identity theory seeks to understand why people choose to enact certain role identities over others (Serpe 1987;
Serpe and Stryker 2011). According to the theory, these identities are arranged hierarchically, and the arrangement is based on the *salience* of the identity (Stryker 1980).

Salience is defined as the probability that an identity will be invoked across situations. Identity salience suggests that because the self is socially-based, it can also change with time. Serpe and Stryker (1987:46) state that “Changes in the nature and level of role relationships are expected to produce commensurate changes over the long haul in both the content and salience order of the self.” Identity theory posits that, whether sustained or changing, identities and the self are tied to social relationships. For example, a person may have a highly salient parent identity and hold a volunteer identity that has low salience. In various situations, that person may mention to others that they are a parent, and/or may discuss their children (relationship) and duties as a parent (role). The parent’s role relationship may evolve as the child gets older, demonstrating a change in the social relationship, the content of the self, and the salience of the identity. The concept of salience reflects the link between social structural effects on social behavior and the behavior itself.

Identity theory states that identity salience is hierarchical. When an identity is high in the salience hierarchy, the identity is more likely to be enacted and to be sustained over time (Serpe 1987; Serpe and Stryker 2011). McCall and Simmons (1978) propose that the location of an identity in the salience hierarchy depends on several factors. One factor is how much *support* a person receives. More self-support and support from others for an identity places that identity higher in the salience hierarchy. Another factor that influences identity placement in the salience hierarchy is *rewards*. The rewards that individuals receive from an identity may be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic rewards are the internal fulfillments that individuals experience for enacting a role. Extrinsic rewards are those that individuals receive from others for a claimed identity.
These rewards may include social honor, money, gifts, and similarly valued items. The more rewards that a person receives for an identity, the higher that identity will be in the salience hierarchy. A third factor in identity salience placement is *perceived opportunity structure*. Opportunity is comprised of the rewards minus any costs that individuals gain for displaying certain identities in social situations. These rewards and costs are subjective to the person who enacts the identity, and they are based on the perceived support, rewards, opportunity structure, and *prominence* of an identity.

Prominence is also organized in a hierarchy. Prominence differs from salience in that it references the importance of identity to how the individual sees their self in cognitive structure rather than a behavioral action (Serpe and Stryker 2011; Stets and Serpe 2013; Brenner et al. 2017; Forthcoming). McCall and Simmons (1966) originally conceptualized prominence as the mechanism that organized how the person sees their self-concept. They argued that identities can be imposed by outside influences, but they are usually created through social interaction. Others may or may not recognize an identity, but the identity can remain prominent in how they view themselves. Other researchers have also defined prominence in terms of the subjective importance of an identity. Rosenberg (1979) introduced the idea of *psychological centrality* to explain the role of prominence in the self, with consideration of degree to which components of the self matter to people. Still others (Ervin and Stryker 2001) have used the term *importance* to describe prominence. The commonalities of these terms emphasize the main idea of prominence; namely, that people have subjective responses to their views of themselves. Like salience, identity prominence is also hierarchical: the more important an identity is, the higher it is in the prominence hierarchy.
The salience and prominence of an identity are connected to the commitment one has to an identity. Identity theory describes commitment as the strength of ties to others in social relationships based on the positions one occupies, the identities one assumes, and the roles one plays (Stryker and Serpe 1982; Serpe 1987; Serpe and Stryker 1993; 2011). Stryker’s (1968) definition of commitment draws on the work of Kornhauser (1962). Kornhauser described commitment in terms of action, relationships that are associated with those lines of action, and the resulting loss of relationships when those lines of actions change. Examining the commitments of members of two categories of political groups, Kornhauser found that radical groups required a greater commitment than liberal groups. Radical groups were also more likely to restrict members’ interaction with people who were not part of their organization. Consequently, leaving the organization also meant forfeiting the ties that accompanied membership in the organization. According to Kornhauser (1962), the strength of a commitment is measured by the number of social domains for which it compels lines of choice and action.

Choosing particular lines of action, changing social networks, and modifying local social structures are all activities that are consistent with Mead’s (1934) notion of persons as active social agents. Choosing courses of action and encountering social networks places people in (and out of) the social domains of others. The presence and absence of others represents a change in small social structures, and these changes occur through choices. Choice takes place when a person encounters various options and must choose a course of action that best suits their relevant goals. Kornhauser (1962) notes that commitment is more than making a choice, but it is also a necessity for determining a course of action. Hence, choice is a fundamental component of commitment and identity theory (Stryker 1980, 2002; Serpe 1987).
Incorporating Kornhauser’s ideas of choice, Stryker contends that identities link commitment and behavior. When an individual is committed to an identity, they are connected to others who engage in similar types of choices and behavior. The degree to which a person’s relationships depend on being a certain type of person and enacting certain types of roles indicates how committed an individual is to being that person. As the strength of these relationships increases through similar choices and behavior, there is an increase in the prominence and salience of identity. As salience and prominence increase, behavior and self-concept become more consistent. If behaviors are not consistent, the inconsistency may indicate that the relevant identity is low on salience and prominence hierarchies, and the individual does not have a strong commitment to the identity. The operationalization of commitment refers to the costs associated with abandoning a role due to the loss of relationships that are connected to that role (Stryker 1968).

Stryker (1980) identified two types of commitment: affective and interactional. Affective commitment refers to the emotional significance that others have for a person in a social network through their relevant identity. Interactional commitment is the extensiveness of interactions in a social network that is associated with a given identity. The affective and interactional components of commitment are related, but Stryker (1987; 1989) and Serpe (1987; 1991) argue that interactional and affective commitment are also theoretically and empirically dependent of each other (see also Stryker and Serpe 1987; 1994). In the basic symbolic interactionist principle that self reflects society, commitment represents society. The organization of self is influenced by the commitment that a person has to others. The number of others that are associated with an identity, the importance of those people, and the perceived closeness one has with those people affects both the prominence and salience of an identity. Although the role of commitment is not
the explicit focus of this dissertation, it is both needful and instructive to demonstrate how commitment informs understanding of the relationships among identity salience, identity prominence, and the impact of social structures.

Types of Social Structures

Identity theory affirms Mead’s (1934) proposition that a society emerges from social processes. However, identity theory reformulates the dictum through acknowledging that society exists prior to the addition of new members and the theory emphasizes that social structures can constrain and facilitate social interaction. Social structures shape interactions and social relationships such that they become stable and generally resistant to change (Stryker et al. 2005). The specifics of the nature and process of these structures has been the subject of increasing sociological inquiry.

The general framework of identity theory (see Stryker 1980) states that “larger” social structures, using concepts such as race/ethnicity, sex/gender, SES, etc. influence the processes explained by the theory. The influence of these larger structures takes place through affecting the likelihood that individuals will enter the types of social relationships entailed in the concept of commitment (Serpe and Stryker 1993). Additionally, one’s location within these larger structures influences identity through commitment. Seeking to refine the concept and impact of social structure on commitment, and under what circumstances these influences take place, Stryker et al. (2005) proposed a more nuanced operationalization of structure than that proposed by Mead. This operationalization is comprised of a nested network of structures that vary in size. These structures, termed large, intermediate, and proximate, all provide insight into the construction and maintenance of role identity. While the specific impact of large and intermediate structures
is not the focus of this dissertation, it is important to acknowledge their function in connecting proximate structures to identities and their related behaviors.

Large social structures are those features of a society that are associated with general stratification, such as race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, and sex/gender. These features are broad boundaries that make it more or less likely that people will form social relationships based on the sharing of that stratification feature. Much research indicates that when people share the general features of these macrostructures, they are more likely to form connections. Large social structures affect the ability to enter intermediate structures.

Intermediate social structures are those that, compared to large social structures, are more localized or associational (Stryker et al. 2005). Localized structures are organized units that bring significant numbers of people together in a setting, thus increasing the chances that relationships will form. Associational structures include patterned relationships across roles, which may include relationships to similar people across roles (i.e., co-workers are also the people with whom one volunteers in the community) or relationships with people who share similar ethnic backgrounds. Both localized and associational structures, operating as intermediate structures, serve as boundaries that influence the probability of the development of more specific types of relationships and interactions.

A third level of social structure is the proximate level, which is closer to commitment than large and intermediate structures. Proximate social structures are small networks that are closest to individuals, and they are the ones in which people tend to enact their role identities (Stryker et al. 2005; Serpe and Stryker 2011). These structures include the social relationships that relate most directly to a role identity, and the enactment of that identity supports their engagement in those structures (Merolla et al. 2012). The nature of proximate social structures elicits particular
group and role identities, and these identities are related to the commitment, prominence, and salience of an identity.

Research on the proximate level of social structure has yielded informative results about its nature and impact on identity. In their work on the impact of larger social structures on commitment, Stryker et al. (2005) examined the proximate level of social structure through a variable that they termed social embeddedness. Embeddedness referred to a structure of other commitments that were contiguous to the commitments of primary focus their work research: work, family, and voluntary associations. The idea of embeddedness suggests that the level of commitment to one of these social networks could affect the level of commitment to another. The researchers found that the majority of the effects of large social structures flowed through intermediate and proximate social structures, concluding “…with respect to at least some problems of interest to sociology generally as well as to a sociological social psychology, social structural variables at more "local" or "associational" network levels hold more explanatory power” (Stryker et al. 2005:119). Their finding and conclusion supported the structural symbolic interactionist view that formative aspects of the self and identities take place at the interactional level.

Further explicating a model of proximate level of social structure, Merolla et al. (2012) conceptualized college-based, science training programs as proximate structures to examine the commitment to and salience of a science identity. They found that students who participated in these proximate social structures were more likely to develop commitment to the role identity, and hence more likely to have a more salient science-based identity than students who did not interact through the proximate structures. Yarrison (2016) argues that this relationship between identity salience and identity-relevant behavior holds when people within a proximate social
structure share the meanings that an individual holds for a specific identity. Further, he contends that in the case of a religious identity, interaction within a proximate social structure that includes others who understand and share beliefs should result in higher levels of identity prominence, identity salience, and religious behavior. Testing three components of a religious proximate social structure (homogeneity, feedback, and understanding of identity), Yarrison finds that all are important for establishing and maintaining religious identities. Yarrison’s work is particularly relevant and informative regarding the role of proximate social structures as they relate to religion and identity, which is a primary focus of this dissertation.

Religion, Practice, and Identity

Religion has provided rich material for sociological study, as it serves multiple functions in a society. Religion can function as a cohesive force, a form of comfort and a source of shared values (Berger 1967; Durkheim 1912; Emerson and Kim 2003), raise social awareness and promote pro-social behaviors (Taylor et al. 2014; Wilson 2000), and reinforce prejudice, discrimination, and inequality even among seemingly similar groups of people (Shelton and Emerson 2012; Smith and Emerson 2001; Yancy and Kim 2008). The nature of religion, at least in a westernized, Protestant sense of the meanings of religious “practice” in groups with like-minded others, provides an opportunity for the study of contexts that reflect proximal social structures. In this dissertation, I am interested in how religion influences the formation of identities that, when coupled with race, produce ethical and moral outcomes.

The United States can be characterized as a religious country, with roughly 85% of persons reporting some kind of religious affiliation (Kosmin and Keysar 2009). This affiliation suggests that being religious is a salient identity for many people in the U.S. However, it is important to acknowledge that religion, while “large” in the patterns whereby people claim an identity,
operates at the proximal level. Its effects on the identities of individuals and groups take place in much smaller contexts than large social structures as described by structural symbolic interactionism. These effects can vary in numerous ways, with one of the most telling being race and religion. As Sanchez and Carter (2005:282) note, “Given the central role of race in American history and sociopolitical life, the developmental processes and life path of all Americans are affected by race.” The long history of racial divides in the United States has extended to religious beliefs, religious settings, and religious identities (Shelton and Emerson 2012). Researchers have documented how, both historically and in contemporary religious practices, Blacks and Whites significantly differ in their experiences of religion.

Race comparative analyses of Blacks and Whites demonstrate notable differences in religious behaviors and beliefs. For example, in the last 20 years, overall congregational membership in the U.S. has significantly declined (Taylor et al 2014). However, Black religious congregations are less likely than White congregations to report declines and more likely to report growth of at least 10% between 2000 and 2010 (Roozen 2011; Taylor et al. 2014). Blacks tend to report more confidence in religious institutions than Whites (Hoffman 1998), and express greater support for the social and political advocacy of religious leaders (Pew 2012). Research also indicates generally higher levels of religious participation among Blacks compared to Whites (Chatters et al. 2009; Krause and Chatters 2005; Taylor and Chatters 2011). Using data from the National Survey of American Life, Chatters et al. (2009) found that Blacks reported higher levels of religiosity across every dependent variable examined in the study. Blacks have higher levels of religious service attendance, read more religious materials, listen to more religious broadcasts, and look to religion for spiritual comfort more often across the life span compared to Whites (Constantine et al. 2000; Spencer et al. 2003; Sanchez and Carter 2005). In their study of
religious non-participation, Brown et al. (2013) found Blacks were significantly less likely than their White counterparts to report never having attended a religious service or having membership in a denomination. Additionally, congregations play a more significant role in the support networks of Blacks compared to non-Hispanic Whites (Krause and Batisda 2011; Taylor et al. 2014).

How are these findings instructive regarding Blacks, Whites, and religion? A few points may be postulated:

1) Religion holds different meanings for Blacks and Whites. Throughout the history of the United States, religious institutions have been an important part of Black communities (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). These institutions, commonly referred to as the Black church, have provided economic, social, emotional, and educational support to Blacks. They stand among very few institutions that are primarily controlled by Blacks, and provide unique opportunities for social interaction that are not available in the larger, White society. Religious institutions, practices, and identities are embedded in social structures, and the nature of these social structures are not the same for Whites and Blacks. The Shelton and Emerson (2012:4) state, “The legacy of race-based oppression and privilege has helped fuel differences in Black and White Christians’ religious sensibilities (i.e., the scope and content of faith-based actions and beliefs). …Blacks and Whites not only approach faith matters differently, but faith matters differently to Blacks and Whites.”

2) The varied behavioral aspects of religion among Whites and Blacks do not indicate that Blacks and Whites share a fundamentally different core belief system about the tenets of their faith. Shelton and Emerson (2012) find that, among Black and White Christians, there is no significant difference in levels of commitment to the core tenets of their beliefs. However, they
do find that Whites and Blacks are, respectively, clustered around academic and experiential models of religion based on these core tenets. Whites tend to believe that culture is secondary to an epistemological approach to faith, and Blacks tend to believe that culture is central to their approach. These approaches guide the interpretation of their faith, and how they characterize the sources of the strength of their faith. How these groups construct, affirm, and reflect their role identities, and those of others, can depend on the perception of their religious experiences.

3) Religious environments and practices provide proximate structures for Blacks that are distinct from that of White Americans. The nature of these proximate structures suggests that the salience and prominence of religious identities may also differ for Blacks compared to Whites.

4) These differences in strength of faith, identity and practice may translate into differences regarding the ethical and moral positioning of these groups, and the bases that they use for this positioning.

A dearth of sociological research exists concerning each of these postulates: meaning of religion for Blacks compared to Whites, perceptions of religious experiences and how they relate to identities, the effects of religion as a proximate structure by race, and differences in moral and ethical reasoning by race. This dissertation seeks to expand sociological knowledge in these areas by examining the relationships among race, religion, identity, and moral and ethical positioning using an identity theory framework. To this end, I hypothesize the following:

H1: The greater the strength of religious faith, the higher the salience of the religious identity.
H2: The greater the strength of religious faith, the higher the prominence of the religious identity.
H3: The greater the strength of religious faith, the stronger the ethnic identity.
H4: The stronger the proximal social structure, the higher the salience of religious identity.
H5: The stronger the proximal social structure, the higher the prominence of religious identity.

**Race and Identity**

In a general sociological sense, the term *identity* includes characteristics, social roles, relationships, and social group memberships that define a person (Oyserman et al. 2012). Identities are lenses through which people make meaning, and they collectively contribute to notions of the self (Stets & Burke, 2003; Stryker, 1980; Tajfel 1981). Sociological literature defines identity in numerous ways. Identity theorists (Stryker 1968; Serpe 1987; Stryker and Burke, 2000) focus on internalized meanings and expectations associated with the roles one plays and the positions one holds in social structures. Social identity theorists (Abrams and Hogg 1999; Tajfel 1981; Tajfel and Turner 2004) view individuals as having various identities that are activated across multiple contexts. These theorists focus on category memberships and when they become salient—that is, relevant in a certain social context. When that membership becomes salient, the associated behavior and perception of self become normative as they relate to the group. Perceptions of others (out groups) become stereotypical of that group, and non-normative. For example, a discussion of race issues among a group of White people may make that social identity contextually salient to the discussants. Social identity theory posits that, within that context, the Whiteness would be the norm in how participants viewed themselves and their behavior, and the participants would non-White groups in more stereotypical ways. For social identity theorists, situations are the primary influence on identity salience. In contrast, Stryker’s (1968) identity theory views salience as a more stable part of the self that individuals carry from one context to another. The likelihood of the activation of that identity is related to prominence, salience, and the level of social structure in which it is enacted.
Given this theoretical background, I hypothesize the following:

H6: The stronger the proximal social structure, the stronger the ethnic identity.

H7: Blacks are more likely than Whites to have higher salience and prominence with regard to their religious identity.

Similar to other social identities, race includes an awareness of belonging to a particular social category, including the social value and significance attached to the membership (Tajfel and Turner 1986). Race is a social identity in the sense that it is ascribed, and people generally do not have to make explicit claims about the identity. However, the complexity of racial and ethnic identities merits a more comprehensive view of the identities than labelling them solely within the tradition of social identity theory. Identity theory and its structural symbolic interactionist framework provides increased breadth and depth to the study of racial identities. The salience of identities for Blacks and Whites may differ due to the placement of their respective groups in social structure. Prominence may also vary among Blacks and Whites. Stryker and Serpe (1994) note that one must have awareness of an identity in order to make it prominent. Whites are less likely than Blacks to be aware of their racial identity (Bonilla-Silva 2009; McDermott and Samson 2005), and therefore may be less likely to have a prominent racial identity.

A primary identity issue for Blacks and other groups considered “of color” is the development of a positive sense of self within a social milieu that undervalues or actively degrades a very visible aspect of the self for Blacks: skin color. Because the self is largely the result of social interaction and feedback, the formation of the self and its accompanying identities vary for Blacks compared to Whites. The meaning of Whiteness significantly departs from the meanings of Blackness in U.S. society. In his review of conceptualizations of White racial and ethnic
identity in the United States, McDermott and Samson (2005) conclude that, while White racial identity has been and continues to be in flux, one constant has been the enduring structural privilege of European Americans who identify as White. Saperstein et al. (2013) note that a central question guiding micro-level work on racial identities is why a person identifies or is perceived in a particular way at a particular point in time. Gans (1979) and Waters (1990) provided foundational work on this question by examining the patterns of self-identification among White Americans whose racial identities became more symbolic as they became less salient regarding their life chances. In her 1999 work on the identities of West Indian immigrants, Waters concluded that some groups have more options for racial identification than others, but no group’s choices are completely free from structural constraints. Waters’ conclusion echoes a general assumption of structural symbolic interaction regarding the role of social structures in facilitating and constraining choices. In terms of race, it is clear that these opportunities and constraints vary according to group membership and identification.

Saperstein et al. (2013) call for increased examination of the construction of racial identities through macro conceptions of race coupled with individual identity work, which is a primary focus of this dissertation. This call for the coupling of macro conceptions and identity work includes elements of intersectionality and assumptions of identity theory. Intersectional theory, developed by Kimberle Crenshaw (1989), includes the foundational belief that social identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, and class intersect in ways such that these identities can only be understood through their intersections. Using historical frameworks and legal precedents, Crenshaw demonstrates that the social and personal experiences of Black women cannot be subsumed under the sole category of women, nor can these experiences be interpreted as only an issue of gender or sex. Crenshaw argues that social theories and strategies aimed at Black
communities must include analyses of sexism and patriarchy, and feminist movements need to include race analysis in order to address the social standing of women. According to Crenshaw, Black women are socially positioned such that their various identities create social experiences that are distinct from others who share the categories of Black or woman.

The assumptions of intersectional theory indicate that race and gender (among others) are not only social categories, but also social identities that influence the views of self and other. Shields (2008:302) states that social identities mutually constitute, reinforce, and naturalize one another:

By mutually constitute I mean that one category of identity, such as gender, takes its meaning as a category in relation to another category. By reinforce I mean that the formation and maintenance of identity categories is a dynamic process in which the individual herself or himself is actively engaged. We are not passive “recipients” of an identity position, but “practice” each aspect of identity as informed by other identities we claim. By naturalize I mean that identities in one category come to be seen as self-evident or “basic” through the lens of another category.

The processes and practices described above can also be found in the basic ideas of identity theory. The theory states that social structure facilitates and constrains interactions and access within a society, and it assumes three bases of identity: person (characteristics of the individual), role (the activities in which we engage based on who we are), and identity (membership in a group). For example, identity theory conceptualizes race as a large social structural condition which becomes a social identity. As a social identity, race activates the prominence and salience of other identities. This activation and consequent role behavior work together and are contingent upon one’s identity. While identity theory assumes that the processes of prominence and salience are similar, it does not assume similarity among those undergo these processes, nor does it assume similar outcomes. The axiom of society shaping self and self shaping behavior accords with intersectionality such that differences in identity through placement in social structures produce differences in social beliefs and experiences. Crenshaw (1989, 1991) argues that the
assumption of White identities in the analysis of various categories is not only problematic, but results in identity politics that silence and essentialize other categories. Identity theory provides a partial answer to these issues by not assuming that Blacks will view their identities in the same ways as Whites, due to the structural nature of race. Identity theory also questions the premise of Whiteness as an implicit, unexamined proxy for social experiences.

The sociological study of race has primarily centered on minority groups, with Whiteness as a silent and assumed category. Studies of Whiteness have proliferated in recent years, signaling a rethinking of the meanings of race. This rethinking does not reflect the whole of sociology. W.E.B. DuBois’ chapter “The Souls of White Folk” ([1920] 1969) considers the social and psychological benefits of Whiteness, in which he notes the very American assumption that Whiteness is inherently better than any other skin color. Other authors such as Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin also wrote prolifically of the nature and effects of Whiteness, which is a telling indicator of the visibility of Whiteness to people of color and not to those who were White (Doane 2003). What makes the study of Whiteness recent in sociology is the explicit focus on the category of White, which includes challenges to its assumed invisibility and normality as an identity.

This structurally-supported mix of privilege, invisibility and normality has created a lens of racial understanding among Whites that researchers have labeled as colorblindness. Colorblindness is an ideology that views race as no longer having significance in social structure. According to those who espouse a colorblind ideology, the way to address racial inequality is to no longer “see” it and to claim equality for all (Bonilla-Silva 2009; Doane 2003). Color blind ideologies allow individuals and groups to support persistently unequal structures while
propagating a seemingly unquestionable foundation of equality and ethical treatment for all. Doane (2003) argues that current formations of Whiteness are steeped in contradiction; as Whiteness becomes more visible through research, countervailing views and social dynamics reinforce and hide White hegemony.

Research indicates that Whites who claim a religious identity reflect the aforementioned patterns of colorblindness and racial privilege. In their groundbreaking work on evangelical Christianity, *Divided by Faith*, Emerson and Smith (2000) find what they term a “tale of paradox” between Christian ideals and the persistent low social and socioeconomic status of Blacks. Emerson and Smith focus their work on evangelical Christians because, they argue, many of the important values of a liberal American identity—i.e., individualism, freedom, equality of opportunity—come from a mixture of Enlightenment ideals and evangelical Christianity. In a considerable number of evangelical churches, this ethos has resulted in attempts at racial reconciliation between Whites and Blacks. Emerson and Smith contend that, in order to understand how evangelicals address issues of race, it is needful to explore the cultural tools that they use to understand their experiences and consider their reality. The researchers find that, by and large, evangelicals’ explanations for “the race problem” come from individualistic, anti-structure views. The respondents are, at best, color blind. They cannot (or perhaps will not) see the role of race in inequality or the construction of ethical responses to that inequality.

In their examination of the effects of racial discrimination on religious beliefs among Black and White Protestants, Shelton and Emerson (2012) document findings similar to Emerson and Smith (2000). Shelton and Emerson find that Black Protestants are more likely than White Protestants to attribute racial inequality to structural causes, and Whites are more likely to attribute them to individualistic ones. The authors conclude that the historical and social
placement of Black and White Protestants in social structures influence their moral reasoning and assumptions about what is “right” concerning policies and social interactions. In short, approaches to ethical and moral issues are not just religious in origin, but are also the result of integration or separation of racial and religious identities. Given the influence of group membership on identity integration and intersection, I hypothesize the following:

H8: Blacks will have a higher degree of integration of racial and religious identities compared to Whites.

Sociological work on morality has interdisciplinary roots in psychology, religion, philosophy, and political science. While discussion of the contributions of each of these fields is beyond the scope of this proposal, it is necessary to acknowledge the rich foundation of psychological theory and research have provided for the study of morals and ethics. Piaget ([1932] 1965) proposed a stage-based model of moral development, arguing that more abstract and universal principles of morality accompanied higher moral levels. Echoing a similar stage model, Kohlberg (1981) theorized that, as individuals progressed through moral stages, their moral cognition served as the force for motivational behavior. Both of these works continue to inform the pursuit of research on morals, and they have birthed numerous strands of inquiry in other disciplines as well. But despite the influential nature of these theories, research does not indicate a strong relationship between progressive moral development and moral behavior (Blasi 1980). People may internalize and recognize social expectations of what is considered to be moral (very much a contextualized and cultural construct in itself), but internalizing and recognizing does not necessarily translate into analogous acts. This finding suggests that other factors may also play a part in moral behavior.
Blasi (1980) argued that link between moral beliefs and behavior is the moral self. According to Blasi, identity is specifically the part of the self that is essential for understanding morality (Blasi 1984; Stets and Carter 2011). People vary on the characteristics and identities that they consider important, and whatever they consider important becomes an organizing force in lives. Blasi’s thinking on moral identity has remained influential, particularly in the field of psychology. Interestingly, this framework assumes that morality is always an intentional attitude or act that reflects identity. Sociologists have taken a particular interest in understanding the factors that influence morality, and much of the research in this area considers the relationship between morality and behavior—what people do compared with what they believe they should do.

Sociological literature on morality is fairly limited in light of other disciplines, but Durkheim’s ([1887] 1973) view on the substance of a society provides a noteworthy foundation for further sociological inquiry on ethics and morals. Durkheim believed that any explanation of a society must account for the development, nature, and function of moral beliefs and norms in that society. He considered this line of inquiry a science of moral facts, seeing moral facts as beliefs, judgments and acts in which social actors are actively implicated and positioned. These facts as conceptualized guide the choices that individuals make, the expectations they have for others, and provide a rationale for what people believe. According to Hall (1993), Durkheim’s science of moral facts can be characterized as a sociology of morality, but sociologists have not pursued development of this area due to a concentration on “value-free” analyses of social structures, lack of conceptual clarity in Durkheim’s work, and the drawing of disciplinary lines.

The dearth of sociological research on morality continues as researchers focus on larger, more socially comprehensive forces such as religion, law, prejudice, discrimination, and economics. Researchers have indirectly studied aspects of morality and ethics through these domains (i.e.,
Deflem 2008; Guhim 2016; Merolla et al. 2011; Taylor and Merino 2011). These lines of inquiry are informative and vital to understanding motives for human action, but a substantial gap in remains with respect to how people view themselves and others, and how these views shape beliefs about what should be done in various situations. Stryker’s (1980) identity theory provides a framework to extend the study of morality to internalized meanings of the self. The focus of this dissertation integrates two key social identities in an effort to explain certain relationships among aspects of the self, influences of social structure, and moral and ethical positioning. To this end, I hypothesize the following:

H9: The greater the integration of racial and religious identity, the stronger the ethical position.

H10: The greater the integration of racial and religious identity, the stronger the moral foundation.
CHAPTER 3
METHODS AND DATA

Data for this dissertation come from the Religion and Identity survey, an online nationally representative sample of adults recruited through phone calls. A screening question, “Which of the following best describes your religious affiliation or preference?” was used to identify participants who expressed affiliation with a specific religion or denomination. Along with agnostics and atheists, those who answered, “Don’t know” or “Prefer not to answer” were excluded from the survey. A total of 2,738 respondents began the survey and 1,591 completed it following the screening question, creating a response rate of 58%. The sample for this dissertation is comprised of 555 non-Hispanic/Latino Blacks and 510 non-Hispanic/Latino Whites.

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the variables used in this study. This dissertation presents the results of two different analyses (see Models 1 and 2). Appendix A provides a full list of questions and response categories used in the analyses.
Table 1. Descriptive Statistics: Mean and Standard Deviation of Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean (SD) Totals</th>
<th>Mean (SD) Black/African American</th>
<th>Mean (SD) White</th>
<th>F-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.32 (.95)</td>
<td>3.31 (.89)</td>
<td>3.34 (1.01)</td>
<td>.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>44.74 (16.82)</td>
<td>44.04 (16.89)</td>
<td>45.50 (16.73)</td>
<td>2.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>.54 (.49)</td>
<td>.54 (.49)</td>
<td>.55 (.49)</td>
<td>.093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity</td>
<td>6.65 (2.71)</td>
<td>7.23 (2.5)</td>
<td>6.04 (2.79)</td>
<td>52.27*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Attendance</td>
<td>5.03 (2.73)</td>
<td>5.44 (2.64)</td>
<td>4.59 (2.76)</td>
<td>25.82*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strength of Religious Faith Identity Salience</td>
<td>3.24 (.69)</td>
<td>3.41 (.56)</td>
<td>3.05 (.76)</td>
<td>63.40*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Prominence</td>
<td>2.47 (.94)</td>
<td>2.74 (.92)</td>
<td>2.18 (.88)</td>
<td>83.17*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximal Social Structure</td>
<td>2.37 (1.09)</td>
<td>2.46 (1.12)</td>
<td>2.27 (1.05)</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td>2.14 (.57)</td>
<td>1.97 (.47)</td>
<td>2.34 (.62)</td>
<td>85.39*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity Integration</td>
<td>2.48 (.52)</td>
<td>2.43 (.52)</td>
<td>2.55 (.52)</td>
<td>10.18*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical Positioning</td>
<td>4.61 (1.18)</td>
<td>4.79 (1.22)</td>
<td>4.40 (1.10)</td>
<td>25.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Foundations</td>
<td>4.34 (.97)</td>
<td>4.46 (1.00)</td>
<td>4.20 (.93)</td>
<td>16.51*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MODEL 1

Model 1 examines the relationships of Blacks’ and Whites’ racial/ethnic and religious identities with proximal social structure, identity prominence, identity salience, and strength of religious faith. The analysis in Chapter 4 (Model 1) uses structural equation modeling as a first test of the following hypotheses:

H1: The greater the strength of religious faith, the higher the salience of the religious identity.
H2: The greater the strength of religious faith, the higher the prominence of the religious identity.

H3: The greater the strength of religious faith, the stronger the ethnic identity.

H4: The stronger the proximal social structure, the higher the salience of religious identity.

H5: The stronger the proximal social structure, the higher the prominence of religious identity.

H6: The stronger the proximal social structure, the stronger the ethnic identity.

H7: Blacks are more likely than Whites to have higher salience and prominence with regard to their religious identity.

Figure 1 illustrates the heuristic model tested in the first analysis (Model 1).
**Exogenous Variables**

*Strength of religious faith* is measured by ten statements that ask people to rate the influence of their faith in their lives, using a scale that ranges from 1=*strongly disagree* to 4=*strongly agree*. Statements include, “My religious faith is extremely important to me.”; “I pray daily”; and “My faith impacts many of my decisions.” Appendix A includes the full list of statements and responses. Cronbach’s alpha for strength of religious faith is .95 (α = .93 for Blacks, α = .92 for Whites). The mean total is 3.24, indicating that respondents generally believe that their faith
has an influence in their lives. Blacks report greater strength of religious faith (3.41) than Whites (3.05).

Proximal social structure is comprised of 13 questions that ask respondents to estimate the amount of people in their immediate social environments (i.e., friends, neighborhood and workplace) who engage in religious activities with them and share their religious views. Appendix A provides a full list of questions and response categories. Items include, “How many of your family members (spouse/partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.) share your religious views?”; “How many of your close friends (people that you know and can count on if you need them) go to your church?”; How many of the people that you work with do you think share your religious views?”; and “How many of the people in your neighborhood do you think share your religious views?” The scale of responses ranges from 1=almost none to 5=almost all. The reliability of the 13 questions is high (α = .92). As a whole, respondents indicated that about half of the people in their immediate social environments share their religious views (mean total of 3.04). The mean for Blacks (3.12) significantly differs from the mean for Whites (2.94).

Endogenous Variables

Identity prominence includes five statements that measure how important a religious identity is to respondents. Statements include, “My religion is an important part of my self-image.” and “I have a strong sense of belonging to my religion.” The response scale ranges from 1=strongly disagree to 4=strongly agree. Cronbach’s alpha for this variable is .93 (.91 for Blacks and .93 for Whites). The total mean, 2.90, indicates that the sample considers their religious identity somewhat important. Blacks considered their religious identity to be more important to them (3.10) than Whites (2.69).
Identity salience includes five questions that ask respondents about the likelihood of telling others about their religion. These items include, “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?”; “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?”; and “Think about meeting a stranger for the first time. How certain is it that you would tell this person about your religion?” Possible responses range from 1=almost certainly would not to 4=almost certainly would. A complete listing of questions and responses can be found in Appendix A. The alpha value for identity salience is .96 (.95 for Blacks and .96 for Whites). As a whole, sample respondents are not very likely to share their religious faith (total mean 2.47), meaning that the salience of their religious identity is not high. However, Blacks (2.74) report a higher level of religious identity salience than Whites (2.18).

Ethnic identity is comprised of nine statements that measure activities and attitudes pertaining to one’s ethnic identity. The statements include, “I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.”; “I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.”; “I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.”, and “I feel a strong attachment toward my own ethnic group.”. The response scale ranges from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree. All questions and response options are listed in Appendix A. Cronbach’s alpha for these items is .86 (.82 for Blacks and .87 for Whites). The mean response for Whites (2.34) compared to Blacks (1.97) indicates that Whites in this sample have a stronger racial/ethnic identity compared to Blacks.
Control Variables

In this study, I control for religiosity, church attendance, sex, age, and education. Previous research has documented the relationships of these variables with strength of religious faith, proximal social structures, and identity prominence and salience (i.e., Chatters et al. 2009; Owens and Serpe 2003; Sanchez and Carter 2005; Yarrison 2016). Religiosity is comprised of the question “How religious do you consider yourself?” with a response scale of 0=not at all religious to 10=very religious. The mean score for “How religious do you consider yourself?” is 6.65, indicating a sample that is notably religious. This finding is not surprising, given that agnostics, atheists, and respondents who reported no religion were excluded from the survey. The means for Blacks and Whites are 7.23 and 6.04 respectively, indicating that Blacks consider themselves more religious compared to Whites. Church attendance is measured by the question, “How often do you attend religious services?” Responses range from 1=never to 10=several times a week. The mean total is 5.03. The mean for Blacks is 5.44 and 4.59 for Whites.

Sex includes the cisgender responses of male and female, with males coded as 0 and females coded as 1. Approximately 54% of the total sample is female, similar to the samples for Blacks (54%) and Whites (55%). Age is measured by asking respondents their age. The mean age for the total sample is 44, the same as that for Blacks. The mean age for Whites in the sample is 45.

Education is measured by five responses that range from 1=less than high school to 5=graduate or professional degree. The mean total, 3.32, indicates that the majority of the sample has had some college or technical school. The mean for Whites (3.34) is slightly higher than the mean for Blacks (3.31).
MODEL 2

The analysis in Chapter 5 provides a test of the full identity model using structural equation modeling. Model 2 (Figure 2) includes the variables from Model 1 and includes the additional variables of identity integration, ethical positioning, and moral foundation. It tests the following hypotheses:

H8: Blacks will have a higher degree of integration of racial and religious identities compared to Whites.

H9: The greater the integration of racial and religious identity, the stronger the ethical position.

H10: The greater the integration of racial and religious identity, the stronger the moral foundation.
Exogenous Variable

Integration includes eight statements that measure the combination of religious and racial/ethnic identities. These statements include, “My ideals related to my race/ethnicity differ from my ideals as a religious person.”; “I feel conflict between my racial/ethnic identity and my identity as a religious person.”; “I feel torn between the expectations of my culture and my religion.”; and “ I do not feel any tension between the goals of my racial/ethnic culture and the goals of my religion.” The response scale ranges from 1=strongly agree to 4=strongly disagree. Appendix A includes a complete listing of statements and response options. The alpha value for integration is .81 (.82 for Blacks and .80 for Whites). The mean total for the sample is 2.48. Whites (2.55) report a higher integration of their religious and racial/ethnic identities compared to Blacks (2.43).

Endogenous Variables

Ethical Positioning items measure behavior and attitudes related to one’s sense of morality. The six items include statements such as, “What is right and wrong is up to each person to decide.”; “Moral standards should be seen as individualistic: what one person considers to be moral may be judged as immoral by another person.”; “Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved because what is moral or immoral is up to the individual to decide.” The response scale that ranges from 1=strongly disagree to 10=strongly agree. All six items and possible responses are listed in Appendix A. The alpha value for these items is .72 (.75 for Blacks and .62 for Whites). Mean total for the sample is 4.61., and the means for Blacks and Whites are 4.79 and 4.40 respectively. These means indicate that Blacks have a stronger sense of ethical positioning compared to Whites.
Moral Foundation includes the prompt, “When you decide something is right or wrong, to what extent are the following relevant to your thinking?” and includes five conditions: “Whether or not some people were treated differently than others”; “Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority”; “Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency”; “Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable”; and “Whether or not someone acted unfairly”. The response scale ranges from 1=not at all relevant (this had nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong) to 6=extremely relevant. The alpha value for these items is .84 (.86 for Blacks and .81 for Whites). Mean total is 4.34. With a mean response of 4.46, Blacks report greater relevance of moral foundations in deciding what is right or wrong compared to Whites, who have a mean of 4.40.

Control Variables

Control variables for Model 2 are the same as those for Model 1: religiosity, church attendance, sex, age, and education. Table 1 contains the descriptive statistics.
CHAPTER 4
MODEL 1 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

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

*What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and salience of religious identities among Blacks and Whites?*

*What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and the prominence of religious identities among Blacks and Whites?*

*How does the strength of religious faith influence racial/ethnic identities among Blacks and Whites?*

*How do proximal social structures influence the prominence and salience of racial and religious identities among Blacks and Whites?*

Chapter 3 provided descriptions for all variables used in this study. Table 1 provided descriptive statistics for the variables used in Model 1. The model was estimated using structural equation modeling, and model fit statistics indicate a good fit. The chi square of 992.4 (p=0.000), 236 degrees and freedom, and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is near the .05 threshold for a good-fitting model (RMSEA = .049). Tests for factorial invariance between Blacks and Whites were conducted for each endogenous and dependent variable. In all cases, constraining the coefficients to be equal for Blacks and Whites produced a statistically significant difference, decreasing the model fit. Therefore, all effects for Blacks and Whites are estimated independently (Alwin and Jackson 1981; Meredith 1993). Table 2 provides the standardized coefficients for Model 1.
### Table 2. Identity Salience, Identity Prominence, and Ethnic Identity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Strength Religious Faith</th>
<th>Proximal Social Structure</th>
<th>Identity Salience</th>
<th>Identity Prominence</th>
<th>Ethnic Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>W</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Church Attend</td>
<td>.30*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
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<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.07*</td>
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<td>.32*</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.49*</td>
<td>.24*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximal Social Structure</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.37*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.39*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Model Fit: Chi Sq.=992.4; df=236; p=.000; RMSEA=.049

*p < .05

N=555 Blacks; 510 Whites

**Exogenous Variables**

*Religiosity* demonstrated to be an important control variable. Coefficients between *religiosity* and *strength of religious faith* were significant (p< .05) and positive for Blacks (B =.30) and for Whites (B = .18). The *religiosity* coefficient was significant and positive on *proximal social structure* for Blacks (B = .15) but not for Whites. For Blacks, religiosity influences the number of people in their immediate environments who share similar religious views and activities. *Religiosity* has a significant positive effect on *identity salience* for both Blacks (B = .22) and Whites (B = .27). The same relationship is present for *identity prominence* for both Blacks and Whites (B =.45 and B = .32, respectively). The relationship between *religiosity* and *ethnic identity* was positive and significant for Blacks (B = .17) but not for Whites. These results
suggest that Blacks and Whites who consider themselves to be religious also have stronger religious faith, higher religious identity salience, and higher religious identity prominence.

Church attendance is significant on strength of religious faith for Blacks (B = .26) and Whites (B = .27). Interestingly, attendance has a negative effect on proximal social structure for Blacks (B = -.12) and a positive effect for Whites (B = .34). This finding suggests that, even though Whites report lower church attendance than Blacks (see Table 1), Whites may be more likely to attend churches with friends, relatives, or people who live in their neighborhoods. Proximal social structure for Blacks may be negatively correlated with church attendance because they are more likely than Whites to interact within other types of proximal structures in which friends, relatives, and others share their religious views and activities (see Chatters et al. 2009; Shelton and Emerson 2012). Church attendance increases identity salience for Blacks (B = .17), but fails to reach significance for Whites. Attendance has no significant effects on identity prominence for Blacks and Whites, but increases ethnic identity for Blacks (B = .14). These findings suggest that attending church will increase the likelihood that Blacks will share their religious identity with others, and church attendance may encourage feelings and activities associated with ethnic identity.

The control variables of gender, age, and education have no significant effects for Blacks and Whites in Model 1.

Endogenous Variables

The next set of variables examine the relationships among strength of religious faith, proximal social structure, identity salience, identity prominence, and ethnic identity. Strength of religious faith performs as expected on identity salience for both Blacks (B = .29) and Whites (B
Religious identity salience increases as strength of religious faith increases, providing support for hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 is also supported for both groups, as stronger religious faith increases religious identity prominence for Blacks ($B = .38$) and Whites ($B = .49$). Strength of religious faith has a positive effect on ethnic identity for Blacks ($B = .24$), but a negative effect on the ethnic identity for Whites ($B = -.15$). This finding provides support for hypothesis 3 with respect to Blacks, but not for Whites.

Proximal social structure increases religious identity salience for Whites ($B = .37$), but has no significant effect on salience for Blacks. This finding provides support for hypothesis 4 for Whites, but is not supported for Blacks. Hypothesis 5 is not supported, as proximal social structure has no significant effect on religious identity prominence for either Blacks or Whites. Regarding ethnic identity, proximal social structure has a significant and positive effect for both Blacks ($B = .39$) and Whites ($B = .21$). This finding provides support for hypothesis 6: the stronger the proximal social structure, the stronger the ethnic identity.

Hypothesis 7, Blacks are more likely than Whites to have higher salience and prominence with regard to their religious identity, was not supported. The effects of strength of religious faith on identity salience and identity prominence were stronger for Whites, and proximal social structure only affected identity salience for Whites.

**SUMMARY**

The results of Model 1 provide answers for some of the research questions. Strength of religious faith does influence religious identity salience for both Blacks and Whites. The results suggest that the more influential a person believes their religious faith to be in their lives, the higher the likelihood that they will enact (salience) their religion identity (hypothesis 1).
Strength of religious faith also has an effect on the importance of one’s religious identity (prominence) for both racial/ethnic groups (hypothesis 2). Strength of faith has a significant effect on both Blacks and Whites regarding their ethnic identities. However, the direction of the effect differs by group. Greater strength of religious faith reinforces ethnic identity for Blacks but has a negative effect on the ethnic identity of Whites. This finding supports hypothesis 3 for Blacks.

Proximal social structure has no effect on the religious identity salience of Blacks, but it has a positive effect on the religious identity salience of Whites. This finding supports hypothesis 4 for Whites. Proximal structures have no significant effect on identity prominence for either racial/ethnic group, so there is no support for hypothesis 5. Proximal social structures do have a positive effect on ethnic identity for Blacks and Whites: stronger proximal structures increase the strength of ethnic identity (hypothesis 6). Regarding the prominence and salience of religious identities, strength of religious faith influenced the prominence and salience of Whites more strongly than Blacks. Proximal social structure only influenced identity salience for Whites, and it had no effect on prominence for either group. Therefore, hypothesis 7 was not supported.

Further discussion of these results and of the limitations of Model 1 and Model 2 will be provided in Chapter 6, as a number of the limitations of Model 1 are in Model 2. Model 2 presented in Chapter 5 incorporates the variables and relationships contained in Model 1, but it includes identity integration and adds ethical positioning and moral foundations as outcome variables.
CHAPTER 5
MODEL 2 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, the analysis for Model 1 is expanded upon to include identity integration, ethical positioning, and moral foundations to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1, including the following: *How does the integration of racial and religious identity influence moral foundations and ethical positioning among Whites and Blacks?*

The model was estimated using structural equation modeling, and model fit statistics indicate a good fit. The chi square of 4484.4 (p=.001), 1334 degrees and freedom, and the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) is near the .05 threshold for a good-fitting model (RMSEA = .047). Tests for factorial invariance between Blacks and Whites were conducted for each endogenous and dependent variable. In all cases, constraining the coefficients to be equal for Blacks and Whites produced a statistically significant difference, decreasing the model fit. Therefore, all effects for Blacks and Whites are estimated independently (Alwin and Jackson 1981; Meredith 1993). Table 3 provides the standardized coefficients for Model 2.
Exogenous Variables

In Model 2, religiosity remained an important control variable. Coefficients between religiosity and strength of religious faith were significant (p< .05) and positive for Blacks (B = .39) and for Whites (B = .15). Religiosity was significant and positive on proximal social structure for Blacks (B = .13) but not for Whites. Religiosity also has a significant positive effect on identity salience for both Blacks (B = .20) and Whites (B = .23). The same relationship is present for identity prominence for both Blacks and Whites (B = .46 and B = .37, respectively).
The relationship between religiosity and ethnic identity was positive and significant for Blacks (B = .15) but not for Whites.

Church attendance is significant on strength of religious faith for Blacks (B = .26) and Whites (B = .27). Attendance has a negative effect on proximal social structure for Blacks (B = -.12) and a positive effect for Whites (B = .34). Church attendance increases identity salience for Blacks (B = .17), but fails to reach significance for Whites. Attendance has no significant effects on identity prominence for Blacks and Whites, but increases ethnic identity for Blacks (B = .11). The control variables of gender, age, and education have no significant effects for Blacks and Whites in Model 2.

Endogenous Variables

The next set of variables examine the relationships explicated in Model 1, with the addition of identity integration, ethical positioning, and moral foundation. Strength of religious faith increases identity salience for both Blacks (B = .23) and Whites (B = .30), and it increases religious identity prominence for Blacks (B = .34) and Whites (B = .53). In this model, it also has a positive effect on ethnic identity for Blacks (B = .21), but a negative effect on ethnic identity for Whites (B = -.16).

Strength of religious faith increases identity integration for Blacks (B = .29), but fails to reach significance for Whites. Strength of religious faith also strengthens ethical positioning (B = .25) and moral foundations (B = .14) for Blacks. It has no significant effect on ethical positioning or moral positioning for Whites.

Similar to the pattern of Model 1, proximal social structure has no effect on the religious identity salience of Blacks, but it has a positive effect on the religious identity salience of Whites (B = .34). Proximal social structure has no significant effect on identity prominence for either
racial/ethnic group, but it has a positive effect on ethnic identity for Blacks (B = .37) and Whites (B = .19).

Religious identity salience has a positive effect on identity integration for Blacks (B = .22), but a negative effect for Whites (B = .15). For Blacks, a stronger likelihood of telling others about their religious identity also increases the strength of integration of their religious and racial identities. As religious identity salience increases for Whites, the integration of their religious and racial identities decreases.

Religious identity prominence has a positive effect on identity integration for Blacks (B = .23), but fails to reach significance for Whites. Blacks who place greater importance on their religious identity will have higher levels of integration of their racial/ethnic and religious identities. The findings for religious identity salience and prominence provide support for hypothesis 8.

Ethnic identity positively affects identity integration for Whites (B = .36), but fails to reach significance for Blacks.

Identity integration strengthens ethical positioning for Blacks (B = .39), but it has a negative effect on ethical positioning for Whites (B = -.12). These findings provide support for hypothesis 9 for Blacks. Identity integration also strengthens moral foundations for Blacks (B = .22), but it has no effect on moral foundations for Whites. This finding provides support for hypothesis 10 for Blacks.

**SUMMARY**

This chapter provided a full test of the hypotheses in this study and includes confirmation of several hypotheses that were tested in the previous chapter. The results of Model 2 also provide
answers for the research question, *How does the integration of racial and religious identity influence moral foundations and ethical positioning among Whites and Blacks?*

Religious identity salience and religious identity prominence both have positive effects on identity integration for Blacks. These findings indicate that the likelihood of enacting one’s religious identity (salience) and the importance placed on one’s religious identity (prominence) influence the integration of racial and religious identities for Blacks. Religious identity salience has a negative effect on identity integration for Whites, indicating that enacting a religious identity will decrease the strength of the combination of religious and racial identities. Ethnic identity has an effect on identity integration for Whites, but has no effect on integration for Blacks. These findings support hypothesis 8, which states that Blacks will have a higher degree of integration of racial and religious identities compared to Whites.

Identity integration has a significant effect on ethical positioning for both Whites and Blacks, but the direction of the effect differs by group. Identity integration strengthens ethical positioning for Blacks, but decreases ethical positioning for Whites. This finding supports hypothesis 9 for Blacks. Greater identity integration produces stronger moral foundations for Blacks but has no effect on the moral foundations of Whites, which confirms hypothesis 10 for Blacks. The final chapter includes a more detailed exploration of these findings. Limitations of this study and possible directions for future research will also be addressed.
CHAPTER 6
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation focused on five key questions:

1. What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and the prominence of religious identities among Whites and Blacks?

2. What is the relationship between strength of religious faith and salience of religious identities among Whites and Blacks?

3. How does the strength of religious faith influence racial/ethnic identities among Whites and Blacks?

4. How do proximal social structures influence the prominence and salience of racial and religious identities among Whites and Blacks?

5. How does the integration of racial and religious identity influence moral foundations and ethical positioning among Whites and Blacks?

Identity theory states that identities are arranged in a hierarchy of prominence and salience, and social structures can facilitate and constrain both the enactment and importance of these identities. These social structures take numerous forms, including the activities, beliefs and behaviors that people bring to interactions. Larger social structures and one’s placement within them can shape the nature of interaction and identities, as well as the ways in which people enact these identities. For example, the hierarchical nature of identity prominence, or the importance one places on an identity, and salience, the likelihood that one will enact an identity across situations, can vary by race/ethnicity. Social structures can also act as boundaries that shape the probability of individuals with certain backgrounds being more or less likely to have certain social interactions and relationships. These boundaries also take many forms, including one
focus of this study: religion. In addition to operating as an institution that shapes placement and interaction, religion provides an opportunity for people to construct and enact their identities.

The strength of one’s religious faith influences both the prominence and salience of one’s religious identity. Greater strength of faith increases the importance of one’s religious identity, and it also increases the likelihood of telling others about a religious identity. This finding is not surprising, given that the majority of people in the United States report some type of religious affiliation and that religiosity is positively associated with strength of faith. The relationship between strength of faith, identity salience, and identity prominence holds for both Blacks and Whites. However, the relationship between strength of religious faith and identity prominence is stronger for Whites than Blacks. Stryker and Serpe (1994) state that awareness of an identity is necessary in order for that identity to be prominent. Strength of faith may have a greater impact on the importance that Whites place on their religious identity because Whites are more aware of that identity apart from their other identities. Blacks may combine their religious identity with other identities, given that they are more likely to incorporate religious activities into their lives (Chatters et al. 2009).

The incorporation of religious activity may also explain the positive association of strength of religious faith and ethnic identity for Blacks. Historically in the United States, religion has served as a social, emotional, financial, and educational institution for Black people in ways that differ from Whites (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990). Social gospel and the civil rights movement had deep roots in Black Christian thought and leadership, and these forces represent an amalgamation of religious belief and racial/ethnic issues. Additionally, religion and houses of worship have been among the few social locations in which Blacks could explore, construct, and reinforce their racial and ethnic identities relatively free from the influences of dominant groups.
Religious faith does not impact the ethnic identity of Whites in similar ways. For Whites, strength of ethnic identity decreases as strength of religious faith increases. The structural symbolic perspective from which identity theory emerges can aid in explaining this finding. This framework describes the self as a multifaceted product of a multifaceted society. Parts of the self may operate independently of each other, such as ethnicity and religious faith. Another possible explanation for the negative association of strength of faith with ethnic identity may be that Whites are more likely than Blacks to espouse a colorblind ideology (Bonilla-Silva 2009) that overlooks or explains away the influence of race in a society. Whites are also more likely than Blacks to view race as unimportant in the practice of religion and to support the notion that “one nation under God” runs counter to explicitly addressing issues of race (Kosmin and Lachman 2011).

The importance of context in these findings is reflected in examination of the effects of proximal social structure. Proximal social structure includes the people in families, neighborhoods, workplaces, and churches who share religious views and religious activities. A stronger proximal social structure reinforces higher religious identity salience for Whites but has no effect on the religious identity salience of Blacks. As with strength of religious faith, the proximal social structures of Blacks may combine elements of religion and other areas of their lives such that they may not be as likely as Whites to tell someone about their religious identity. This explanation also speaks to this study’s finding of the negative correlation between church attendance and proximal social structure for Blacks. Moreover, Shelton and Emerson (2012) noted that Whites view their religion and associated identities are more of an intellectual or spiritual pursuit to be understood. Whites may be more apt to see their religion as something that they do in association with their identity—that is, a role. Stryker and Serpe (1982) found that
time spent enacting a religious role, and the activities associated with that role, are related to the salience of an identity. The relationship between religious identity and proximal social structure appears to take a different form for Blacks. Shelton and Emerson (2012) found that religious Black people in their study viewed their religion and associated activities as something to be experienced and felt, and one just “knows” that the effects of religious beliefs are present. An implicit assumption that religious identities are present in the proximal social structures of Blacks may explain why proximal social structure has no effect on their religious identity salience.

Interestingly, proximal social structure has no significant effect on religious identity prominence for either group in this study. This finding is somewhat surprising, given the importance that Blacks in particular tend to place on the role of religion in their lives. This finding may relate to an increasing sense of individualism among people in the United States who identify as religious (Pew 2012). Individualism can affect one’s perception of the importance of a religious identity as it relates to other people and environments—people may not feel as strong of a need to connect the importance of their religious identity to others in their surroundings who share their views. Proximal social structure does, however, influence the strength of ethnic identities for both Blacks and Whites. A large body of sociological literature documents the role of similarity, real and perceived, in reinforcing the identities of racial and ethnic groups. This similarity can take many forms, including shared social and historical experiences, comparable belief systems, and activities that encourage a sense of community. Religious activities and institutions remain largely segregated by race in the United States (Emerson and Smith 2000), and the proximal social structures created through them serve to reinforce racial and ethnic identities.
The findings of this study indicate that various factors influence racial and religious identities. These influences do not operate independently of each other, and the identities may also influence each other. Identity theory assumes that some identities will shape the prominence and salience of others, and identities may integrate to produce distinct outcomes. In this study, higher religious identity salience correlated with stronger identity integration for Blacks, but lower integration for Whites. Higher religious identity prominence also produced stronger identity integration for Blacks, but had no effect for Whites. These findings suggest that Blacks have a stronger integration of their racial/ethnic and religious identities compared to Whites. The findings accord with previous discussion of the ways in which Blacks combine religious identities and activities into their various aspects of their lives in ways that Whites generally do not. The positive effect of ethnic identity on integration for Whites but not Blacks is of interest.

Researchers have documented the role of privilege and color-blindness in how Whites construct their religious identities (Emerson and Smith 2000; Shelton and Emerson 2012). An increased awareness of their ethnic identities and how they relate to their religious beliefs may produce greater levels of integration.

Blacks with higher levels of identity integration also have higher levels of ethical positioning and moral foundations. They are less likely to view moral decisions as relative to the individual, and more likely to espouse a universal view of ethics compared to Whites. The negative association of integration with ethical positioning for Whites, along with finding of no relationship between integration and moral foundations, supports an individualistic explanation for Whites. These findings do not align with conventional sociological approaches to the study of morality. These approaches emphasized how morality acts as a unifying force through shared rules and expectations. These shared rules and expectations shape behavior through interactions
and shared activities (Durkheim 1912). Weber (1978) conceived of morals as subjective forces learned from others that reside in the individual and guide behavior. These paradigms are decidedly sociological in how they characterize the roles of socialization and social interaction in shaping moral beliefs and ethical behavior. However, these perspectives assume that individuals in a society experience socialization and interaction in similar ways, and therefore they will generally share the same moral beliefs. They also do not explicate the internal mechanisms that shape the positions people take on moral issues. Recent sociological research has sought to address this oversight. Using identity theory in their analysis of past experiences and the moral self, Stets and Carter (2011) found that moral identities guide behavior. In a subsequent examination of university students and their moral identity, behavior and emotions, Stets and Carter (2012) found that moral identity and seeing situations in moral terms influence both feelings and behavior. The limitations of previous research on ethics and morals, along with the findings of more current research, suggest that numerous identities, placement in social structure, and the meanings associated with identities will influence ethical positioning and moral foundations.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The primary goals of this research were to examine the relationships between racial and religious identities, to explicate the role of identity salience and identity prominence in the integration of racial/ethnic and religious identities, and to understand how the integration of racial/ethnic and religious identities influences ethical positioning and moral foundations. These goals were partially successful. However, this study focuses exclusively on a sample that self-identified as Black/African American non-Hispanic, and White non-Hispanic. These categories
assume a racial/ethnic homogeneity that obscures the variability of identities and social placements found within them. This variability has the potential to provide a more complete understanding of the ways in which social positioning influences the prominence, salience, and integration of identities. Additionally, Stets and Carter (2011, 2012) call for an extension of the sociological research on morality through studies that examine how multiple identities interact with each other in a situation, and how these identities interact with contexts to produce or constrain identities. In this dissertation, gender, age, and education had no significant effects on the dependent variables of interest. An intersectional approach in future studies could provide greater insight into how these identities work together beyond an additive understanding of their contribution to identity salience, prominence, and integration.

A second limitation of this study is its exclusion of respondents who did not express a particular religious affiliation. Atheists agnostics, and those who practice no religion still maintain identities that may be connected to those who are affiliated with a religion. For example, atheists, agnostics, and people who do not claim a religion participate in proximal social structures along with individuals who are religious. In line with the assumptions of identity theory, it is reasonable to assume that the general identity processes associated with prominence, salience and integration are similar for those who are religious and non-religious. However, non-religious identities may shape interaction and proximal social structures in ways that more inclusive research may discover.

Third, this research holds potential to address the conceptual overlap between ethics and morality. Given recent downward trends in the U.S. economy, very public political controversies, increasing class divides and racial/ethnic tensions, researchers have a renewed interest in the sociology of morality (Abend 2010). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, gaps in
sociological research on ethics and morality are partially due to lack of conceptual clarity and a continued emphasis on “value-free” analyses of social behavior. This work is needful, particularly in the area of religion and identity. Religion remains an ideological guiding force in the United States, and this dissertation indicates that it shapes selected aspects of identity and beliefs. Specifying what people believe (morals) and what they actually do (ethics) based on the prominence, salience, and integration of their identities will contribute to an area of sociological inquiry that is increasingly relevant for understanding the breach between beliefs and behavior in numerous social arenas.
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APPENDIX A

SURVEY ITEMS

Religiosity:
(Relig3) How religious do you consider yourself?
0. Not at all religious
...
10. Very Religious

(Relig6) How often do you attend religious services?
1. Never
2. Less than once a year
3. Once or twice a year
4. Several times a year
5. Once a month
6. 2-3 times a month
7. About weekly
8. Weekly
9. Several times a week

Sex:
(sex) What is your gender?
0. Male
1. Female

Age:
(age) What is your age?
___ Age in Years
**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

**Race**

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

**Strength of Religious Faith**

(Scrf1) My religious faith is extremely important to me.

(Scrf2) I pray daily.

(Scrf3) I look to my faith as a source of inspiration.

(Scrf 4) I look to my faith as providing meaning and purpose in my life.

(Scrf5) I consider myself active in my faith or church.

(Scrf6) My faith is an important part of who I am as a person.

(Scrf7) My relationship with God is extremely important to me.

(Scrf8) I enjoy being around others who share my faith.

(Scrf9) I look to my faith as a source of comfort.

(Scrf10) My faith impacts many of my decisions.

1. Strongly Disagree
2. Disagree
3. Agree
4. Strongly Agree
Proximal Social Structure

(Prox1) How many of your family members (spouse/partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.) share your religious views?

(Prox1a) How many of your family members (spouse/partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.)

(Prox2) How many of your close friends (people that you know and can count on if you need them) share your religious views?

(Prox2a) How many of your close friends (people that you know and can count on if you need them) go to your church?

(Prox3) How many of your friends (people you know and do things with) share your religious views?

(Prox3a) How many of your friends (people you know and do things with) go to your church?

(Prox4) How many of the people that you work with do you think share your religious views?

(Prox4a) How many of the people that you work with go to your church?

(Prox5) How many of the people that you grew up with do you think share your religious views?

(Prox5a) How many of the people that you grew up with go to your church?

(Prox6) How many of the people in your neighborhood do you think share your religious views?

(Prox6a) How many of the people in your neighborhood do you think go to your church?

1. Almost none
2. Less than half
3. About half
4. More than half
5. Almost all

(Proxrace) How many of the people at your current place of worship are of the same race/ethnicity as you?

1. Almost none
2. Less than half
3. About half
4. More than half
5. Almost all

**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
Social Identity

(Sid1) I have spent time trying to find out more about my ethnic group such as its history, traditions and customs.

(Sid2) I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

(Sid3) I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

(Sid4) I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

(Sid5) I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

(Sid6) In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

(Sid7) I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.

(Sid8) I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

(Sid9) I feel a strong attachment toward my own ethnic group.

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

Identity Integration

(Idin1) My ideals related to my race/ethnicity differ from my ideals as a religious person.

(Idin2) I feel conflict between my racial/ethnic identity and my identity as a religious person.

(Idin3) I keep everything about my racial/ethnic identity separate from being a religious person.

(Idin4) I am someone whose behavior switches between what is expected of me based on my racial/ethnic identity and what is expected of me based on my religious identity.

(Idin5) Succeeding according to my racial/ethnic identity involves the same sides of myself as succeeding as a religious person.

(Idin6) I feel torn between the expectations of my culture and my religion.

(Idin7) How I see myself is consistent with both my racial/ethnic identity and my religious identity.
(Idin8) I do not feel any tension between the goals of my racial/ethnic culture and the goals of my religion.

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

**Ethics Position**

(EthsPos1) Right and wrong should be based on God’s law.

(EthPos2) American children should be raised to believe in God.

(EthPos3) What is right and wrong is up to each person to decide.

(EthPos4) Moral standards should be seen as individualistic: what one person considers to be moral may be judged as immoral by another person.

(EthPos5) Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved because what is moral or immoral is up to the individual to decide.

(EthPos6) Moral standards are simply personal rules that indicate how a person should behave, and should be used when making judgments of others.

1. Strongly Disagree

…

10. Strongly Agree

**Moral Foundation**

(MoralF1) Whether or not some people were treated differently than others.

(MoralF2) Whether or not someone showed a lack of respect for authority.

(MoralF3) Whether or not someone violated standards of purity and decency.

(MoralF4) Whether or not someone cared for someone weak or vulnerable.

(MoralF5) Whether or not someone acted unfairly.

1. Not at all relevant (this had nothing to do with my judgments of right and wrong.)
2. Not very relevant
3. Slightly relevant
4. Somewhat relevant
5. Very relevant
6. Extremely relevant